



**May 2017 – Pre NI Westminster Election Tracker Poll – No. 3
LucidTalk Tracker Poll (Northern Ireland) Results Report**

**Issues: Voting Intention, Election Issues, NI Political Leaders – Trustworthiness,
NI Political Leaders – Likeability, + The Final LT Seat Predictor model
POLL QUESTIONS RESULTS - GENERAL REPORT**

5th June 2017

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Subject Media Polling Projects

Issue 5th June: Opinion Panel Poll-Project – Poll 3: Final Results – General Report (Version 1)

Date 5th JUNE 2017

Author(s) Bill White – LucidTalk

LUCIDTALK MONTHLY TRACKER POLLS - Introduction and Background

LucidTalk run scheduled regular 'Tracker' polls of their established Northern Ireland online Opinion Panel - usually on a quarterly basis (every three months). The LucidTalk Opinion Panel (now 8,211 members) consists of Northern Ireland residents (age 18+) and is balanced by gender, age-group, area of residence, and community background, in order to be demographically representative of Northern Ireland. In the build-up to the NI Westminster Election on 8th June 2017, LucidTalk will run **THREE NI OPINION PANEL 'Tracker' POLLS**:

Poll 1 - NI OPINION PANEL 'TRACKER' POLL: Pre NI Westminster Election 2017

27th to 29th April 2017 – Results: 1st May 2017 – COMPLETED (Full report on LucidTalk web site)

Poll 2 - NI OPINION PANEL 'TRACKER' POLL: Pre NI Westminster Election 2017

15th to 17th May 2017 – Results: 18th May 2017 – COMPLETED (Full report on LucidTalk web site)

Poll 3 - NI OPINION PANEL 'TRACKER' POLL: Pre NI Westminster Election 2017

1st to 3rd June 2017 – Results: 4th June 2017 – THIS POLL REPORT

ELECTION DAY: 8TH JUNE 2017

The objective of these scheduled and regular 'Tracker' polls is to research opinion on key issues at key points in time + track changes in trends and opinions about key topics and issues over the period of the NI Westminster Election campaign. These key issues include, in the context of this poll, NI Westminster Election voting intention per constituency, NI Political Party Leaders – Trustworthiness and Likeability, Election Issues, and estimation of voting turnout.

For this 'Tracker' poll-project our 8,211 member NI Opinion Panel was targeted, and invited to participate, 3,419 responses were received, and after data auditing to ensure:

(a) 'one person-one vote' responses, and

(b) the collation of a balanced representative NI sample,

- 2,080 full responses were recorded and used for analysis in terms of the final results.

Methodology:

Polling was carried out by Belfast based polling and market research company LucidTalk. The project was carried out online for a period of 60 Hours from 11am 1st June to 11pm 3rd June 2017 (60 Hours). The project targeted the established Northern Ireland (NI) LucidTalk online Opinion Panel (8,211 members) which is balanced by gender, age-group, area of residence, and community background, in order to be demographically representative of Northern Ireland. 3,419 full responses were received, and a data auditing process was carried out to ensure all completed poll-surveys were genuine 'one-person, one-vote' responses, and also to collate a robust and accurate balanced NI representative sample. This resulted in 2,080 responses being considered in terms of the final results - the results presented in this report.

All data results have been weighted by gender and community background to reflect the demographic composition of Northern Ireland resulting in 2,080 responses being considered in terms of the final results. All data results produced are accurate to a margin of error of +/-3.0%, at 95% confidence.

All surveys and polls may be subject to sources of error, including, but not limited to sampling error, coverage error, and measurement error. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting.

LucidTalk – Professional Credentials

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FULL REPORT AND COMMENTARY

- PRE NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION 'Tracker' POLLS: Poll No. 3 – June 2017
- KEY POINTS AND HEADLINES

The benefit of this regular scheduled polling is that it allows us to see changes in trends and opinions at regular intervals over the time of the NI Westminster 2017 Election campaign.

NB For this third poll (of three): Poll No. 3 – We have carried out 18 individual constituency polls for each of the 18 constituencies – the results from this have been fed into our 18 constituency seat predictor model (see below).

NB All commentary is provided on a 'for guidance' basis, and for information purposes only. Commentary and analysis is not meant to be absolute determinations from the poll results, as poll and market research results can be subject to differing interpretations, commentary, and conclusions. In addition, the election situation has changed since the period of this poll e.g. candidate lists have been announced, so some aspects of the analysis and commentary may/may not be as relevant/applicable.

QUESTION 1: NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION – VOTING INTENTION – June 2017 Tracker:

Includes comparison to, and change from, NI Assembly Election 2017, the LT May 2017 'Tracker' poll, and the General Election 2015:

	June 2017 - THIS POLL	Change vs NI Assembly Election (2nd March 2017)	Change vs May 2017 LT Poll	Change vs General Election 2015
DUP	28.9%	0.8%	0.1%	3.2%
SINN FEIN	28.1%	0.2%	0.2%	3.6%
SDLP	13.8%	1.9%	0.1%	-0.1%
UUP	15.4%	2.5%	-0.3%	-0.6%
ALLIANCE	9.9%	0.8%	0.1%	1.3%
TUV	0.1%	-2.4%	0.0%	-2.2%
GREEN PARTY	0.6%	-1.7%	-0.1%	-0.4%
NI CONSERVATIVES	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	-1.1%
PBP	0.6%	-1.2%	-0.3%	-0.3%
OTHERS	2.4%	0.0%	0.2%	-0.3%

Since NI Assembly Election March 2017: DARK BLUE = Significant Increase, RED = Significant Decrease, LIGHT BLUE = Small Increase, LIGHT RED = Small Decrease. All other increases/decreases are less than 0.5% so are not viewed as significant, due to the polling error-margin inherent within the poll-project.

COMMENTARY:

NB Results relating to UKIP and the PUP have not been included as neither of these parties is running candidates in the forthcoming Westminster election.

Like our May Poll we see the two main parties i.e. the DUP and Sinn Fein consolidating their positions, with 'small/medium increases', and this shows that these two big parties are maintaining their strong leads over the other parties. The jump for the UUP is expected because e.g. in Fermanagh and South Tyrone the DUP voters in that constituency will be voting for the UUP at the Westminster election and that of course gives a boost to the overall NI-Wide UUP vote share. The UUP vote share of 15.4% (down 0.3% from our May poll) is down 0.6% from the General Election 2015, and this vote share is where it should be taking into account the pact arrangements with the DUP in Fermanagh and South Tyrone. However, it should be concerning for the UUP that they are currently down 0.6% from the GE2015, as they are aiming to hold 2 seats i.e. Fermanagh and South Tyrone, and South Antrim. The UUP need this sort of support level if they are to hold seats like South Antrim where the UUP are defending that seat with the current sitting MP Danny Kinahan.

Likewise, on the Nationalist/Republican side we see growth for the SDLP of 1.9% from the Assembly election in March, and again this is to be expected as in seats like South Belfast, Foyle, and South Down (the current 3 seats where the SDLP have their MPs) there is a trend for perhaps some Sinn Fein voters (NB some – certainly not all!) to coalesce around the 'strongest' nationalist/republican candidate, and basically someone who has the best chance of winning the seat. This latter point applies more in South Belfast than in the other 2 SDLP seats, however in South Down and Foyle there is a tendency for some Unionist voters to lend their votes to the SDLP to stop Sinn Fein winning those seats.

It is not surprising that the vote shares for the smaller parties (particularly on the Unionist side), have been 'squeezed' throughout this campaign. This is normal in Westminster elections when people/voters tend to go towards the larger parties, and those parties who have a chance of winning seats in the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) Westminster election system. 'Others' is holding up at 2.4% mostly driven by the fact that Lady Sylvia Hermon is included in 'Others', and of course she always polls strongly in her North Down constituency.

Key Headline Points – June 2017 Pre Westminster Election Tracker Poll.

- Since the last general Election in 2015 the TOTAL Unionist vote has gone down from 47.9% (NI General election 2015) to 44.6% (in this poll) – i.e. a 3.3% drop. Although a key point here is Sylvia Hermon (North Down) is counted in 'Others' so this score of 44.6% is roughly what the Unionists polled in the recent Assembly (and that included N. Down) so this score of 44.6% is actually quite strong. Historically in Westminster Elections more Unionists tend to vote in these type of elections, and there could be a reaction against the Nationalist/Republican surge in the Assembly Election – March 2017.
- The TOTAL Nationalist/Republican vote has gone up to 42.5% which is a significant 0.9% up from the Nationalist/Republican vote i.e. 41.6% at the NI Assembly Election 2017. – and NB this includes People before Profit (PBP) who tend mostly to attract votes from the Nationalist/Republican sectors (currently at the moment – that may change). This is still significant (i.e. the Nationalist/Republican holding at this level) as the total Nationalist/Republican vote has reversed a trend that has been happening over recent years of the total vote from this sector dropping – a growth of 39.3% (our January poll) to 42.5% (this poll – June 2017) is quite significant.

- Plus, the Alliance/Green ‘middle ground’ vote has gone down 0.9% since the NI Assembly Election 2017 i.e. to 10.5% (this poll), and is also down 1.5% from our April poll. However, this has been mostly at the expense of the Green Party, as the Alliance poll rating in this June poll is only down 0.3% at 9.9%, which is still 0.8% higher than what Alliance scored at the recent NI Assembly election in March. Maybe the Green Party is suffering from the ‘squeeze factor’ with some of their support going to other candidates who perhaps are viewed as having a more realistic chance of winning a seat e.g. perhaps some East Belfast Green Party supporters switching to Naomi Long in East Belfast? However, this is still significant growth for the Alliance/Green vote i.e. from 8.5% (NI Assembly 2016) to 10.5% (this poll). NB since all our 2017 pre NI Assembly election polls (from our January poll), the Alliance Party have increased, showing a healthy upward trend.

NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION 2017: SEAT PREDICTOR

As during the UK General Election in 2015 we are once again using our computer systems based **NI Westminster Election Seat Predictor model** (last used very successfully for the GE 2015). This computer based predictor model is constantly being improved and enhanced, and we’re again confident that it will be able to closely predict this upcoming Westminster election in NI. The model uses the last 3 major NI election results: UK (NI) General Election 2015, and the NI Assembly Elections 2016 and 2017, and also the most recent LT polling (i.e. this poll), as data input to the model. The model also considers and weighs-in factors such as incumbency (who is the outgoing MP from each seat), and what poll participants believe will be the results in each seat – ‘Wisdom of Crowds’ (i.e. apart from what way they will be voting themselves).

The model then predicts likelihood in % terms, of seats being won by the various parties, broken down by the 18 Westminster constituencies. We’ve run the model, using the 3 most recent NI elections and LT polls (as per above), and it generated the results shown in the enclosed table (see below). Comparisons are shown against our ‘Poll 2 Table’ (published 18th May – see LT website for report). This is our ‘Version 3 – Poll 3’, – this has enabled tracking of trends up or down for each of the political parties in each of the 18 NI Westminster constituencies as the campaign progresses. As such, the seat predictor model should get ‘more accurate’, and up-to-date, as the campaign progresses, as it will be using/analysing the latest poll data.

Notes:

- The seat predictor table (below) shows the results generated from LucidTalk’s NI 18 Westminster constituency computer based seat predictor model (as used for the 2015 General Election). This automated predictor model takes into account recent NI election results, and the most recent LT NI polls.
- This is the VERSION 3 – POLL 3 TABLE generated using the second pre NI Westminster Election LT Opinion Panel NI-Wide representative ‘Tracker’ Poll (i.e. this report): 1st -3rd June 2017. The predictor model also uses as input results from: May 2015 General Election, and the NI Assembly Elections 2016 and 2017.
- % probability represents the probability of the named party in the ‘2017 Forecast-Party’ prediction column of winning the named seat, e.g. 90%+ means the named party is almost certain of winning the named seat, 70%-85% means the named party is ‘reasonably probable’ of winning the named seat, 55%-70% means the named party is ‘favourite but not certain’ of winning the named seat etc..
- Any ‘change since last forecast’ is detailed where applicable.
- This table presents the results from the last run of the LT Westminster seat predictor model before the election on 8th June. As indicated above, changes are shown compared to the immediate previous Seat Predictor table by % probability changes e.g. +5%, -10% etc..

NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION – SEAT PREDICTOR MODEL

NORTHERN IRELAND: WESTMINSTER ELECTION – 8th JUNE 2017

UK GENERAL ELECTION – LT NI AUTOMATED SEAT PREDICTOR MODEL

Version 3 (Poll 3) – 5th June 2017: [Base Seat Predictor Forecast Table \(based on the third pre NI Westminster Election 2017 LT Poll\)](#)

NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUENCY	2015 UK GE Result - Party	2017 UK GE Forecast- Party	Probability % of correct Forecast (e.g. 100% = certain)	Change since last Forecast – 18th May 2017	Alternative - if main forecast doesn't win
North Antrim	DUP	DUP	100%	No Change	-
South Antrim	UUP	UUP	55%	-5%	DUP
East Antrim	DUP	DUP	100%	No Change	-
Belfast North	DUP	DUP	80%	-10%	Sinn Fein
Belfast South	SDLP	SDLP	60%	No Change	DUP
Belfast East	DUP	DUP	55%	-5%	Alliance
Belfast West	Sinn Fein	Sinn Fein	100%	No Change	-
North Down	Independent	Independent (Unionist)	100%	No Change	-
Mid-Ulster	Sinn Fein	Sinn Fein	100%	No Change	-
West Tyrone	Sinn Fein	Sinn Fein	100%	No Change	-
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	UUP	Sinn Fein	55%	No Change	UUP
Foyle	SDLP	SDLP	75%	No Change	Sinn Fein
East Londonderry	DUP	DUP	100%	No Change	-
Lagan Valley	DUP	DUP	100%	No Change	-
Upper Bann	DUP	DUP	80%	No Change	UUP or Sinn Fein
Strangford	DUP	DUP	100%	No Change	-
South Down	SDLP	SDLP	55%	-10%	Sinn Fein
Newry and Armagh	Sinn Fein	Sinn Fein	100%	No Change	UUP or SDLP
UK GENERAL ELECTION 2017 - NORTHERN IRELAND: LUCIDTALK FORECAST – V2: 18th May 2017					
POLITICAL PARTY	DUP	UUP	SINN FEIN	SDLP	INDEPENDENT
2017 SEAT FORECAST - TOTALS	8	1	5	3	1

SEAT PREDICTOR – WHAT DOES THE TABLE SHOW

So what does the final run of the LT model show (results in the table above)? The model doesn't show many changes from the mid-May run of the model, with e.g. Sinn Fein holding their slight probability advantage in Fermanagh and South Tyrone at 55%, but this is by no means certain for Sinn Fein in this seat. Interestingly, the model previously predicted in the April run of the model that Sinn Fein and the UUP were exactly equal at 50% each for the Fermanagh and South Tyrone seat – However, now Sinn Fein have gone back up again to 55% and have become, once again, the slight favourites to regain this seat from the UUP. For this seat i.e. Fermanagh and South Tyrone the Unionists are running one agreed candidate (i.e. Tom Elliott for the UUP) with the support of the DUP. We see after this polls results were inputted into the model that the Sinn Fein chances in this seat have stayed at 55% - but basically this means the UUP and Sinn Fein are both on a knife-edge as to who will win this seat.

This move back up again to 55% for Sinn Fein chance is not surprising, taking into account that our recent 2017 pre NI Assembly election polls, and the NI Assembly election itself, all showed and produced a strong Sinn Fein performance. Remember the data from our polls and the recent elections are the key inputs into our computer-based seat predictor model. Perhaps what's keeping the Sinn Fein rating for this seat at 'only' 55% is that we also have an incumbency weighting built-in to our predictor model – incumbents (in this case the UUPs Tom Elliott) always have an advantage in Westminster first-past-the-post elections.

East Belfast is showing as a DUP hold, but at a probability of only 55% - down 5% from the last run of our predictor model. This is again lower than expected for an incumbent MP (Gavin Robinson) and for someone from NI's largest party. However, the model has been impacted by the Alliance Party's strong showing in the recent 2017 NI Assembly election and in recent LT polls. Alliance are the main challengers for this seat, and must have a good chance now with the outgoing MP Gavin Robinson trending downwards – a 55% DUP win probability is by no means certain, and it's significant that this has dropped from 65% over the past 2 months (i.e. since the April run of the seat predictor model).

Alasdair McDonnell, who is defending the marginal South Belfast constituency for the SDLP, comes in at 60% probability, which is the same as the last (May 2017) run of the model. This is down 5% from his 65% score in the April seat predictor model, reflecting how tight this seat may be in the end and even though McDonnell is not up against one combined agreed Unionist opponent in this seat. This latter point is probably one of the key reasons McDonnell's score is holding steady at 60% probability for this seat, and isn't dropping.

The UUP had dropped a sizable 15% in South Antrim from 75% (April seat predictor model) to 60%, and they've dropped again in this run of the model to 55%. This is showing that Danny Kinahan (who is defending this seat for the UUP) is facing a strong challenge from the DUPs Paul Girvan. However, Kinahan still is the slight favourite here, helped also be the fact that he's the outgoing MP (always an advantage). But at 55% and trending downwards this seat could end-up as a very close result.

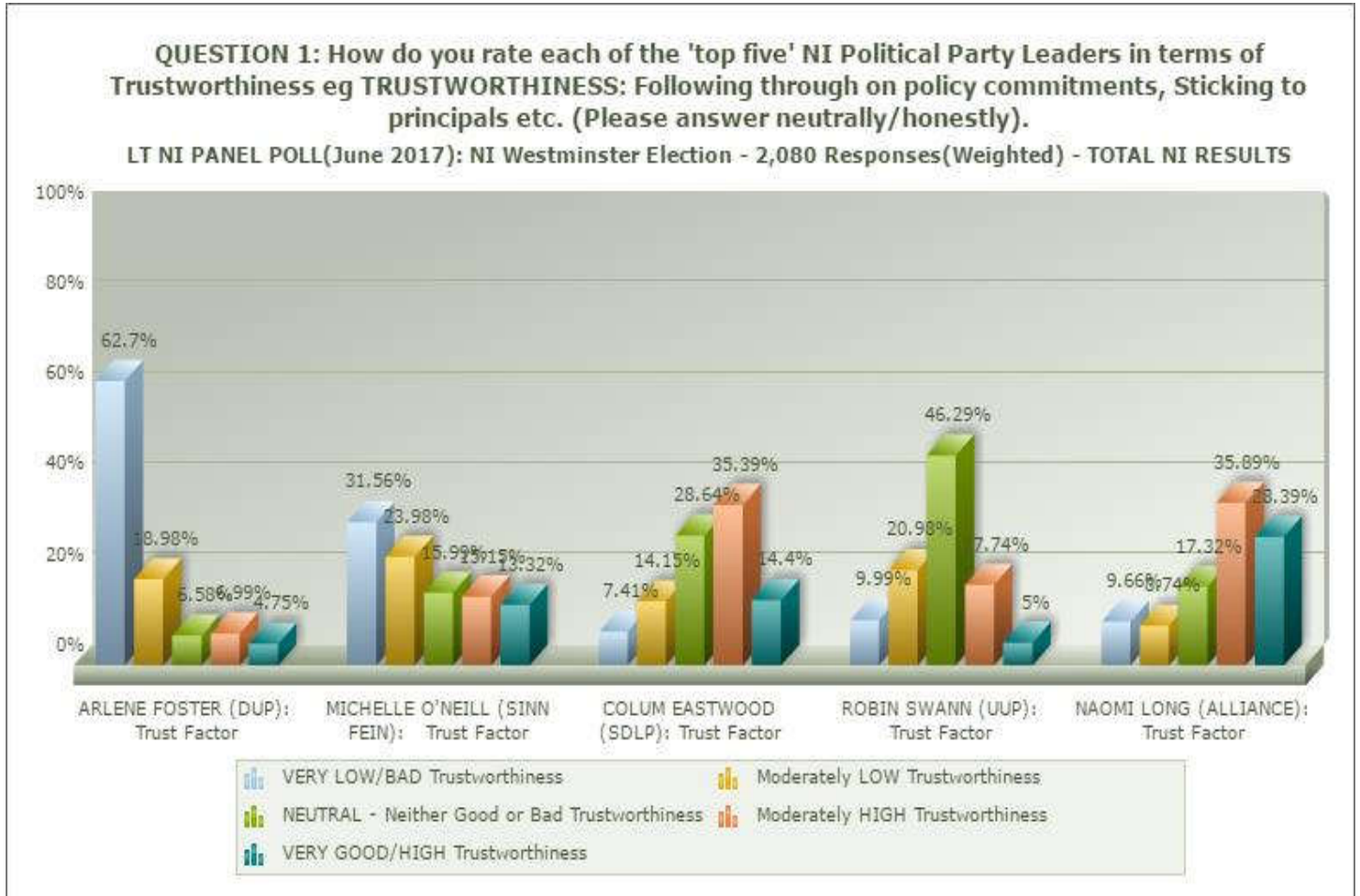
Foyle has remained at 75% probability for Mark Durkan of the SDLP, showing he is still the favourite to hold that seat. However, the model shows Margate Ritchie (SDLP candidate – South Down) is now under real pressure as the SDLP probability for South Down has dropped (i.e. dropped again, from the May run of the model) to 55%. This represents that the SDLP are being seriously challenged in this seat by Sinn Fein, however, the SDLP still remain the slight favourites to hold this seat, but may have to depend on some Unionist tactical voting.

Not surprisingly, 10 of the 18 seats are showing win-probability scores of 100% for the named political party (all of them the incumbent party) e.g. North Antrim for the DUP, West Belfast for Sinn Fein etc. Unless something dramatic happens we don't see these scores changing for any of these 10 seats.

NI POLITICAL LEADERS – DO YOU TRUST THEM?

QUESTION: NI PARTY LEADERS: DO YOU TRUST THEM?: QUESTION 1: Taken 'in the round' - How do you rate each of the 'top five' NI Political Party Leaders in terms of Trustworthiness e.g. TRUSTWORTHINESS: Following through on policy commitments, Sticking to principals etc. (Please answer neutrally and honestly i.e. disregard your personal political views).

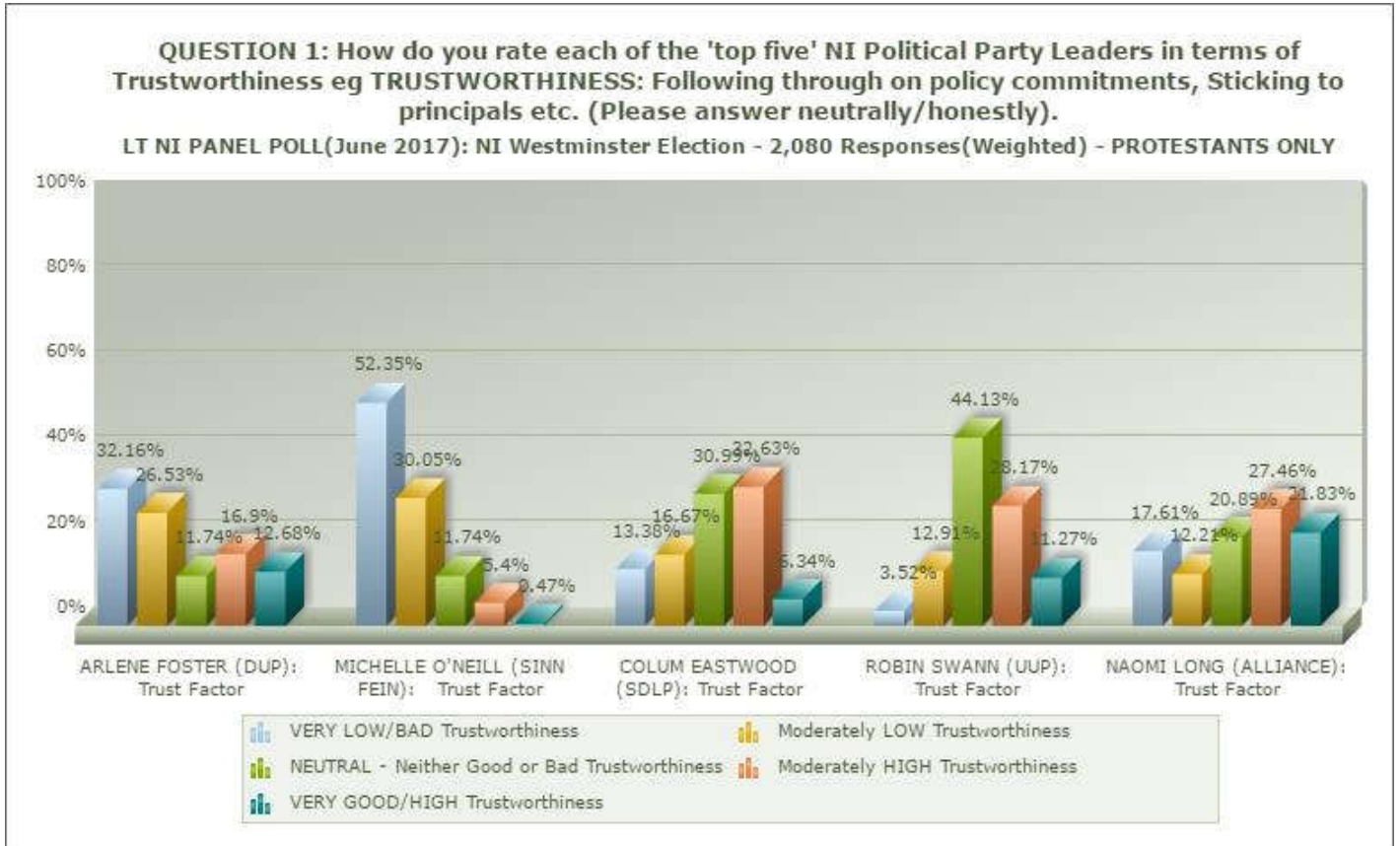
TOTAL NI REPRESENTATIVE RESULTS:



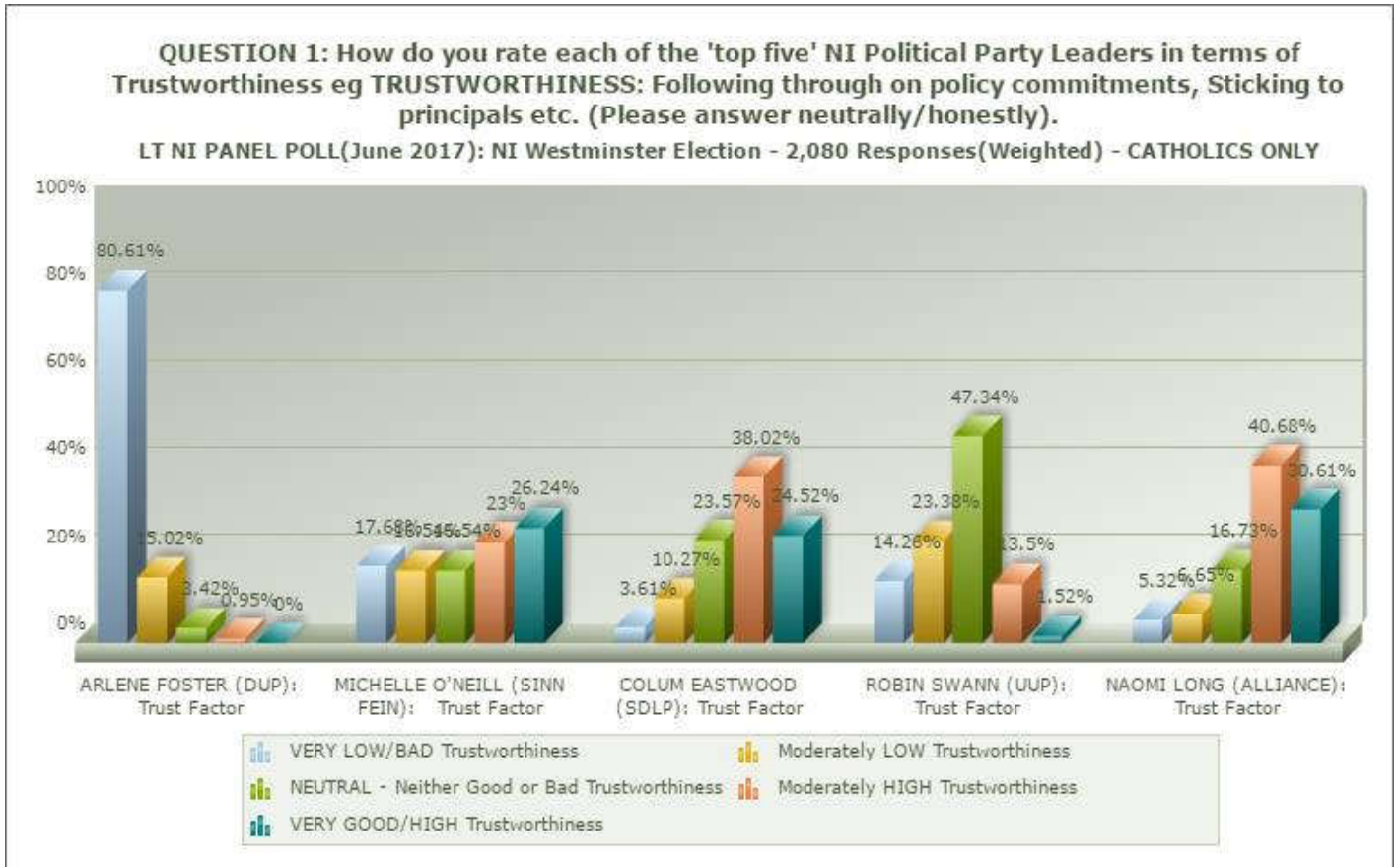
Notes:

- Arlene Foster scores the worst in terms of Trustworthiness with 63% saying they have Very Low/Bad trustworthiness in Mrs Foster. This is high.
- Michelle O'Neill doesn't score all that well either i.e. in terms of trustworthiness – but has a bit 'less bad' results than Arlene Foster.
- Colum Eastwood scores quite well with 50% saying they either trust Mr Eastwood 'Moderately' and/or 'Very highly'.
- However, Naomi Long scores the highest with 64% saying they either trust Mrs Long 'Moderately' and/or 'Very highly'.
- Robin Swann comes in as sort of 'neutral' – with e.g. his green neutral column scoring 46%. This isn't surprising as Mr Swann is relatively new to the UUP leader job, and did have a low profile before that – so it's not surprising that the jury is mostly still out on Mr Swann in terms of Trustworthiness.

TRUSTWORTHINESS - PROTESTANTS ONLY:

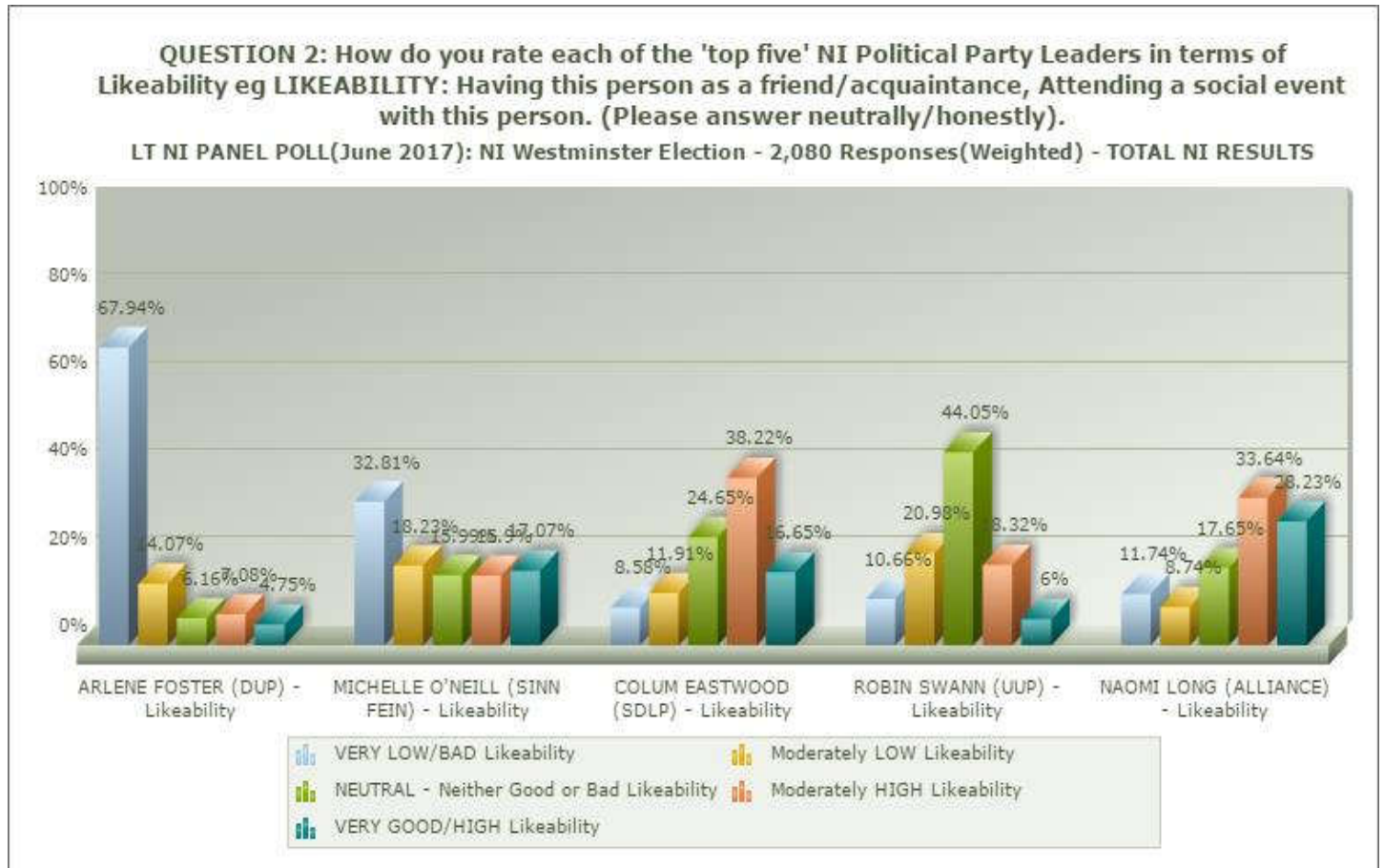


TRUSTWORTHINESS - CATHOLICS ONLY:



NI POLITICAL LEADERS – DO YOU LIKE THEM?:

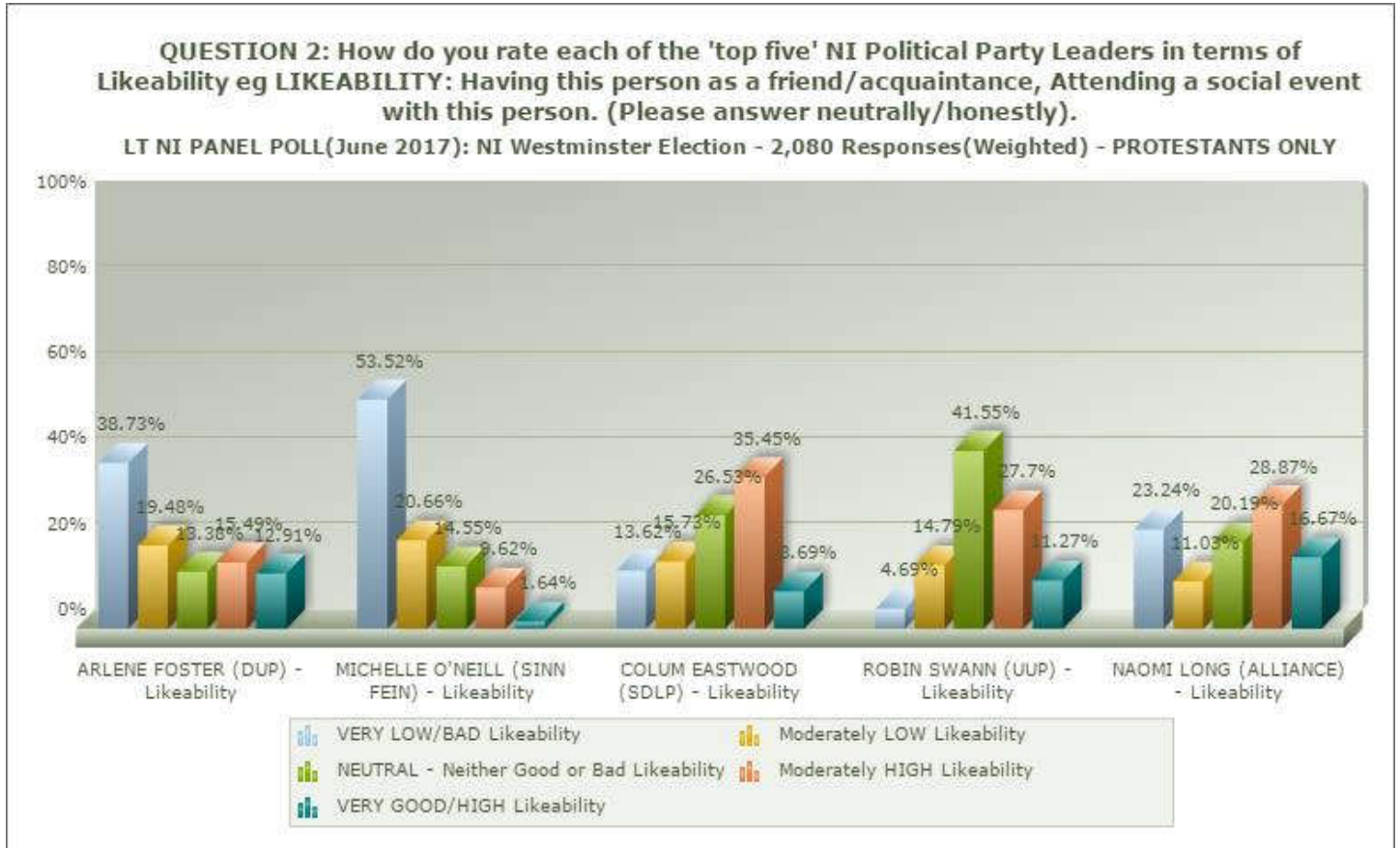
QUESTION: NI PARTY LEADERS: DO YOU LIKE THEM?: Taken 'in the round' - How do you rate each of the 'top five' NI Political Party Leaders in terms of Likeability e.g. LIKEABILITY: Having this person as a friend/acquaintance, Attending a social event and/or having a coffee/drink/meal with this person. (Please answer neutrally and honestly i.e. disregard your personal political views).



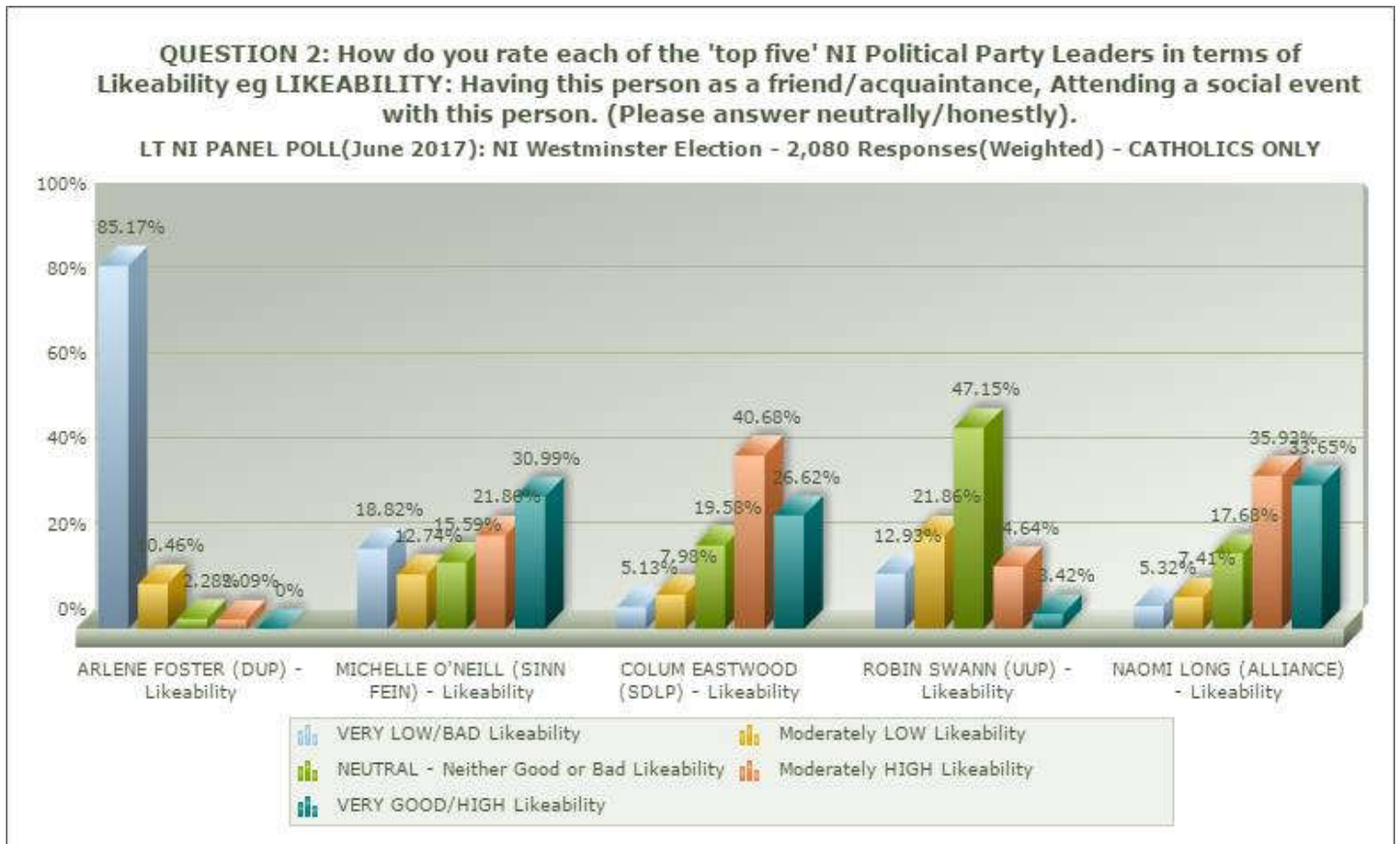
Notes:

- Again, like the Trustworthiness, Arlene Foster doesn't score well with this 'Likeability' question. 68% say they have Very Low/Bad Likeability as far as Mrs Foster is concerned.
- Plus, again like the Trust question, Michelle O'Neill doesn't score that well with Likeability but not as bad as Arlene Foster.
- Colum Eastwood and Naomi Long score well with likeability. For Colum Eastwood - 55% have 'Moderately high' or 'Very high' likeability, and for Naomi Long - 62% have 'Moderately high' or 'Very high' likeability.
- Again, like the Trust question, Robin Swann comes in as sort of 'neutral' – with e.g. his green neutral column scoring 44%. Again, this isn't surprising as Mr Swann is relatively new to the UUP leader job, and did have a low profile before that – so it's not surprising that people can't really judge if the 'like him' until they get a better view of him, and get to know him better.

LIKEABILITY - PROTESTANTS ONLY:



LIKEABILITY - CATHOLICS ONLY:

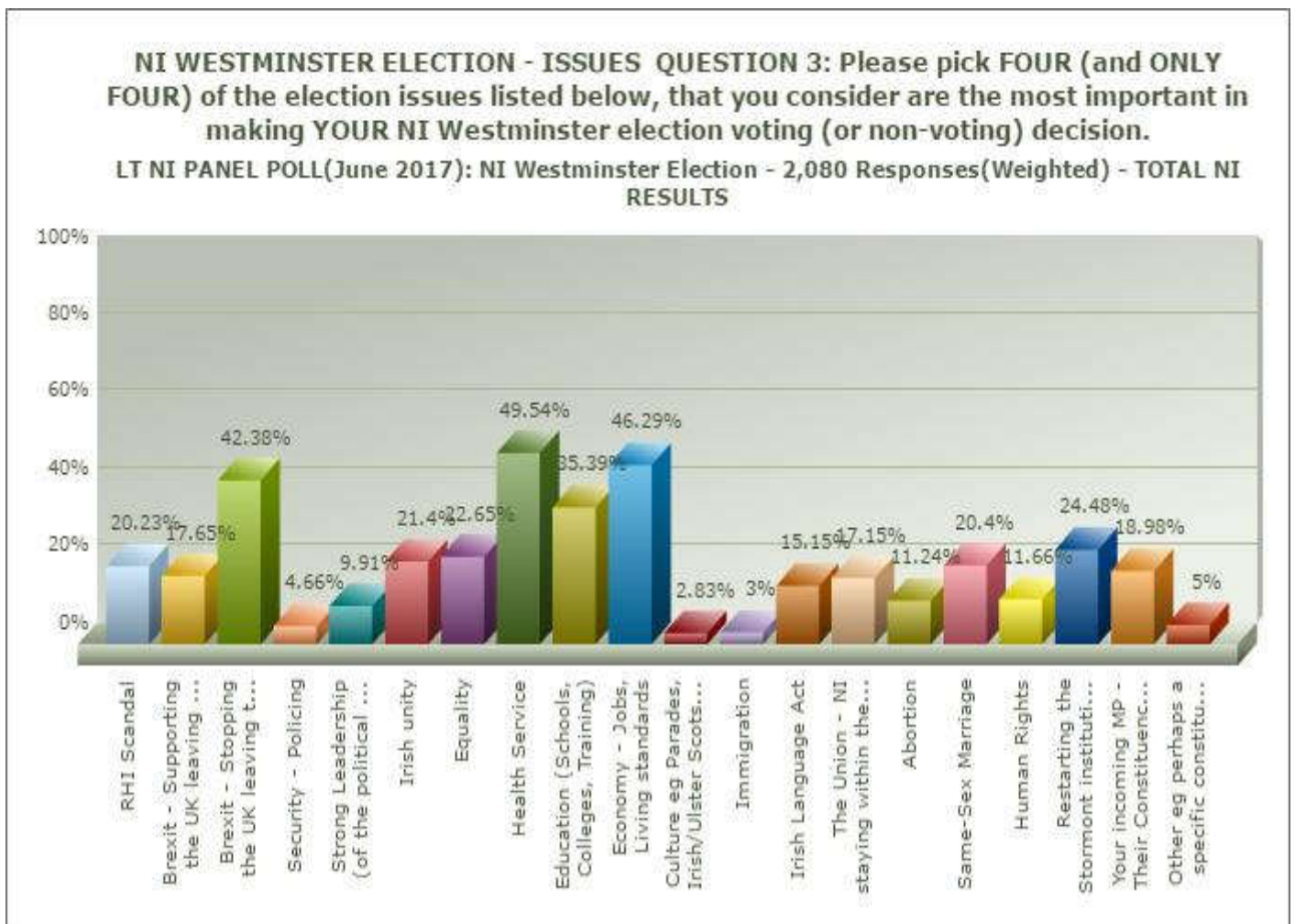


Notes:

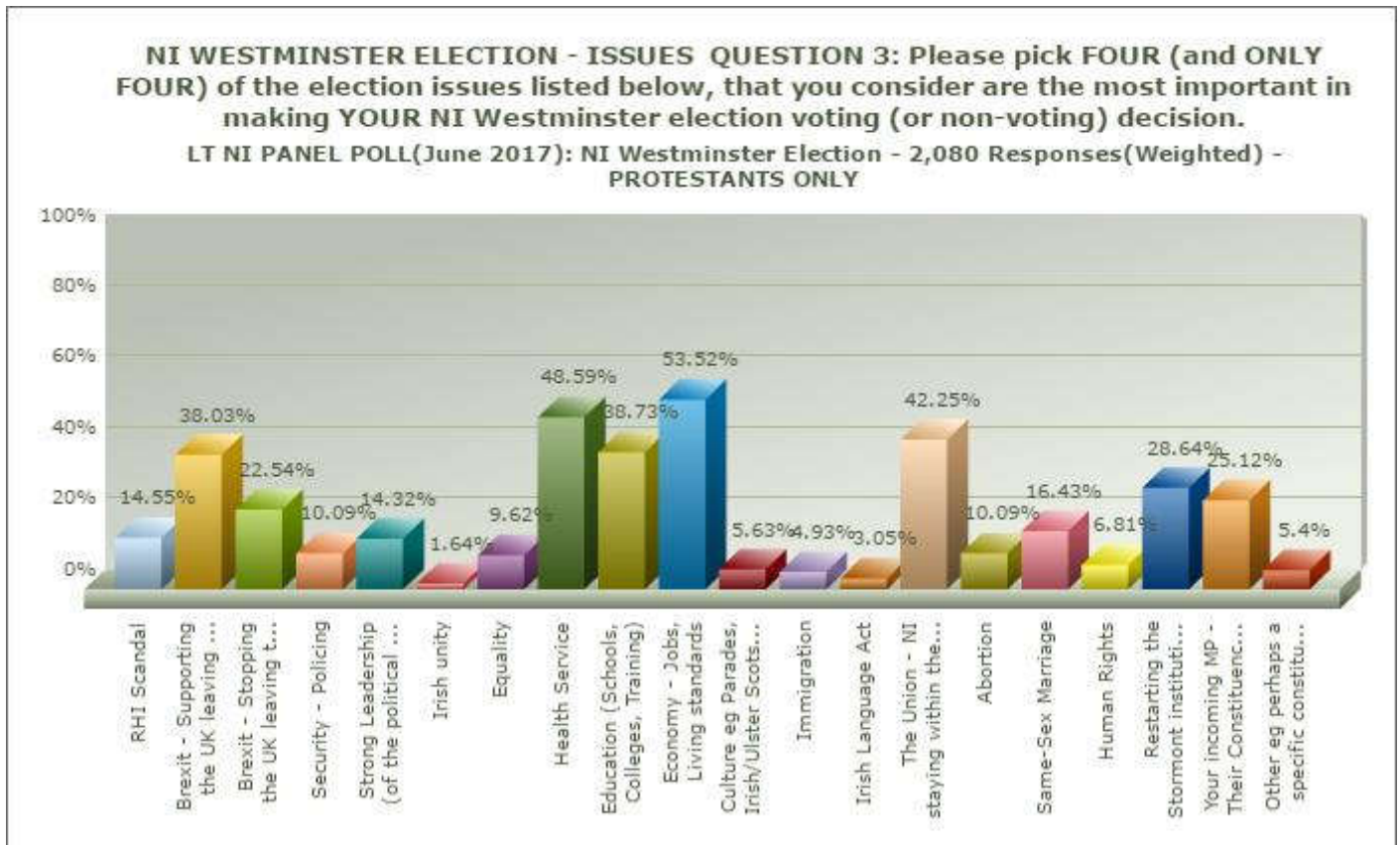
- Colum Eastwood scores highly overall with Likeability (i.e. see the total NI results – see above). It is noteworthy that Colum Eastwood also scores quite well with Likeability with Protestants as well.
- Not surprisingly Michelle O’Neill scores the worst in terms of Likeability with Protestants.
- Note that Alliance leader Naomi Long is ‘liked more’ by Catholics than Protestants. This follows the pattern from all previous, and other poll questions i.e. Catholics ‘like’ Naomi Long 9and the Alliance party) more than Protestants.

NI WESTMINSTER ELECTIONS – ISSUES – TOTAL RESULTS?

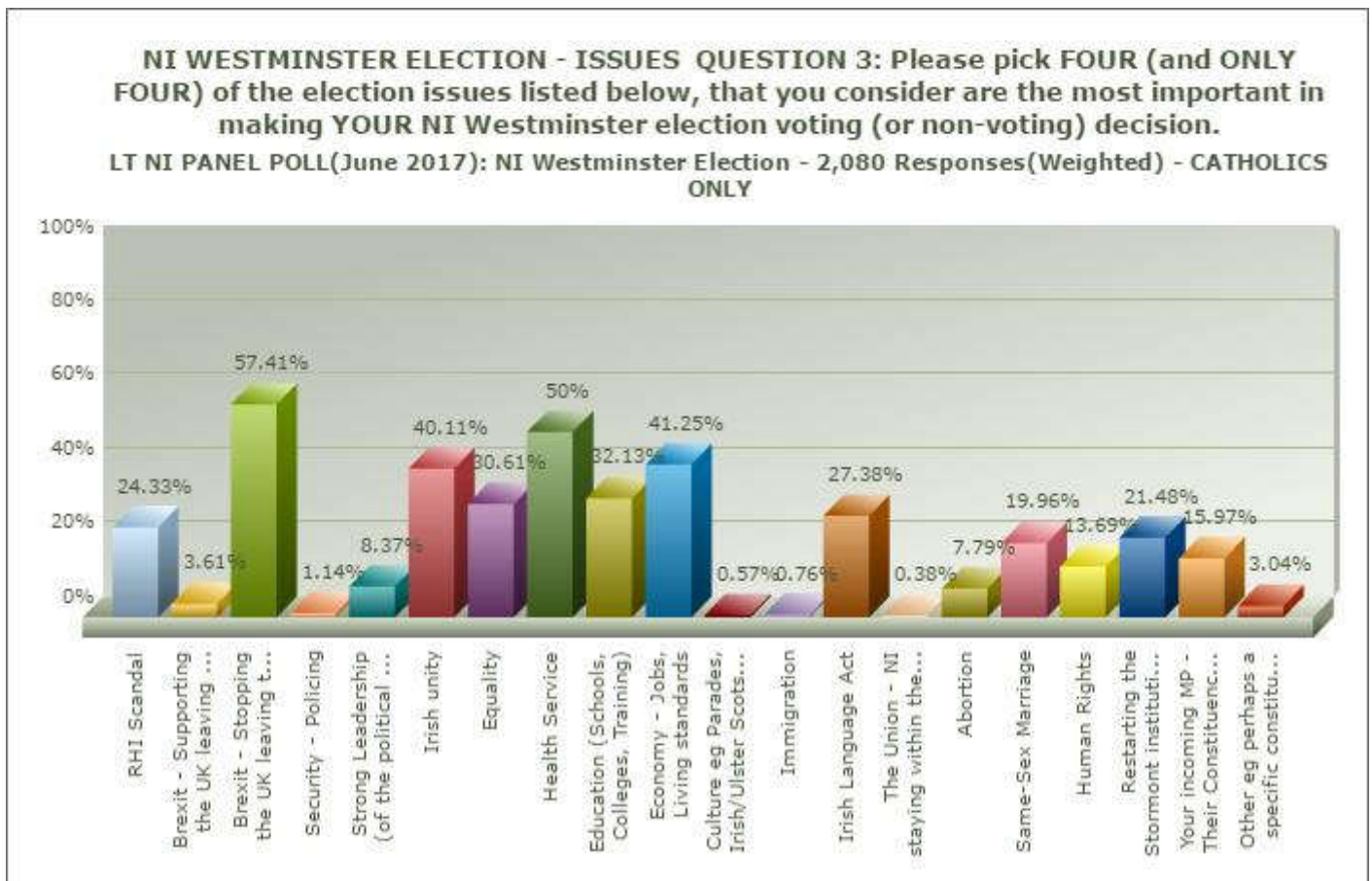
QUESTION: NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION - ISSUES QUESTION 3: Please pick FOUR (and ONLY FOUR) of the election issues listed below, that you consider are the most important in making YOUR NI Westminster election voting (or non-voting) decision.



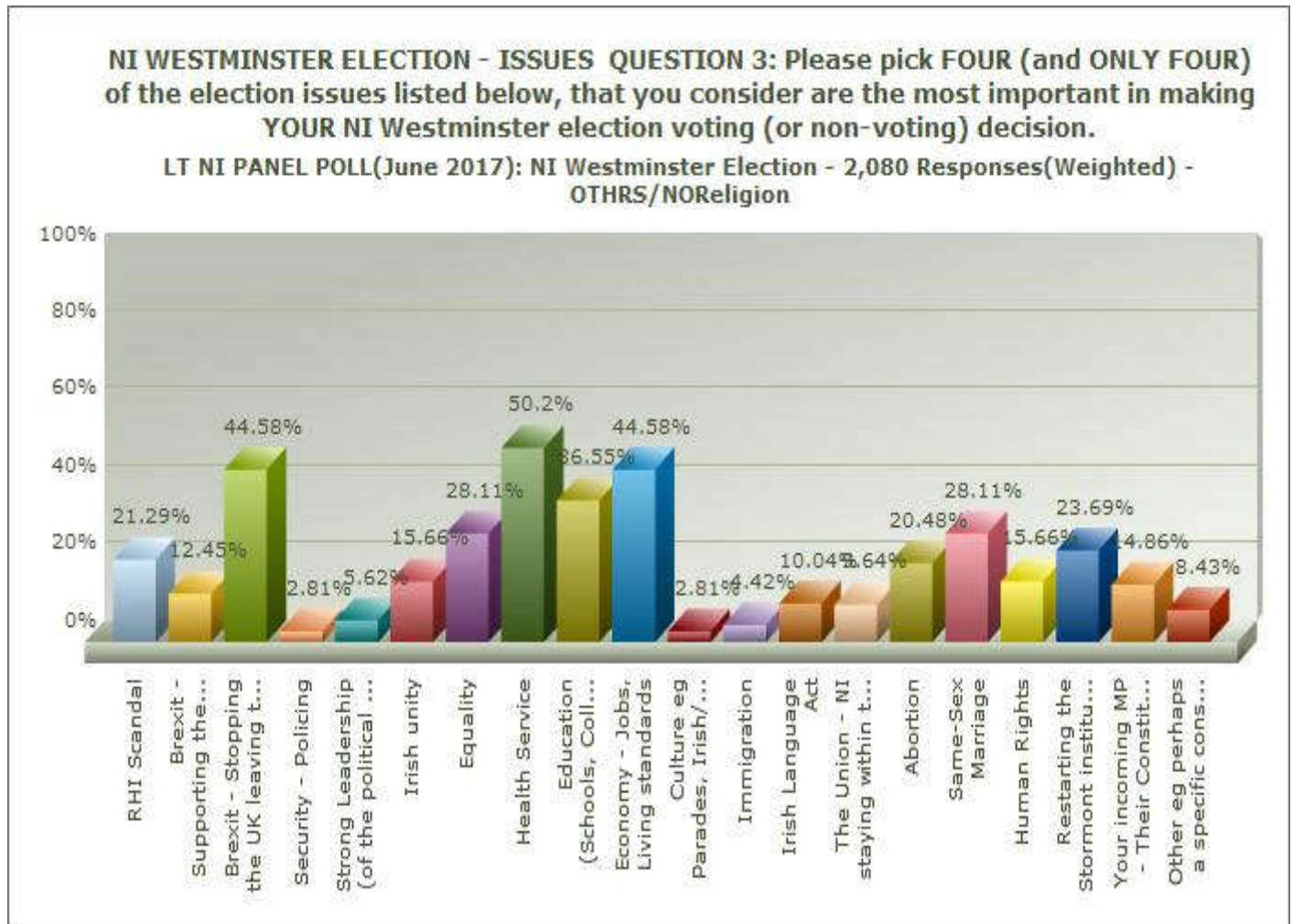
ELECTION ISSUES - PROTESTANTS ONLY:



LIKEABILITY - CATHOLICS ONLY:



LIKEABILITY – OTHERS/NO RELIGION ONLY:



NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION 2017: 4 REASONS FOR YOUR VOTING DECISION?

QUESTION: NI Assembly Election – Reasons for your voting decision:

We see above Results – Top Issues ranked as per the TOTAL RESULTS graph above: **Health Service, Economy/Jobs, Education/Schools, Brexit, Restarting the Stormont institutions**, closely followed by **The Union, Irish unity, Equality, Same-Sex marriage, etc.** It's noteworthy that **RHI** comes in at only 'mid table' i.e. at around 20%. **RHI** which was the major issue that sparked the NI Assembly Election in March, and was in the top 3-4 issues in that election campaign is now coming in lower with each poll as an issue voters are concerned with i.e. it is fading in importance – it was 10th in our May poll. Plus '**Restarting the Stormont institutions**' comes in around 4th or 5th i.e. fairly high-up and this applies across all demographic groups, showing that restarting the Stormont institutions has widespread support across Unionists, Nationalists, etc.

NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION 2017: TURNOUT?

QUESTION: Turnout – What do you expect it to be?

NI WESTMINSTER ELECTION TURNOUT - YOUR OWN VIEW!: QUESTION 6: Taken 'in the round', and based on your own discussions with family, friends, work colleagues etc., what do you think the voter turnout will be at the upcoming NI Westminster Election (8th June) - compared to the NI Assembly Election March 2017 turnout (which was 65%). Please answer from: 40%(LHS) = Lowest possible turnout (realistically), through 65% = Same as last NI Assembly Election, to 80%(RHS) = Highest possible turnout (realistically).

Item	Average	Min	Max	Std. Deviation	Total Responses
Turnout in the NI Westminster Election - 8th June 2017 (65% = same as NI Assembly Election March 2017)	61.71	40.00	80.00	6.05	2,080
				answered	2,080
				skipped	0

Note: 61.7 means the poll participants currently think the turnout will go down bit (slightly) from NI Assembly Election 2017 but not dramatically so, e.g. maybe to 60-63% or somewhere about that level. This shows there is still significant engagement and enthusiasm within the electorate. When a further 'drill-down' analysis is done on this question we find out that **Nationalist/Republicans are more 'optimistic' of a higher turnout than Unionists i.e. Nationalists/Republicans think the turnout will be around the 63-64% level. Nationalist/Republicans are also more likely to go out and vote as they scored their own 'Likelihood of voting' at around 96%, whereas Unionists were 'only' at the 86% level i.e. Nationalist/Republicans seem more determined to go and vote.** This is/was similar to the NI Assembly Election 2017 which had a large 'differential turnout' when comparing Unionists to Nationalist/Republican voting levels.