
Department for Communities Consultation on Liquor Licensing laws in Northern Ireland

Survey Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In October 2019, the Department for Communities (the Department) launched a public consultation on "Liquor Licensing Laws". The consultation was a follow up to the 2012 consultation "Proposed changes to the law regulating the sale and supply of alcohol in Northern Ireland". The 2012 consultation resulted in the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill 2016, which was making its way through the Assembly when it was dissolved in 2017, and as such did not progress. The Department decided that due to the amount of time that had passed, along with a number of recent developments in other jurisdictions and growing public interest in licensing issues, a further consultation was required.
- 1.2. The consultation, which ran from 14 October to 6 December 2019, sought views from all interested individuals and organisations on the current law and were categorised under the following headings:
 - Categories of licence.
 - Permitted hours.
 - Young persons.
 - Advertising.
 - Miscellaneous issues.
- 1.3. The consultation reflected on the need to strike a balance between any potential relaxation in licensing laws with the need for regulation in the public interest.
- 1.4. Consultation responses have been analysed by statisticians within the Professional Services Unit of the Department.

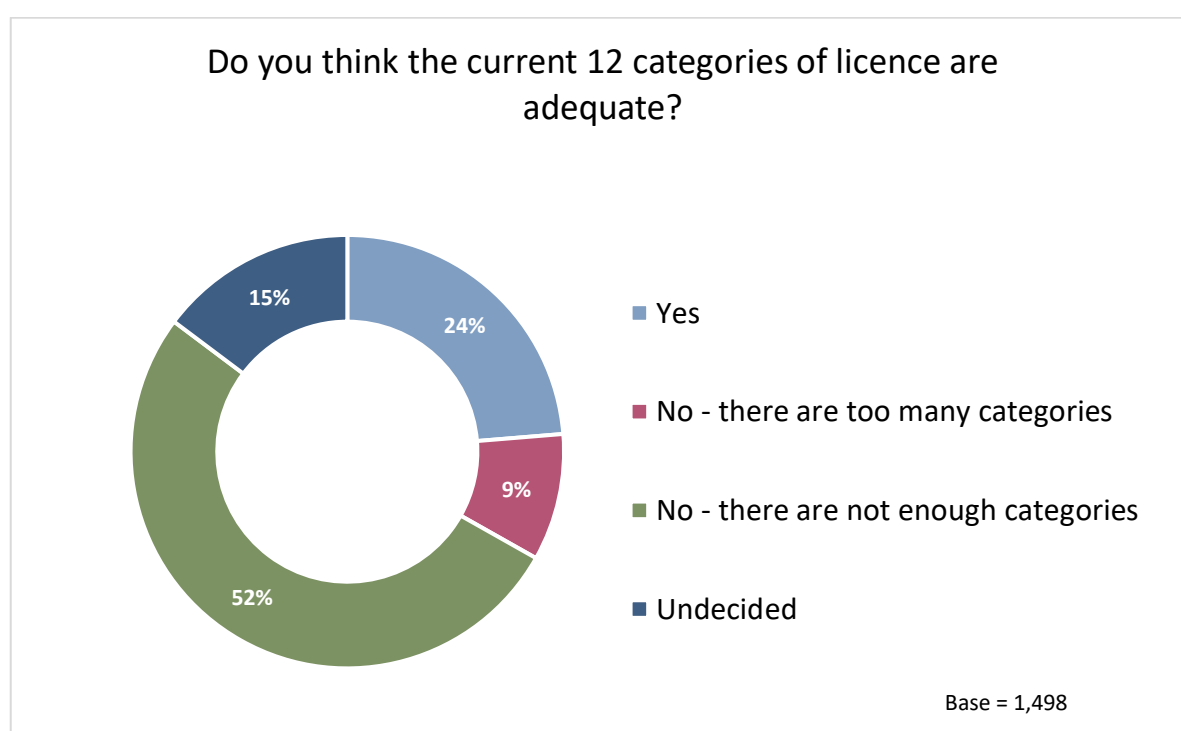
2. Consultation Responses

- 2.1. The consultation questions were asked through an online survey and this report provides a summary of the responses received. The consultation asked questions on specific aspects of current licensing law, and also provided an opportunity for additional comment on a variety of areas. There were a total of 1,498 responses received. This figure included analysis of 43 hard-copy responses received by the Social Policy Unit in the Department, who extracted the relevant content and placed it into the survey format to ensure consistency in analysis.
- 2.2. Approximately 95% (1,418) of respondents described themselves as answering as an individual, with 5% answering on behalf of an organisation. A list of organisations who responded is available at Annex 1. Comments from a range of organisations are provided at Annex 2.
- 2.3. A summary of the main points raised is provided in each relevant section of the analysis where appropriate.
- 2.4. As a number of policy areas specifically relate to young people, the Education Authority's Youth Service carried out focus groups with 56 young people. The report is attached at Annex 3.
- 2.5. The Department for Economy also provided a response which included representations from Invest NI, The Consumer Council for Northern Ireland and Tourism NI. The response was received on 13 January so is not included in the overall figures however officials have taken the views expressed into consideration when compiling this report.
- 2.6. Note: Percentages in tables may not total to 100% due to rounding. Percentages quoted in commentary are based on actual response counts, and are rounded, and therefore may not equal the sum of individual rounded values within corresponding tables.

3. Categories of licence

3.1. The initial section of the consultation questioned respondents about the current categories of licence in Northern Ireland, and whether they were of the opinion that they were still adequate. The consultation document made mention of the increase in breweries, cideries and distilleries within Northern Ireland within the past 15 years, and the issues faced by these local producers given they do not fall into any of the current categories of licence.

Figure 1: Responses to categories of licence



3.2. Just over half of respondents (52%) were of the opinion that there are currently not enough categories of licence, while just under a quarter (24%) believed the current categories are adequate. Less than one in ten (9%) believed there are too many, while the remaining 15% were undecided.

3.3. Respondents who believe there should be further categories of licence were invited to provide additional comments on what categories of licence should be added. There were 780 comments, of which an overwhelming number, approximately four out of every five such respondents, suggested a

“producers’ licence” be made available for breweries, cideries, and distilleries. The main argument for such a licence was that this would enable producers to sell their product direct to consumers through samples provided during tours of the premises, the creation of tap-rooms, off-sales through selling on site or online, and having the ability to sell their product at craft or farmers markets. Many respondents also mentioned the disparity in licensing law in Northern Ireland in comparison to the rest of the UK, and the impact of this in hindering local producers and stifling the industry and competition.

- 3.4. There were a number of other suggestions for additional categories of licence, although these were considerably lower than that of a “producers’ licence”. Suggestions included a licence to sell in convenience/small shops and cafes. There were also a number of suggestions of introducing a more flexible and affordable licence for small scale festivals, community events and pop-ups, such as food vans or markets stalls, enabling them to serve alcohol alongside food.
- 3.5. Those respondents who felt there were currently too many categories of licence were presented with the current categories and asked which they felt should be removed. The response distribution is presented in Table 1 below. It is worth noting that respondents who agreed that there were too many categories were able to select more than one type of premises to be removed.

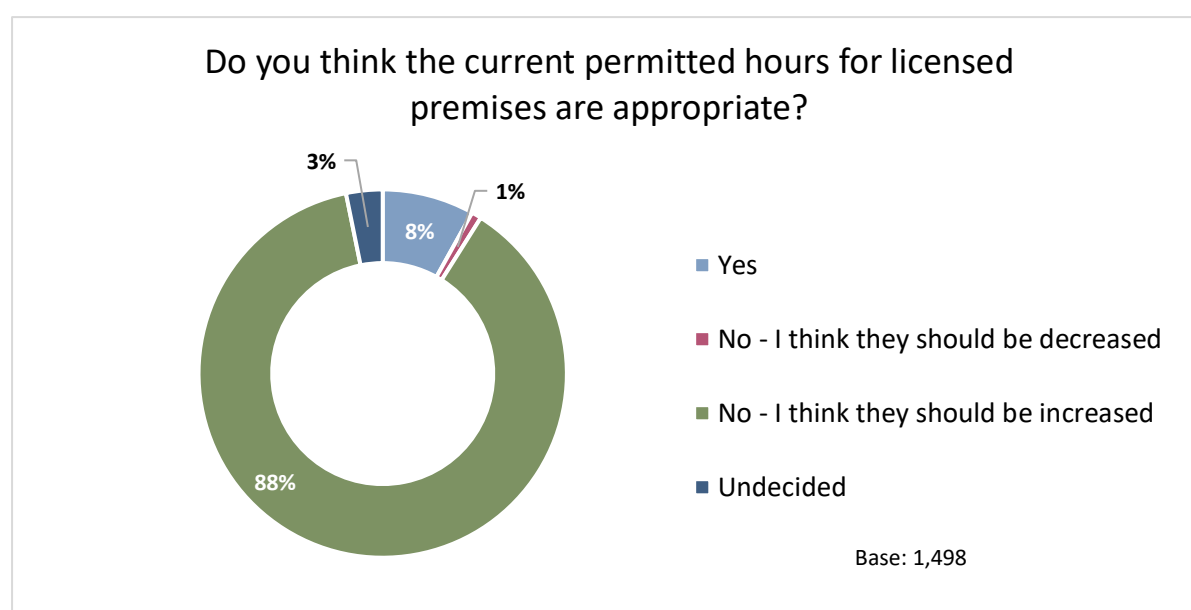
Table 1: Responses to which categories of licence should be removed

Type of premises	Response count	Response %
Seaman's canteen	109	77%
Refreshment room in public transport premises	88	62%
Conference Centre	87	61%
Higher Education Institution	79	56%
Guest House	63	44%
Outdoor stadium	46	32%
Indoor arena	44	31%
Place of public entertainment	39	27%
Restaurant	21	15%
Hotel	18	13%
Public House	15	11%
Off-licence	11	8%
All respondents	142	100%

4. Permitted hours

- 4.1. This section of the consultation dealt with a number of questions relating to current permitted hours for licensed premises. The consultation document discussed the importance of the licensed trade to the economy in Northern Ireland through supporting and sustaining jobs, and also through attracting tourism. However, it also stated that consideration should be given to the association between late opening of licensed premises and disorder, anti-social behaviour and the strain placed on both police and health resources.

Figure 2: Responses to current permitted hours for licensed premises



- 4.2. There was strong support for increasing permitted hours with 88% of respondents agreeing that they should be extended. Of the remaining responses, 8% felt current permitted hours were appropriate, only 1% thought they should be decreased, and 3% were 'undecided'.
- 4.3. Of the respondents who believed that permitted hours should be decreased, some were of the view that there should be no availability. Others suggested a more moderate reduction in permitted hours.

- 4.4. Respondents who agreed that permitted hours should be increased were then asked what time they thought closing time should be extended to, and were given four options. There were 1,321 responses which are represented in Table 2. *(It is worth noting that although there were 1,316 responses in agreement that hours should be extended, a further 5 respondents who had initially responded to say they agreed with current permitted hours or were undecided, suggested extended hours when presented with the options for extended hours, which accounts for the discrepancy in Table 2).*

Table 2: Responses to extensions to permitted hours

What time do you think permitted hours should be extended to?	Response count	Response %
2:00am	284	21%
3:00am	351	27%
4:00am	391	30%
Other	295	22%
Total	1,321	100%

- 4.5. Those who responded 'other' were given the opportunity to provide additional comments on what change to permitted hours they would like to see. While comments were invariably different, there were a number of common themes throughout.
- 4.6. The most common theme was to implement a 24 hour licence, or to make licences completely unrestricted. Those respondents who provided further comment on this suggested that, rather than a carte blanche approach, opening hours would be at the discretion of the licence holder, with a few highlighting how this operates effectively in England and the rest of the UK. Moreover, a few suggested opening hours should also be dependent on the neighbourhood the premises are located in, with the licence holder taking into consideration the views of the local council and working with the police when deciding their opening hours. Following the suggestion of a 24 hour

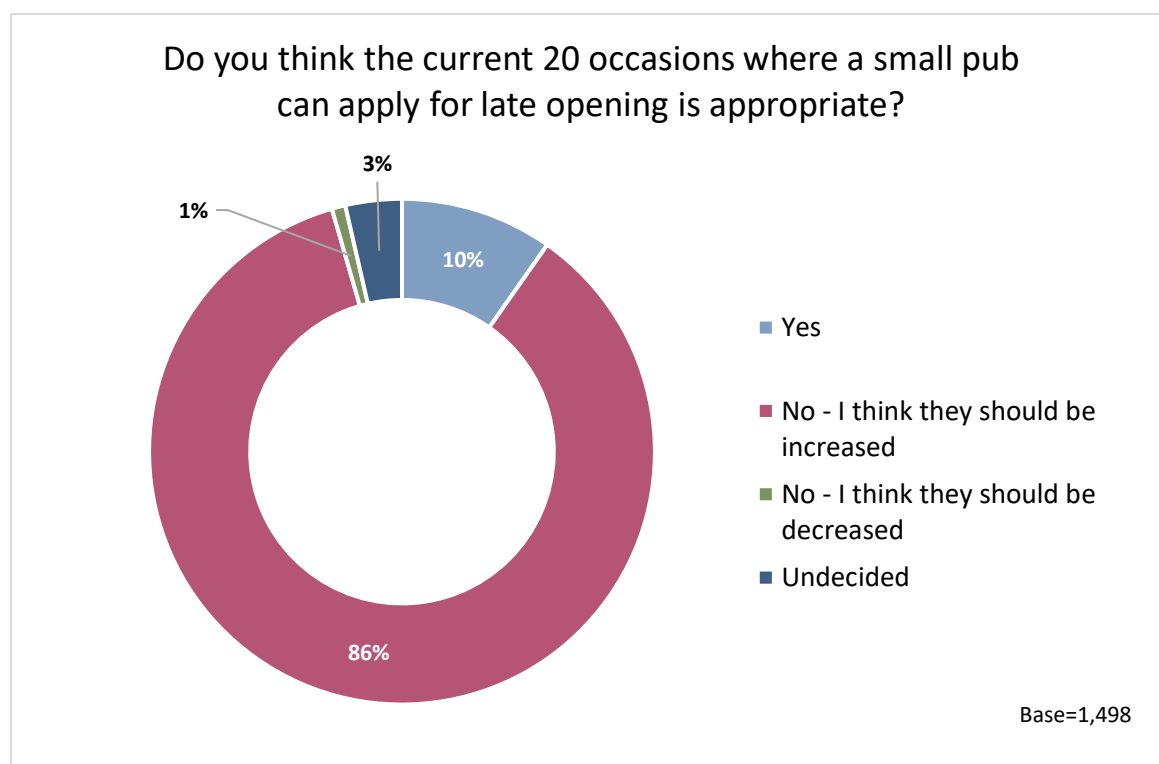
licence, the next most common suggestion was for an extension to 5am or 6am.

- 4.7. Another common theme for justifying an extension of permitted hours was that of staggered closing times. Approximately one in ten respondents were of the opinion that this would be of benefit by limiting the numbers of people out on the streets at the same time. It was argued that this would reduce anti-social behaviour and fights, reducing pressures on both police and emergency services. Comments also suggested that staggered closing times would reduce pressure on taxi services, allowing people to get home safely as people would filter out at different times instead of all at once.

5. Additional permitted hours for small pubs

5.1. Current legislation dictates that smaller pubs that do not offer food or entertainment may not apply to the courts for a late licence. They can however apply to the police for a late licence up to 20 times a year for these premises, with the option to close at 1:00am on a weekday and 12:00am on Sundays.

Figure 3: Responses to additional late opening for smaller pubs

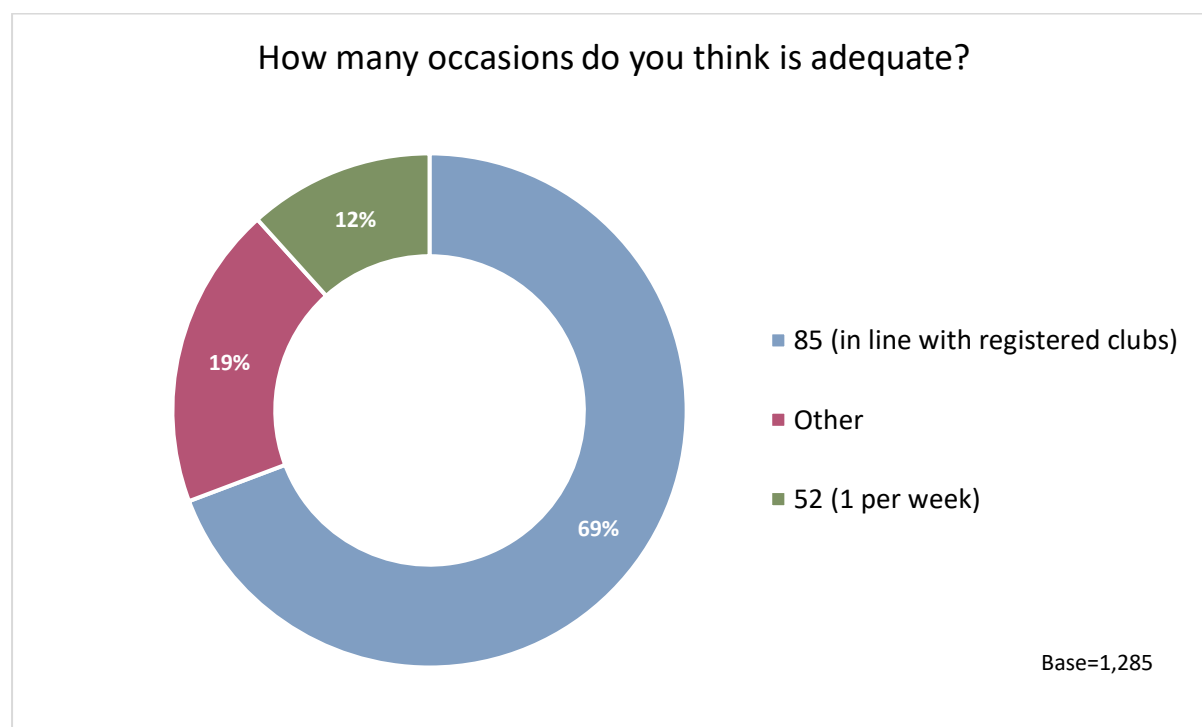


5.2. The majority of respondents (86%) agree that the number of occasions should be increased. One in ten (10%) believe that the current status quo is appropriate. A small minority of 1% believe they should be reduced, while the remaining 3% were undecided.

5.3. The respondents who agreed that the number of occasions should either be increased or decreased were given the option to suggest the number of occasions small bars should be able to apply for a late licence per year.

- 5.4. Of the 1% of respondents who believed the number of occasions should be reduced, around half felt that between 10 to 20 occasions would be appropriate. The remainder felt that there should be no allowance for late opening for smaller pubs.

Figure 4: Responses for those believing occasions for late opening for small pubs should be increased



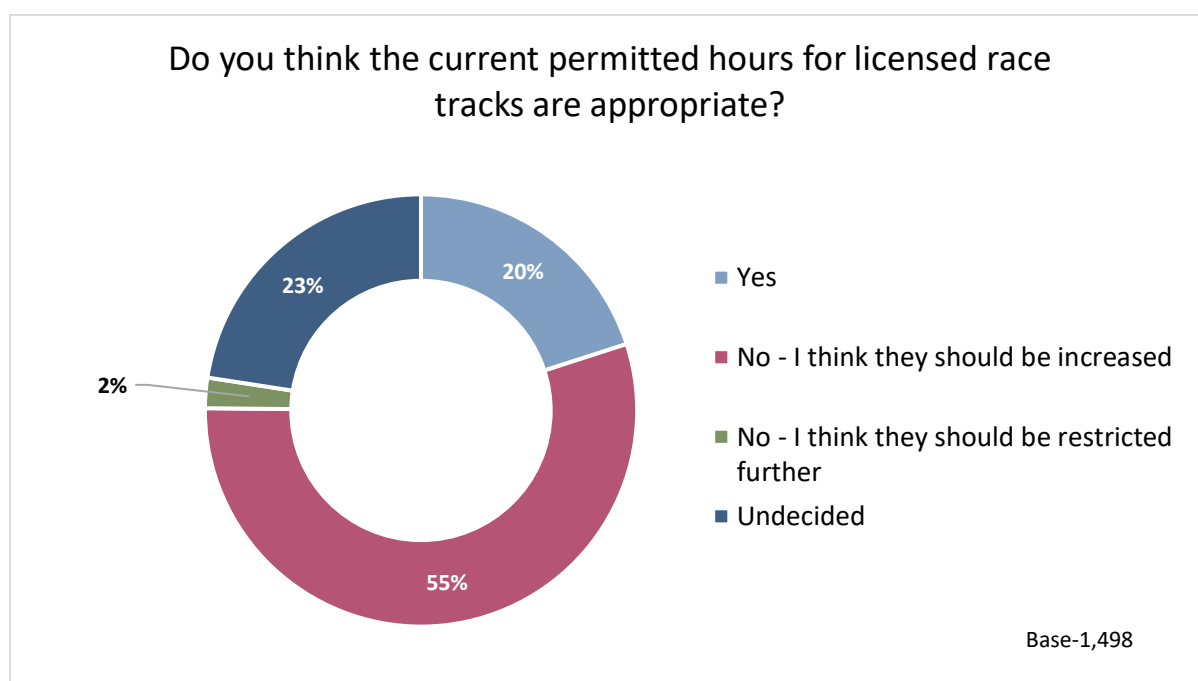
- 5.5. Those agreeing that small bars should be allowed to open more than the current 20 were given the options, '52 (1 per week)', '85 (in line with registered clubs)', or 'other' with the option to provide additional comment. The majority (69%) believed that they should be allowed to apply for late opening 85 times per year (in line with registered clubs). A further 12% believed 52 times per year would be adequate, while 19% responded 'other' and provided comments on what they believed would be appropriate.
- 5.6. Additional comments relating to the number of occasions that small pubs should be allowed to apply for late opening ranged anywhere between 85 and 365. A large proportion of the additional comments suggested complete deregulation of opening hours for smaller pubs, allowing them to open as

late as demand and economic viability dictated. A number of those who suggested deregulation did suggest that this should be dependent on location of premises, ensuring consideration of any neighbours and noise levels, and that the licensee should work with local police to minimise any issues.

6. Permitted hours for places of public entertainment

- 6.1. Current legislation allows for places of public entertainment such as race tracks, theatres and ballrooms to be granted a liquor licence. Permitted hours are 11:30am to 11:00pm. Race tracks are not currently permitted to sell alcoholic drinks on a Sunday.

Figure 5: Responses regarding permitted hours for licensed race tracks



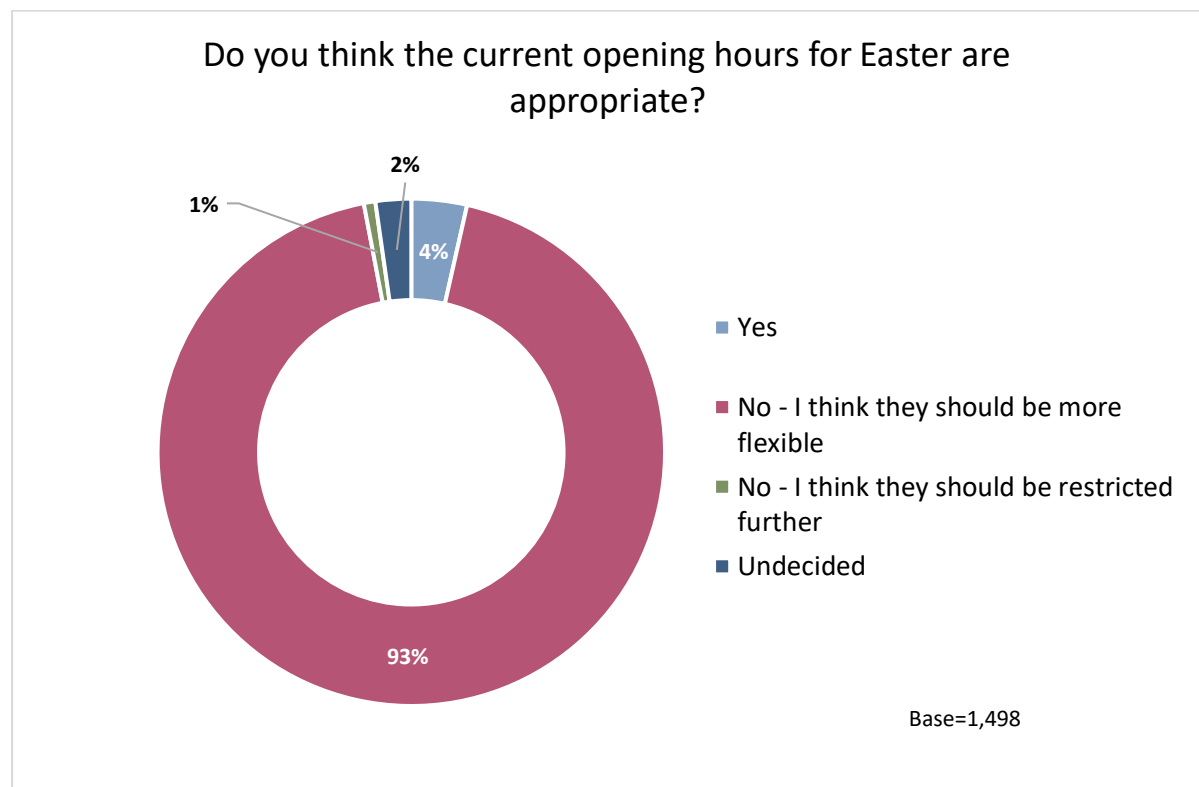
- 6.2. Fewer respondents supported amending permitted hours for licensed race tracks compared with the responses for bars/pubs. Just over half of all respondents (55%) believe permitted hours should be increased for licensed race tracks. Only 2% agree that permitted hours should be restricted further for licensed race tracks. Of the remaining responses one in five (20%) feel current permitted hours are appropriate while just under a quarter (23%) were undecided.
- 6.3. Respondents who believed permitted hours for licensed race tracks should be restricted further were invited to provide additional comments. A number of respondents believed race tracks should not be licensed to sell alcohol at all, while others suggested a more moderate reduction in the permitted

hours, similar to previous responses for other types of premises. However, within the comments on permitted hours at licensed race tracks two further broad themes arose. There were those who were opposed to gambling, especially so when alcohol was involved and others were against animal cruelty, which they associated with horse and dog racing. Of the 34 responses, two suggested hours remain as they are, which may suggest the respondent had misunderstood the initial question on whether current permitted hours were appropriate, while one respondent was undecided.

7. Easter opening hours

7.1. The consultation next sought to test opinion on current Easter opening hours. The consultation document highlighted the religious significance of the Easter period to many people within Northern Ireland, and the history of licensing legislation in relation to this. The document also highlighted the negative impact regarding potential financial loss to licensed trade over the Easter holiday period, due to the restrictions on opening hours. Respondents were asked a number of questions relating to permitted hours over Easter.

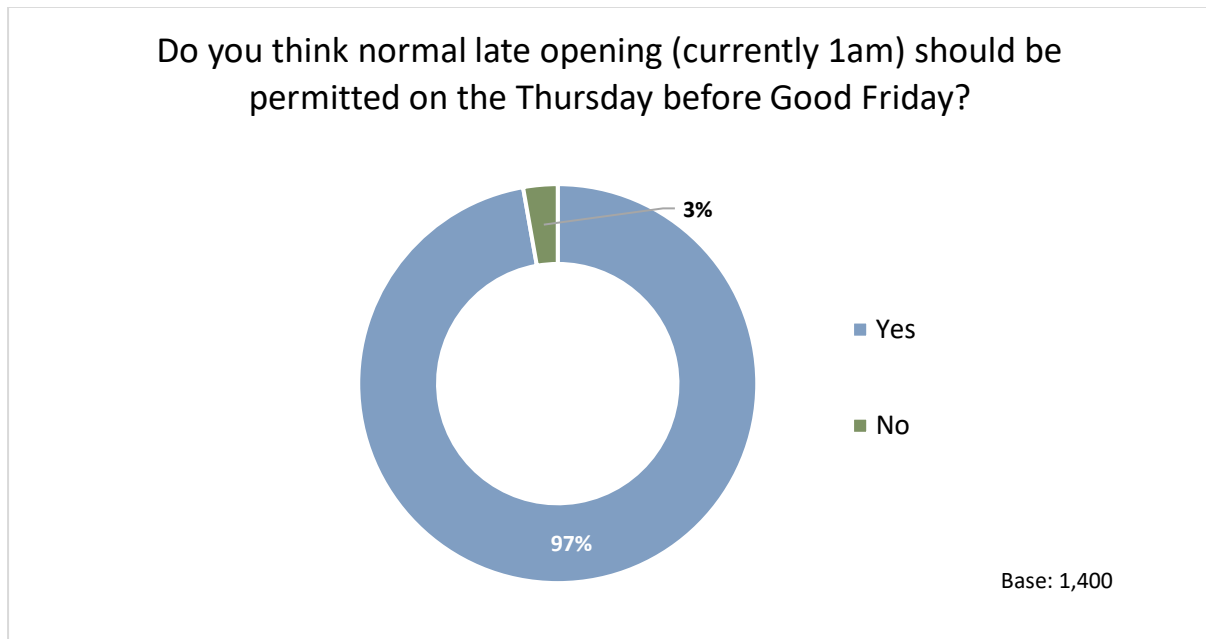
Figure 6: Responses regarding current opening hours for Easter



7.2. There was overwhelming support for removing the current restrictions on opening hours over the Easter period, with 93% of respondents believing opening hours should be more flexible. There were a small number (4%) who supported current opening hours. Only 1% would like to see opening hours over the Easter period restricted further, while the remaining 2% were undecided.

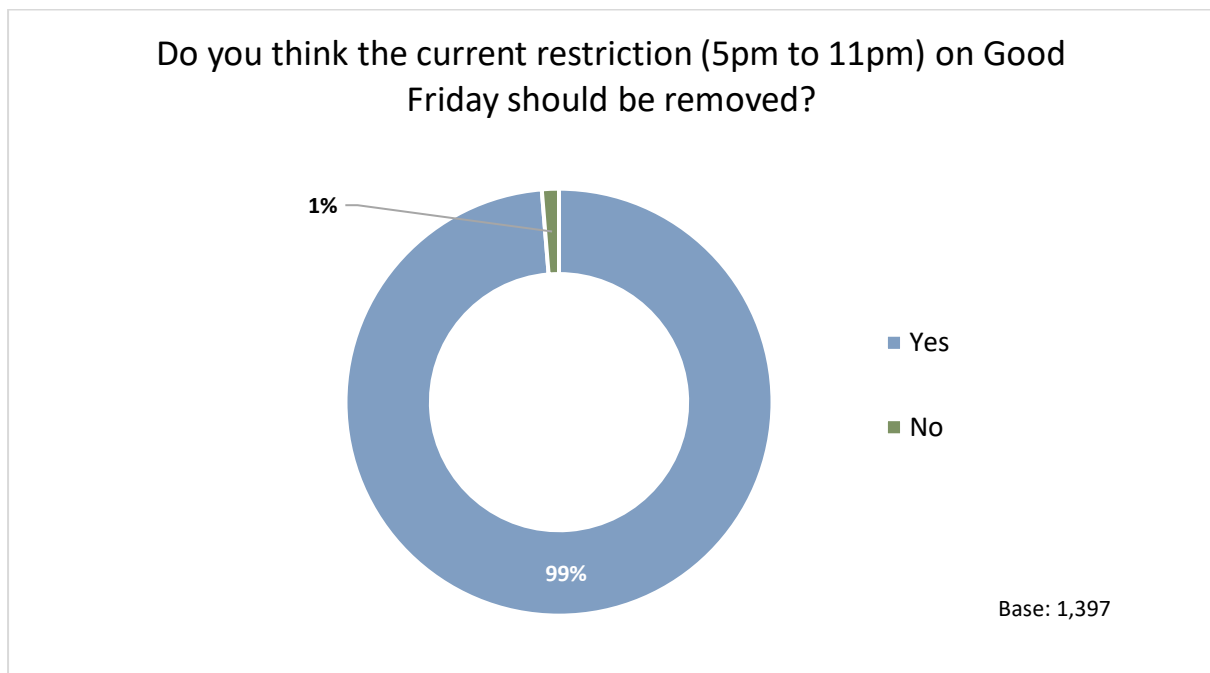
- 7.3. Respondents were then asked a series of questions relating to current opening hours on specific days of the Easter period, and whether these should be brought into line with the rest of the year.

Figure 7: Responses on extending late opening on the Thursday before Good Friday



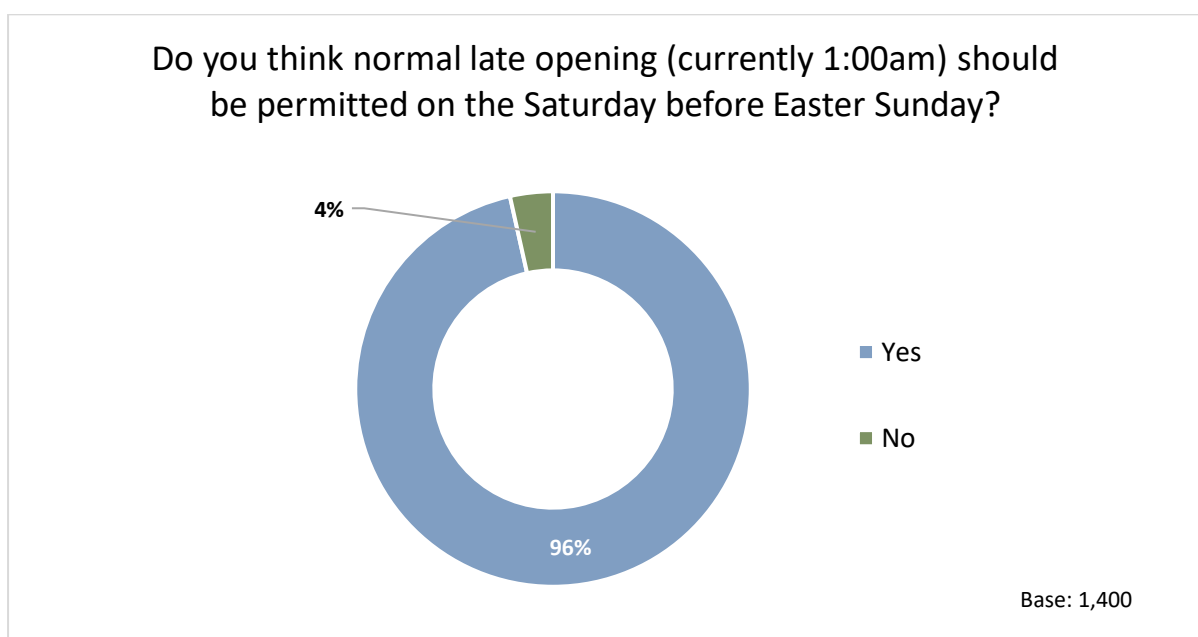
- 7.4. The overwhelming majority of respondents (97%) were in favour of bringing the Thursday before Good Friday into line with normal late opening. The remaining 3% did not believe that normal late opening should be permitted.

Figure 8: Responses on removing restriction to permitted hours on Good Friday



- 7.5. Almost all (99%) respondents were also in favour of removing the restriction to permitted hours on Good Friday, while only 1% of those who answered were in favour of maintaining the restrictions.

Figure 9: Responses to extending late opening on the Saturday before Easter Sunday



- 7.6. Again, the vast majority of respondents (96%) agreed that normal late opening should be extended to the Saturday before Easter. The remaining 4% of respondents believed they should remain as they are.

Figure 10: Responses to extending late opening on Easter Sunday

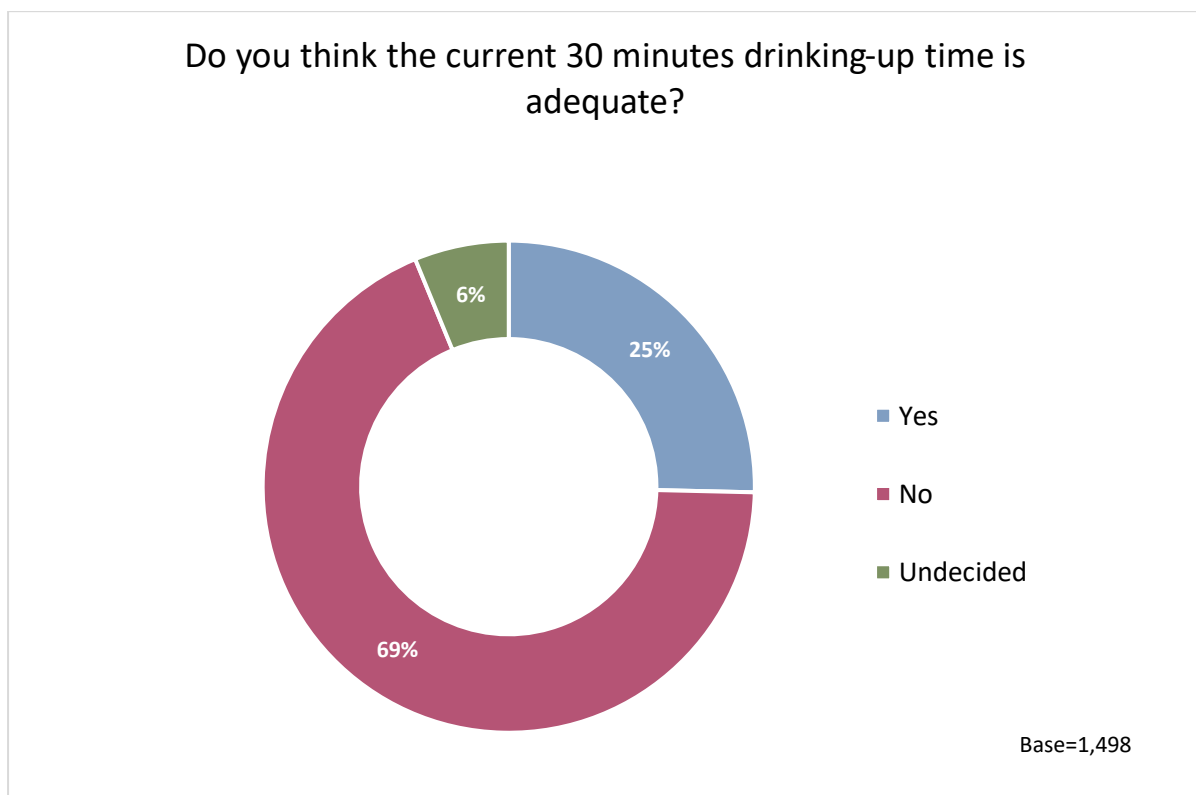


- 7.7. As with the other questions on the Easter opening hours, general consensus was that normal late opening should be extended to Easter Sunday, with 95% of respondents agreeing. The remaining 5% of those who answered believed that normal late opening should not be permitted on Easter Sunday.

8. Drinking up time

8.1. Drinking-up time in Northern Ireland is currently 30 minutes after the bar stops serving alcoholic drinks. The 2016 Bill proposed changing this to one hour to allow for a more gradual dispersal of customers. The argument for this was that it would have eased noise levels for nearby residents, pressure on bar staff to clear the premises in an orderly fashion, and difficulty for those getting taxis or waiting on lifts.

Figure 11: Responses to drinking-up time



8.2. The majority of respondents (69%) did not feel that 30 minutes drinking-up time was adequate. One quarter of respondents (25%) felt the current 30 minutes drinking up time was adequate, while the remaining 6% were undecided.

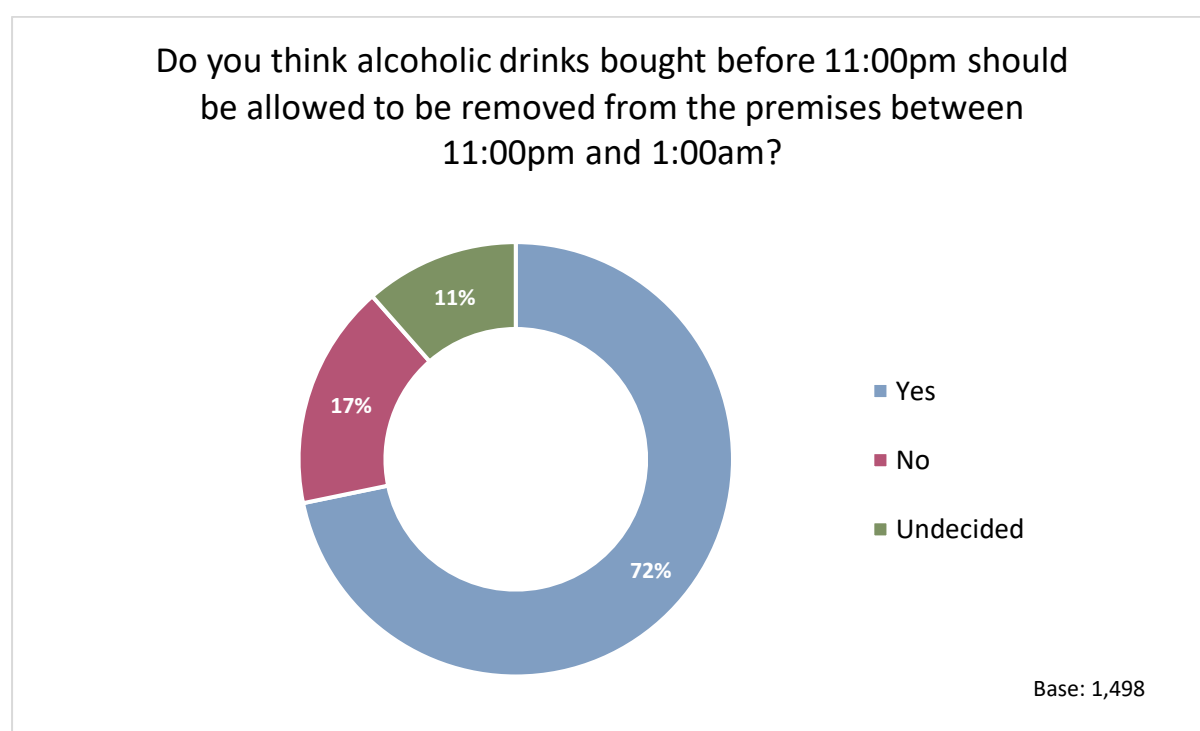
8.3. Respondents who answered that they did not agree that 30 minutes drinking up time was adequate, were invited to provide additional comments on what

they thought would be adequate. The vast majority, approximately four of every five such respondents, thought that it should be extended to one hour.

9. Removal of off-sales from premises during late opening periods

9.1. The consultation document discussed current legislation which enables customers who have purchased off-sales before 11:00pm in a licensed premises being able to remove these to consume off premises after 11:00pm. Concerns had been raised that this had the potential to be abused, with some pubs selling off-sales between 11:00pm to 1:00am. This could promote on-street drinking and anti-social behaviour, and as such was in line to be banned via the 2016 Bill. Respondents were asked for their opinions on removal of off-sales between 11:00pm and 1:00am.

Figure 12: Responses to removal of off-sales from licensed premises after 11:00pm

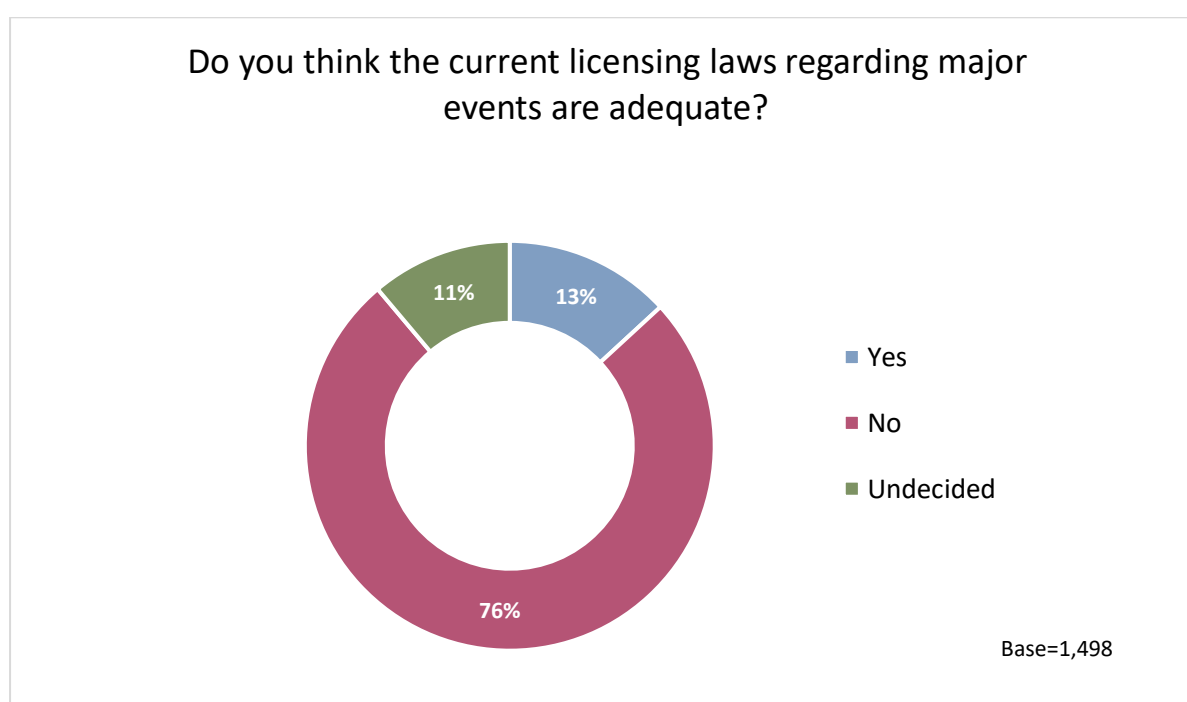


9.2. Just over seven out of every ten respondents (72%) believe that off-sales purchased from licensed premises before 11:00pm should be allowed to be removed from the premises between 11:00pm and 1:00am. Less than one in five respondents (17%) were opposed to allowing off-sales to be removed from licensed premises between 11:00pm and 1:00am. The remaining 11% of respondents were undecided.

10. Licensing for major events

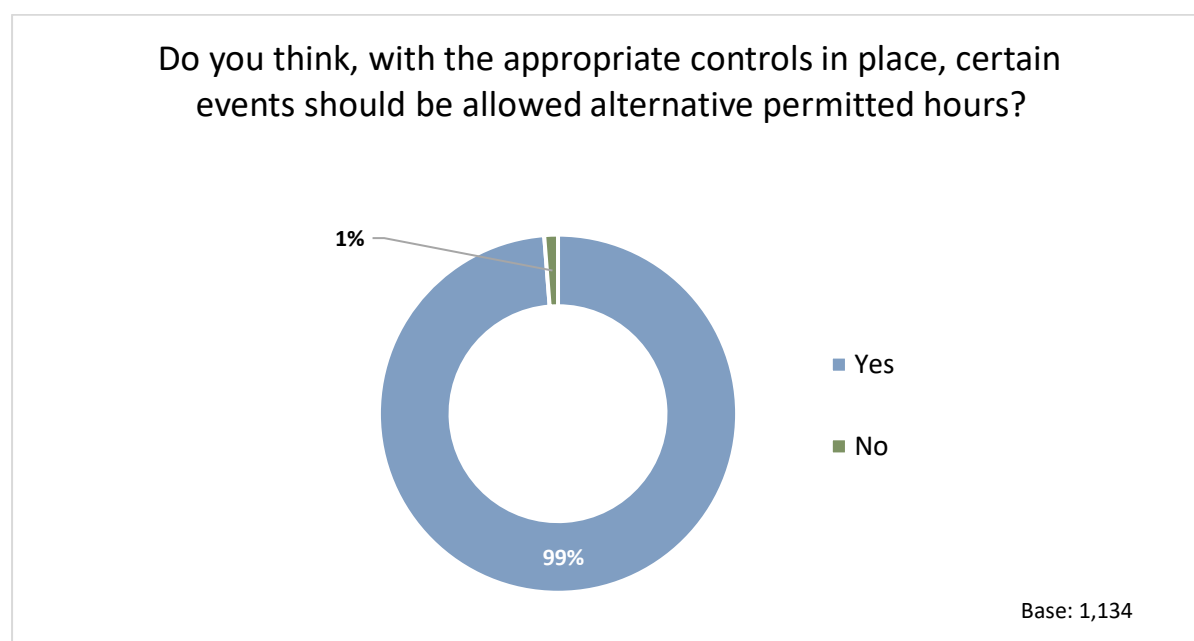
10.1. Under current legislation, licensing for major events is normally possible through obtaining an occasional licence due to these events often taking place in unlicensed premises. Occasional licences allow permitted hours from 11:30am to 1:00am the following morning on Monday to Saturday, and from 12:30pm to 12:00am on Sundays. Occasional licences also restrict the selling of alcoholic drinks to that which is to be consumed on premises, which means commemorative bottles of alcoholic drinks cannot be sold. A number of organisers of major events within Northern Ireland have commented on the negative impact that the restrictive occasional licence has had on the success of their events. As a result, a specific consultation on licensing at major events was opened in March 2019 with results published in May 2019. One of the key themes from this consultation was that there was an appetite to amend permitted hours for major events, which could potentially bring strong economic benefits to Northern Ireland. Against this background, respondents were asked for their opinions on licensing for major events.

Figure 13: Responses to amending permitted hours for major events



- 10.2. There was a high degree of support for amending permitted hours for major events, with just over three-quarters of respondents (76%) stating that they did not think current licensing laws were adequate. Of the remaining 24% of respondents, views were almost evenly split between those who believed current laws were adequate (13%) and those who were undecided (11%).

Figure 14: Responses to whether major events should be allowed alternative permitted hours



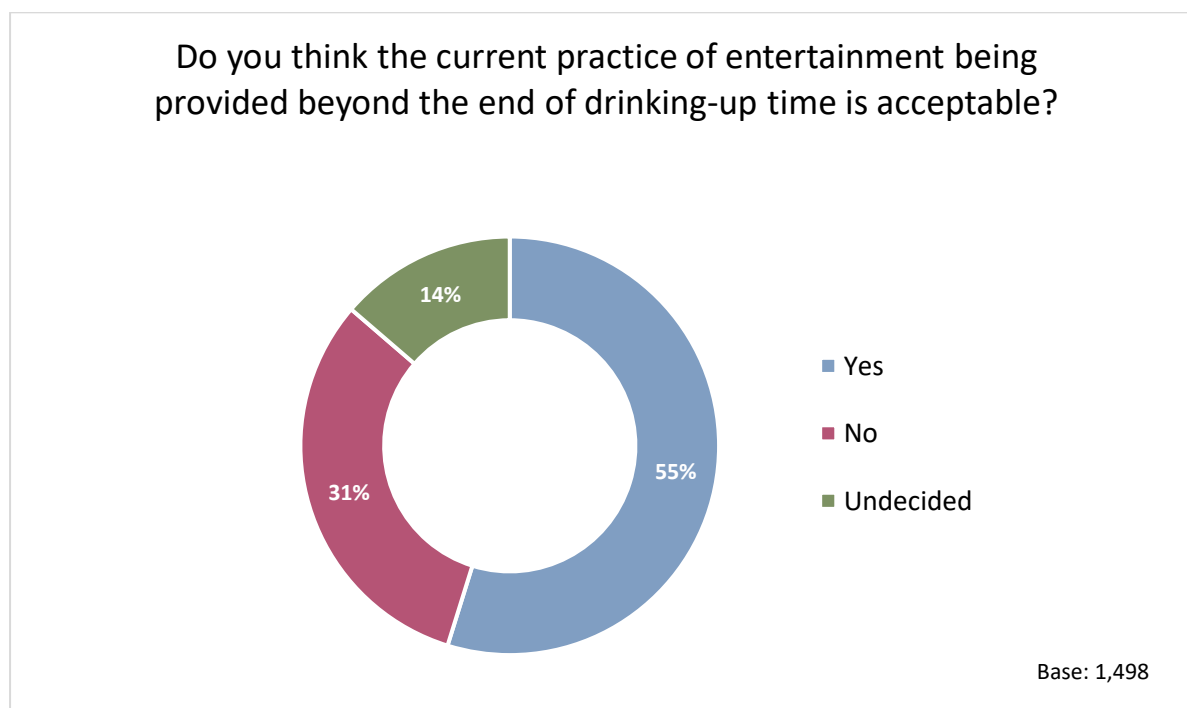
- 10.3. Those who did not think the current licensing laws for major events were adequate were asked whether certain events should be allowed alternative hours with appropriate conditions and controls in place. Those who answered were overwhelmingly in favour, with 99% of responses. Only 1% of respondents disagreed that certain events should be granted a licence for alternative permitted hours.
- 10.4. Respondents who disagreed with granting a licence for alternative permitted hours for special events were then given the option to provide further comment, to advise how they believed these events should be licensed. There was a total of 13 additional comments. Respondents suggested that permitted hours should be the same as that for all other licensed premises, or should remain as is, while the remainder believed they should be

restricted further or altogether. Three were in direct contradiction to their initial response, in that they supported a flexible licence being granted for special events.

11. Alignment of entertainment and liquor licences

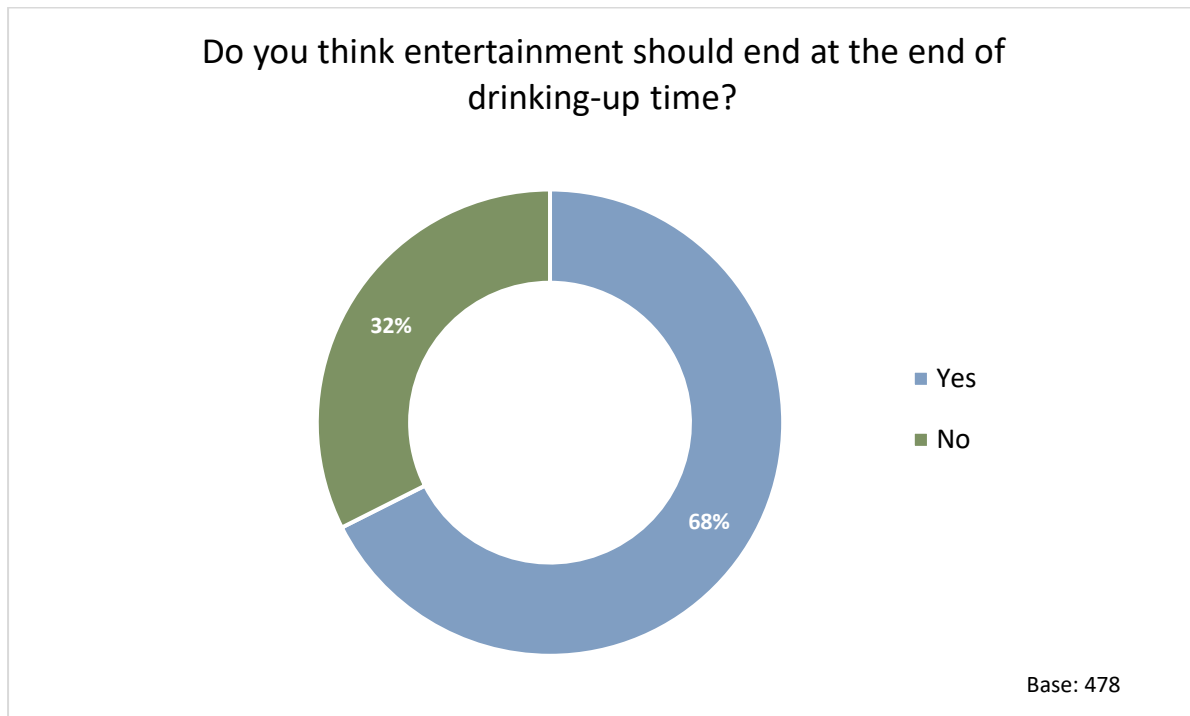
11.1. The consultation document highlighted that under current legislation liquor licences are granted by courts, while entertainment licences are granted by local councils. This has led to a number of premises being granted an entertainment licence which allows for them to continue providing entertainment after drinking-up time has ended. There is an argument that this has led to illegal sales after permitted hours, which is unfair to premises adhering to the law. The consultation asked respondents for their views on this issue.

Figure 15: Responses on entertainment continuing beyond the end of drinking-up time



11.2. Only a slight majority (55%) agreed with the practice of entertainment continuing after the end of drinking-up time. Just less than one third of respondents (31%) disagreed with the current practice of allowing entertainment to continue beyond the end of drinking-up time. This left 14% of respondents as undecided on the issue. Respondents who disagreed that entertainment should be allowed to continue after the end of drinking-up time were asked a further question.

Figure 16: Responses to whether entertainment should end at the same time as the end of drinking-up time

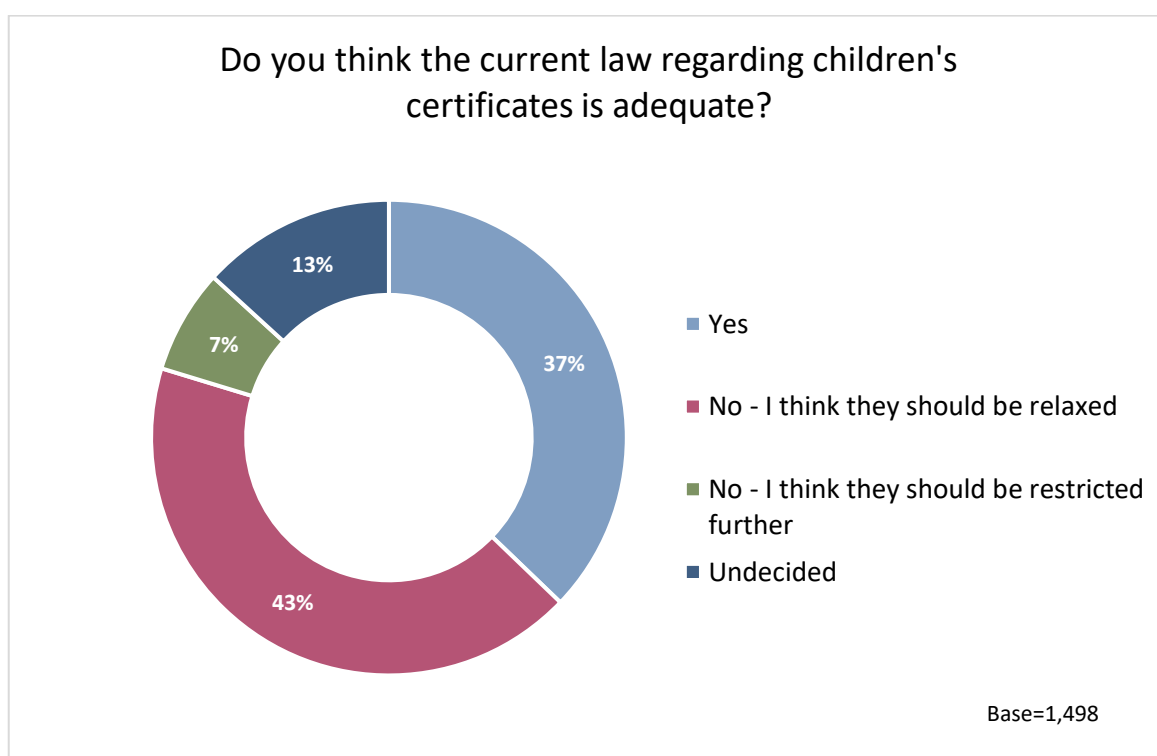


11.3. Of those who disagreed that the current practice of entertainment being provided beyond drinking up time was acceptable, over two-thirds (68%) believed that entertainment should stop at the end of drinking-up time. Just under a third (32%) disagreed that entertainment should end at the end of drinking-up time.

12. Children's certificates

12.1. Under current licensing law, young people under 18 years are not allowed in the bar areas of any licensed premises or registered club at any time unless the premises has been granted a children's certificate. A children's certificate allows young people to be present in the bar area until 9.00pm, provided certain conditions are met, for example, the young person is in the company of an adult and is seated at a table away from the bar. Respondents were asked if they felt current legislation was adequate.

Figure 17: Responses to whether the current law regarding children's certificates is adequate



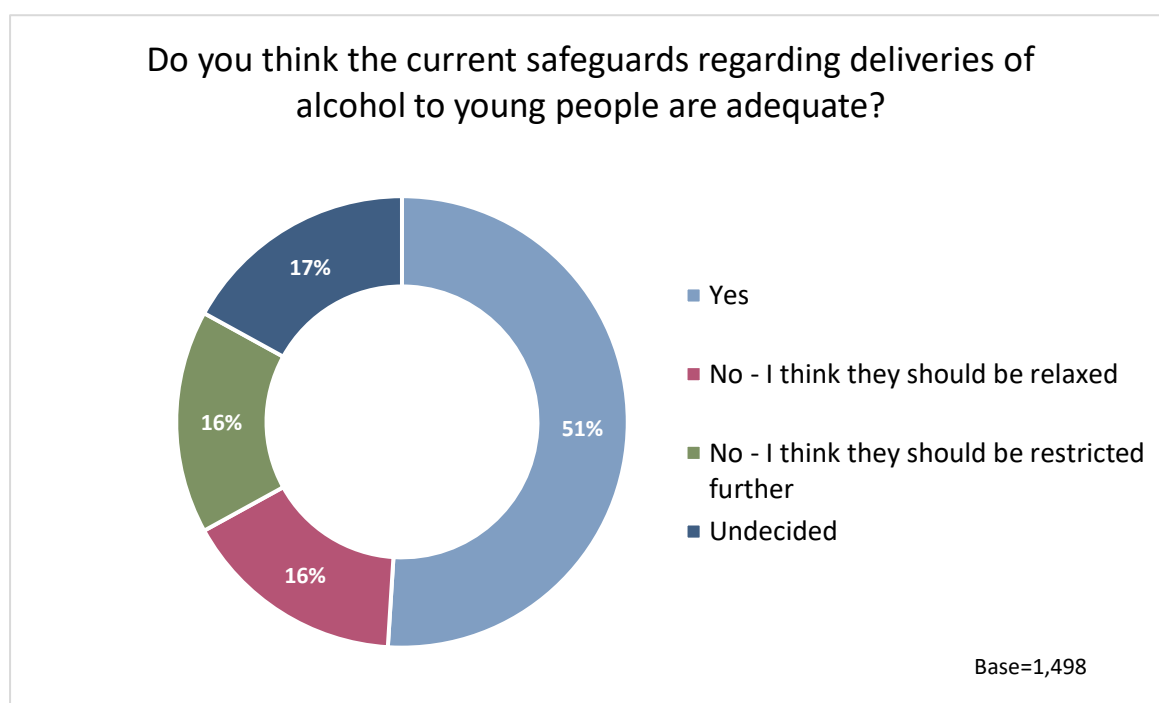
12.2. Just under two out of five respondents (37%) felt that the current law is adequate while just over two out of five respondents (43%) felt that the requirement to hold a children's certificate should be removed. A small percentage (7%) expressed the view that they would like the law strengthened, and 13% were undecided.

- 12.3. Those who had answered that the children's certificate should be removed were able to respond to the question 'Do you think the current safeguards and conditions should be retained?'. Responses were almost evenly split, with 52% saying 'yes' and 48% saying 'no'.
- 12.4. Respondents who had said the current safeguards and conditions should not be retained were able to provide further information on what they felt should be changed. There were 305 comments in total. There were a number of themes identified throughout the comments. One theme was that children on licensed premises should be the responsibility of accompanying adults. Within these responses there were suggestions that legislation be brought into line with the rest of the UK. Other responses suggested that current safeguards should be relaxed or more lenient, or even abolished altogether. Another common theme was that it should be up to each individual licensed premises to self-regulate in regards to allowing and monitoring children on their premises.
- 12.5. There were 107 comments on why the law regarding children's certificates should be strengthened. The most frequently cited comment was in relation to the time that children should be allowed to be in a bar to, ranging from 6.00pm to 10.00pm for those who are older. The next most frequently recurring comment was that children should not be allowed into bars at all. Some respondents felt that children should only be allowed on licensed premises where food is being served or if the child is accompanied by a responsible adult. Other respondents felt that there should be better enforcement of legislation.

13. Deliveries of alcoholic drinks

13.1. Under current licensing law, details of alcoholic drinks purchased and delivery locations must be entered into a day book held in the licensed premises. The delivery person must hold an invoice with the same details. Under current law a young person under 18 is permitted to accept a delivery made to the residence or working place of the purchaser. The consultation asked a number of questions in relation to this issue.

Figure 18: Responses to the current safeguards regarding deliveries of alcohol to young people being adequate

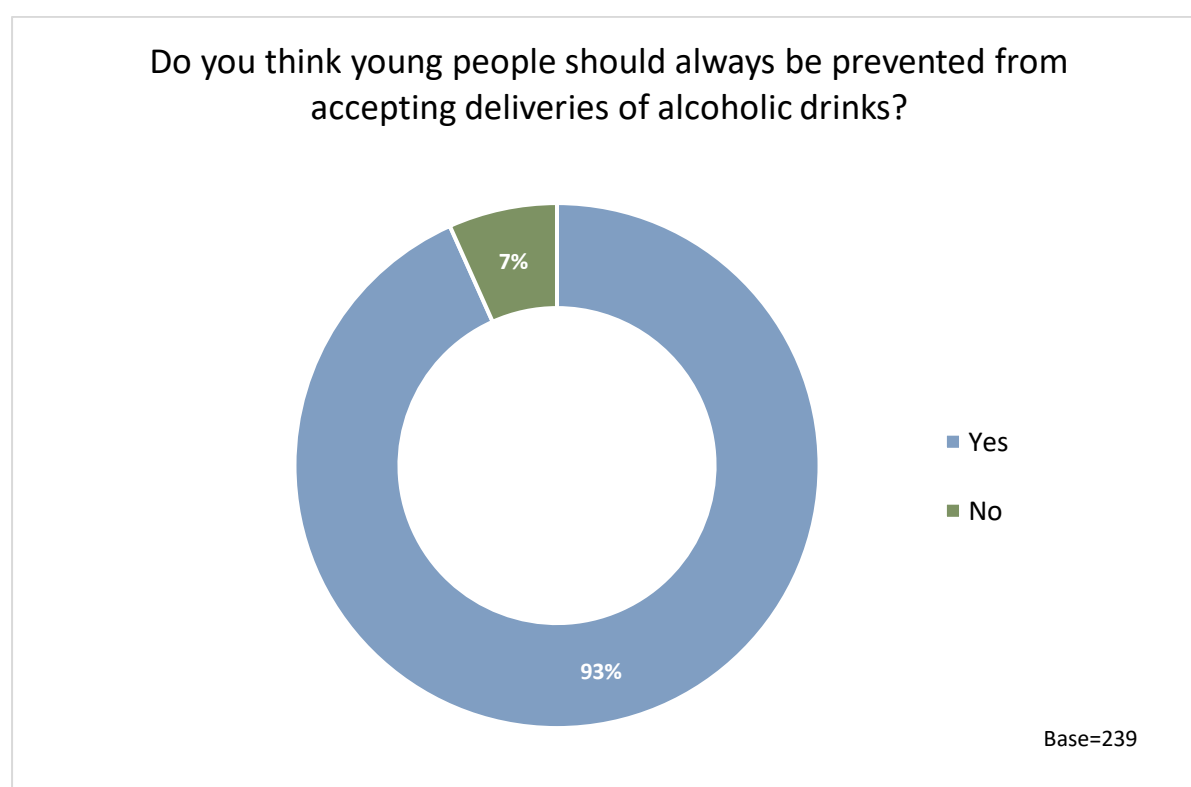


13.2. Just over half (51%) of respondents agreed that current safeguards regarding deliveries of alcoholic drinks to young people were adequate. Similar proportions felt that the safeguards should be relaxed (16%), or that they should be restricted further (16%). A slightly higher proportion were undecided (17%).

13.3. There were 241 comments in relation to the safeguards regarding deliveries to young people. The most frequently cited comment, approximately a

quarter of responses, suggested removing the safeguards completely, whilst others felt there should be more flexibility, or that they should be relaxed more. A few respondents felt that ID should be shown. Others felt that the age at which you can accept deliveries should be dropped to 16 or 17, with the main argument for this being that if you are old enough to work in a bar you are old enough to accept a delivery. Another argument provided by a few respondents was, whether it be at work or at home, you would not actually be drinking the alcohol yourself so there was no issue with accepting the delivery. It should be pointed out that some respondents may have interpreted this question differently, with some thinking it was only in relation to the work place and others only in relation to the home.

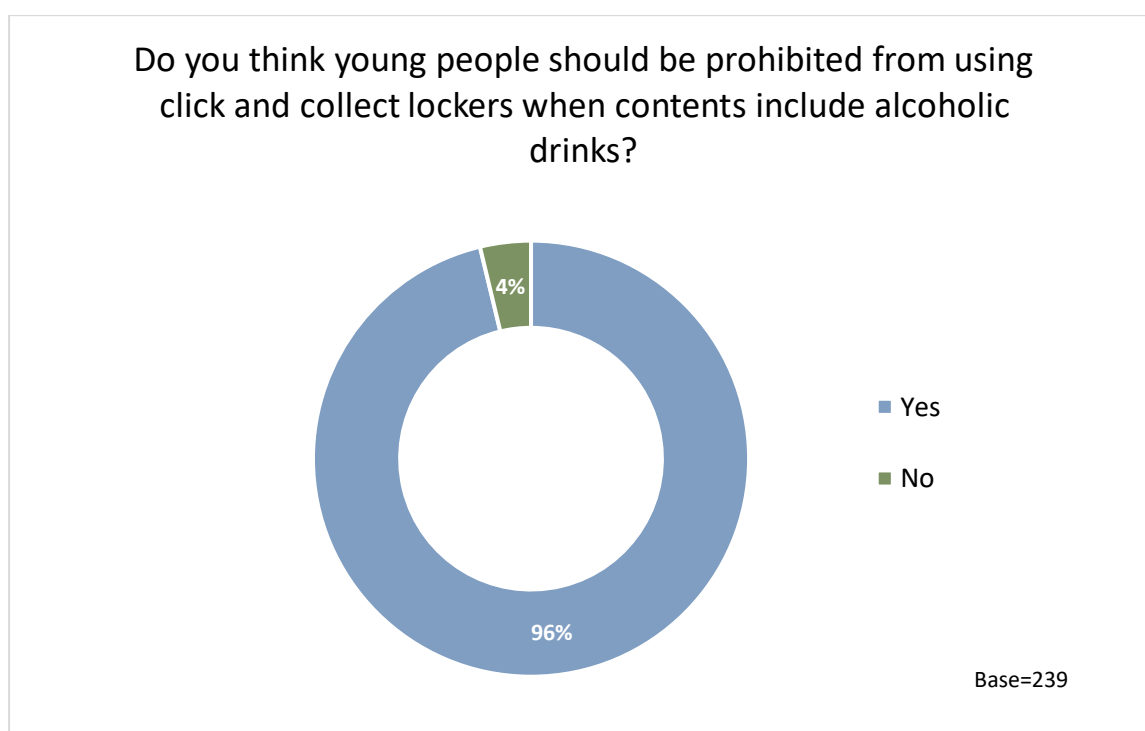
Figure 19: Responses to young people always being prevented from accepting deliveries of alcoholic drinks



- 13.4. Those who felt that the current safeguards regarding deliveries of alcoholic drinks to young people should be restricted further were asked should young people always be prevented from accepting deliveries of alcoholic drinks.

The vast majority (93%) responded 'yes'. Those who answered 'no' were able to provide additional comments on when it is acceptable for young people to accept delivery of alcoholic drinks (16 comments in total). Comments on what circumstances would be acceptable for young people to accept delivery of alcohol included, if the young person was working, if they had proof of age, as part of a groceries delivery, or if an adult was not available and the young person was responsible enough to accept delivery.

Figure 20: Responses to young people always being prevented from accepting deliveries of alcoholic drinks

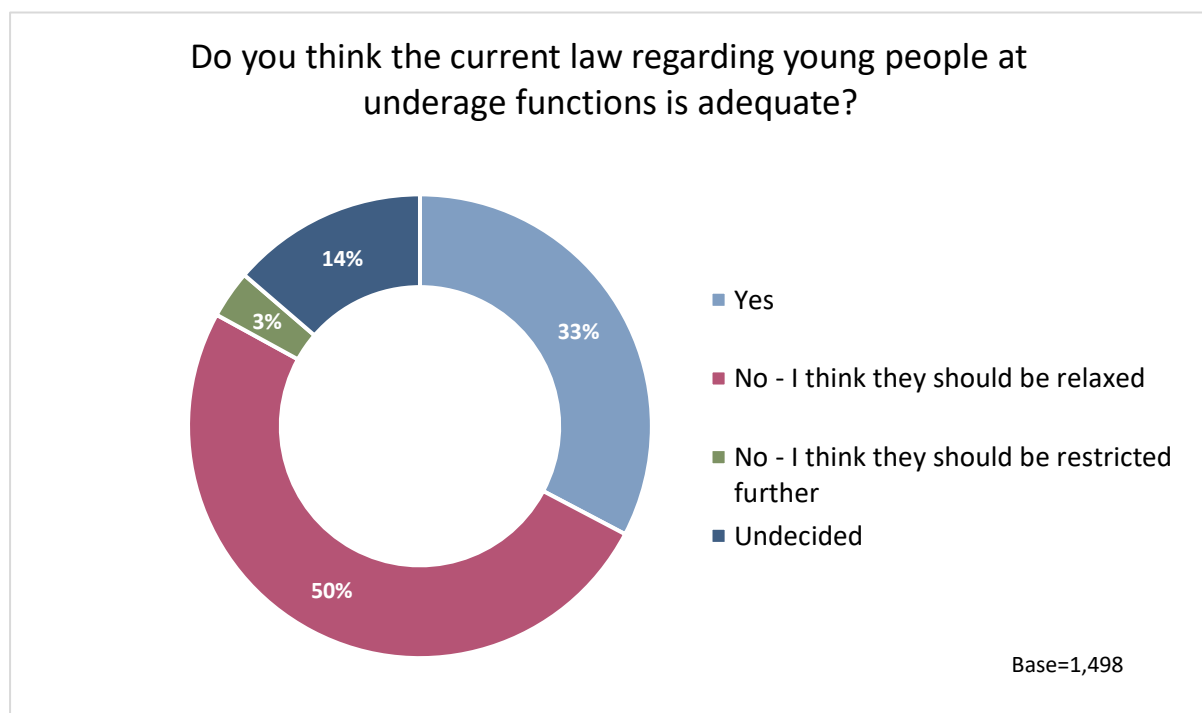


13.5. This question was only asked of those who had responded that safeguards should be extended further (239 respondents in total). The overwhelming majority (96%) felt that young people should be prohibited from using click and collect lockers when contents included alcoholic drinks.

14. Underage functions

- 14.1. Under current licensing law, young people under 18 are not allowed in any part of licensed premises which contains a bar or is used mainly or exclusively for the sale and consumption of alcohol, unless a children's certificate is in force, they are accompanied by an adult and are off the premises by 9.00pm.
- 14.2. A Court of Appeal decision in 2015 upheld a ruling that it was illegal for young people to be in licensed premises beyond 9.00pm. This effectively means that the practice of holding school formals beyond 9.00pm in hotels, for example, contravenes licensing law.
- 14.3. The 2016 Bill included a provision which would have permitted underage functions in licensed premises beyond 9.00pm, provided the bar was closed. Strict conditions would have to be met in order for such a function to take place. The consultation asked if the current law was adequate.

Figure 19: Responses to whether the current law regarding young people at underage functions is adequate



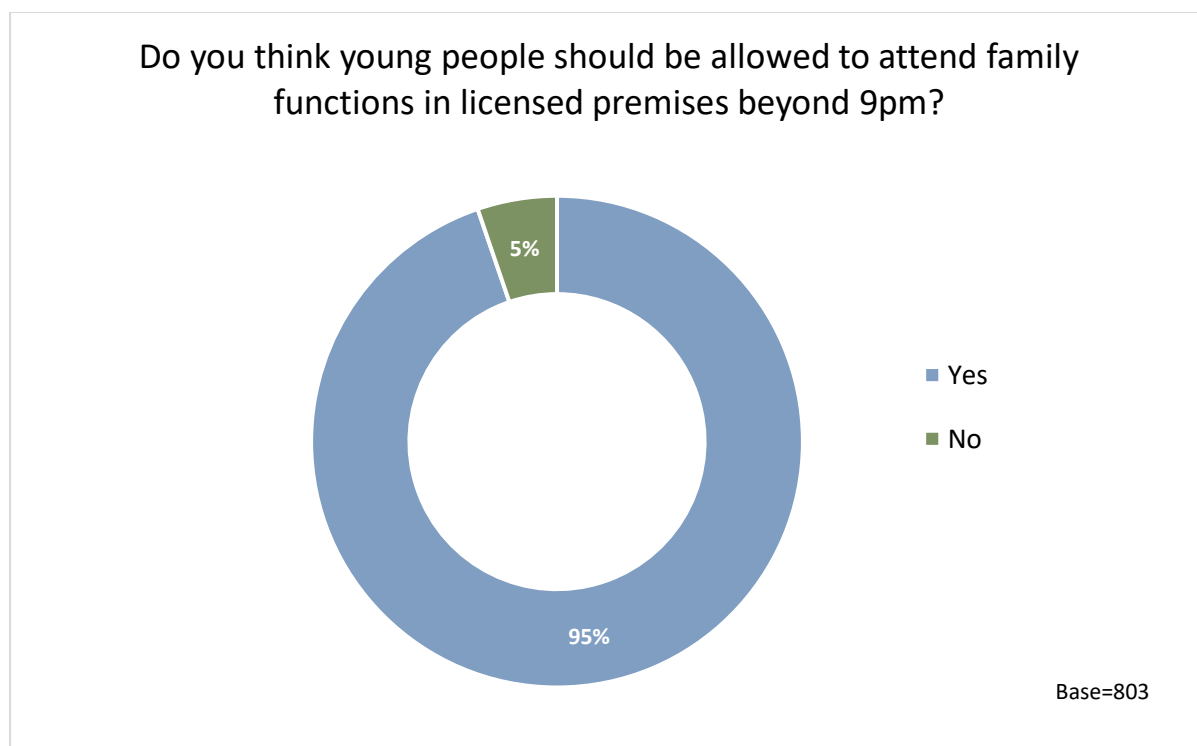
- 14.4. Half (50%) of respondents felt that the current law regarding young people at functions should be relaxed. One third (33%) thought they were adequate, and a small percentage (3%) felt that they should be restricted further. The remainder (14%) were undecided.
- 14.5. Those who felt there should be further restrictions were asked to provide comments on the changes they thought were necessary to the current law. There were 50 comments in total. Comments included better ID checks, young people not being allowed in unless 18, no sale of alcohol at all, or no bar to be open on the premises. Other changes included no underage functions, proper enforcement of the legislation, and as per the 2016 Act.

15. Family functions

15.1. The current licensing law for family functions is the same as that for underage functions, i.e. young people under 18 are not allowed in any part of licensed premises which contains a bar or is mainly or exclusively used for the sale and consumption of alcohol, unless a children's certificate is in force, they are accompanied by an adult and are off the premises by 9.00pm. This allows a young person to be present in the bar area until 9.00pm, provide they are accompanied by an adult and seated away from the bar.

15.2. Concerns have been raised around the legality of the current practice of children being present at family functions in licensed premises, for example, a family wedding, wedding anniversary or birthday party, which are often held in hotels and licensed restaurants beyond 9.00pm. The consultation asked if attendance for young people beyond 9.00pm was appropriate.

Figure 20: Responses to whether young people should be allowed to attend family functions



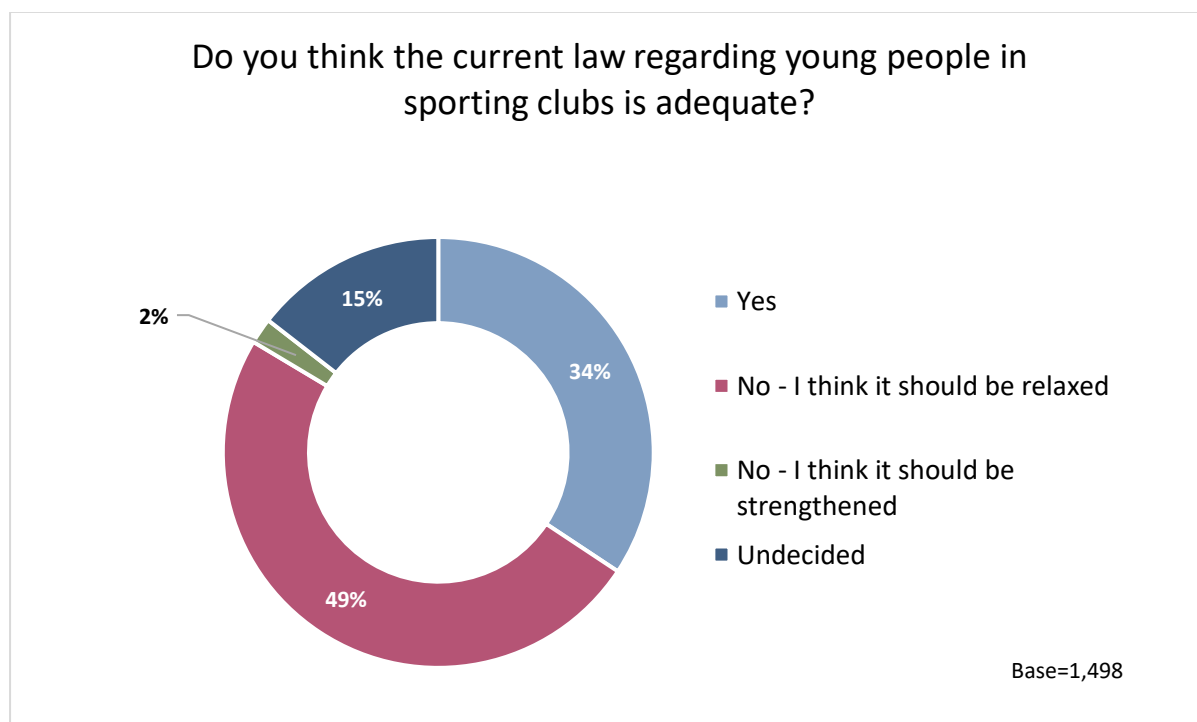
- 15.3. The majority (95%) said 'yes' they should be allowed to attend family functions in licensed premises beyond 9.00pm.
- 15.4. Those who disagreed with young people attending family functions after 9.00pm on licensed premises were asked to provide comments on what changes to the law they felt were necessary. There were 42 in total. Comments included permitting young people on premises until 9.00pm if food is available, parent/adult are responsible for children, follow the 2016 Act, and they should not be permitted at all.

16. Young people in sporting clubs

16.1. Under current licensing law, young people under 18 years are allowed to be in the bar area of a sporting club until 10.00pm. Many sporting clubs hold award ceremonies, which are usually in the evening, celebrating the accomplishments of club members, and often include presentations to young people.

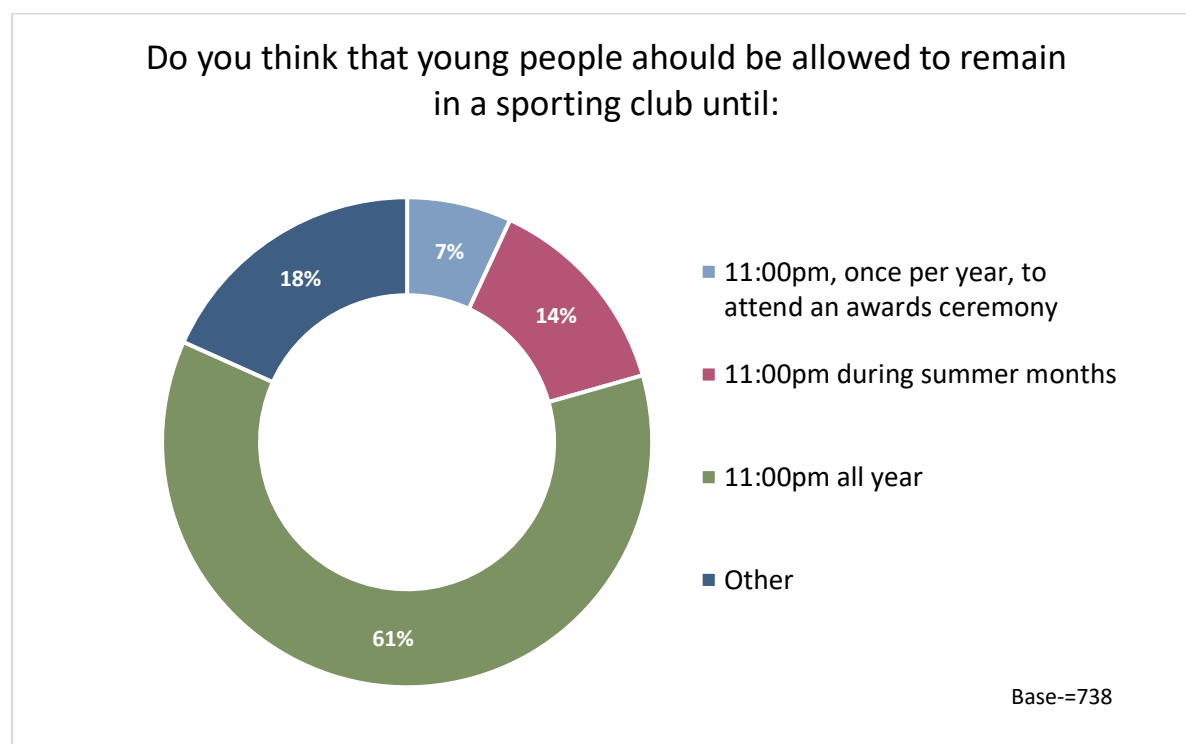
16.2. During the summer months, sporting activities often extend into the evening and sporting bodies and clubs have asked for an extension to the time young people can remain in a sporting club. The 2016 Bill contained a provision to allow one awards night per year, until 11.00pm, and a proposal to allow young people to remain on the premises until 11.00pm during the summer months. The consultation asked if the current law was adequate, and to consider extending the time for young people to be in the bar area of a sporting club to 11.00pm.

Figure 21: Responses to whether the current law regarding young people in sporting clubs is adequate



- 16.3. Almost half (49%) of respondents felt that the current law regarding young people in sporting clubs should be relaxed, over a third (34%) thought the current law was adequate, and 2% would like to see it strengthened. The remainder (14%) were undecided.

Figure 22: Responses regarding the time that young people should be able to remain in a sporting club until:



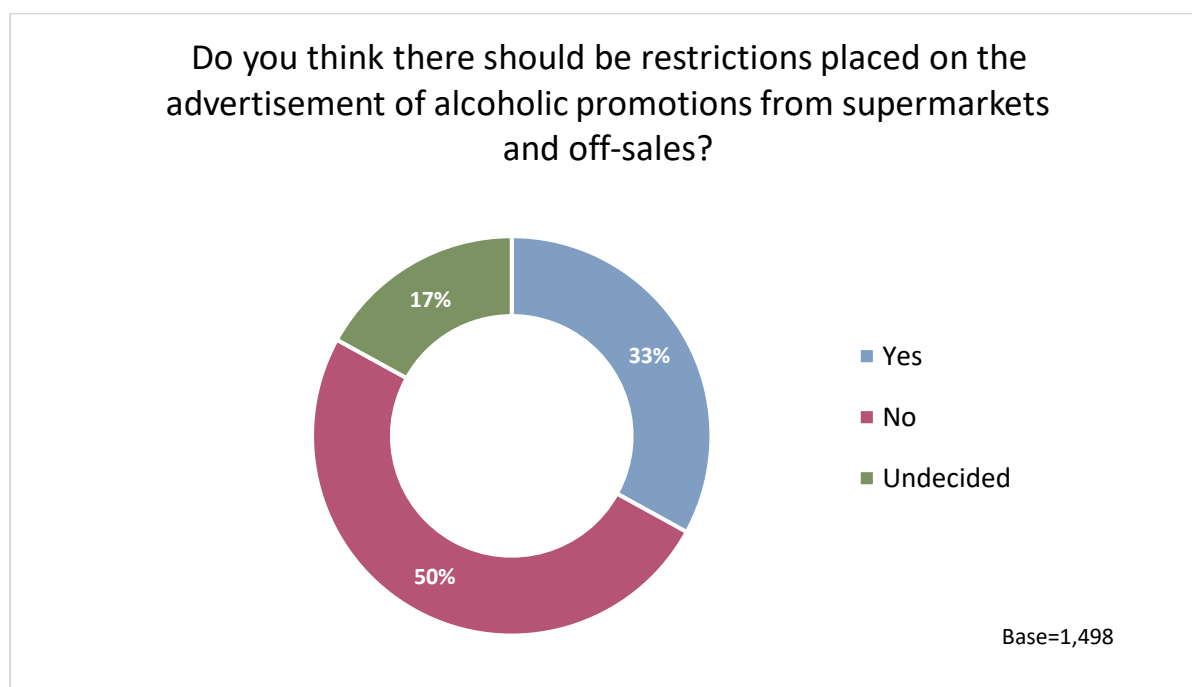
- 16.4. Those who had indicated their preference for the current law to be relaxed were asked about the time and number of occasions that a young person could remain in a sports club. The majority (61%) felt that young people should be allowed to remain in a sporting club until 11.00pm all year.
- 16.5. Respondents were able to record 'other' suggestions. These included: there should be no restrictions (36 responses); as long as they are with a parent or under adult supervision then until normal closing time; clubs should be self-regulating; or if it is appropriate for a young person to be there (e.g. awards ceremonies, family or social events).

16.6. Those who felt the law should be strengthened were able to add comments as to what changes should be made to the current law. Some believed the 9.00pm rule should remain, whilst for others it should be earlier than this or children should not be allowed in sports clubs at all.

17. Restrictions on advertising in supermarkets and off-sales

17.1. The consultation document stated that there is growing evidence to support an association between alcohol advertising and consumption habits, particularly amongst young people. Current licensing law places no restrictions on advertising of alcoholic drinks in supermarkets and off-sales. With a change of law it would be possible to restrict advertising in or close to licensed premises.

Figure 23: Responses to whether restrictions should be placed on advertisement of alcoholic promotions from supermarkets and off-sales



17.2. Half (50%) of respondents thought there should not be restrictions placed on the advertisement of alcoholic promotions from supermarkets and off-sales, one-third (33%) responded there should be, and 17% were undecided.

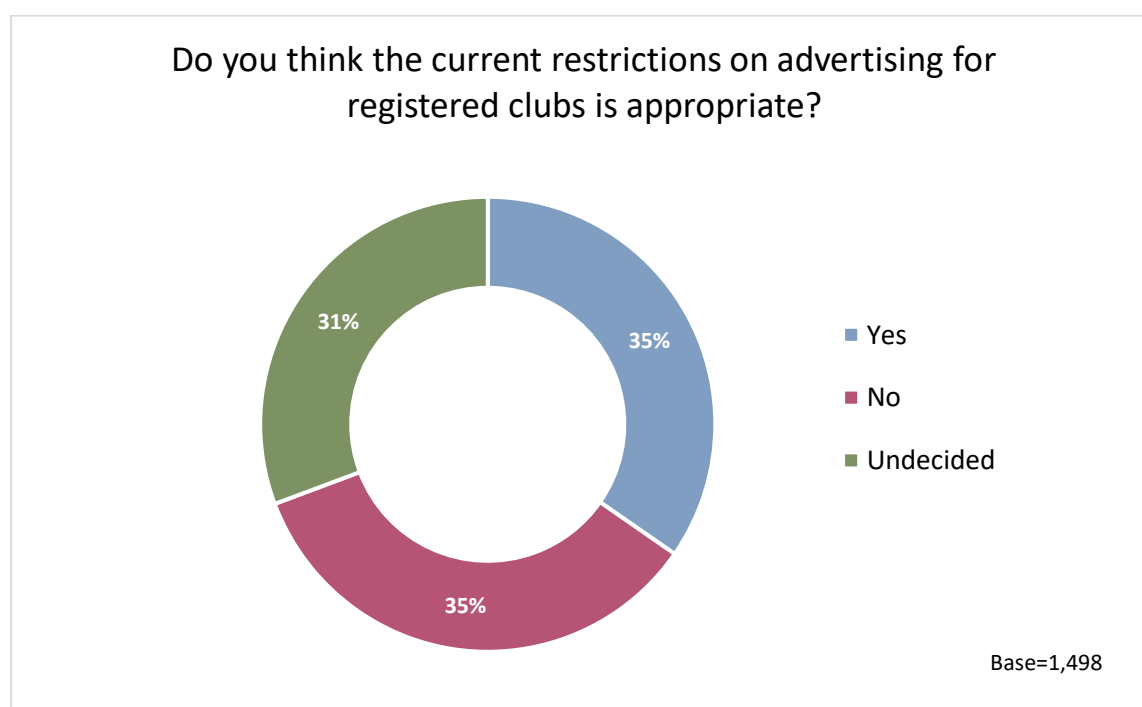
17.3. Respondents who responded 'yes' there should be restrictions were then asked 'What type of restrictions do you think are suitable?'. There were 475 comments, and these included: having a complete ban on the advertising of

alcohol; only advertising in the off licence area of a supermarket; a ban on discounts and special offers; and as per legislation in the rest of the UK.

18. Advertising of functions in clubs

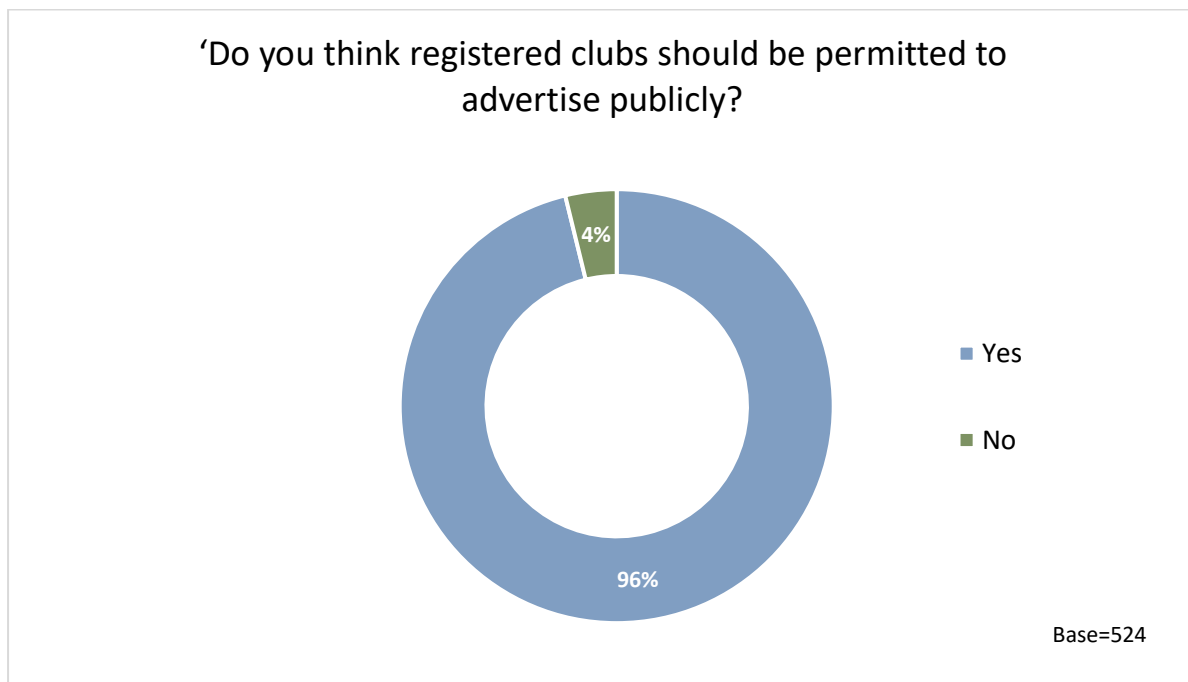
18.1. Private members clubs, which hold a certificate of registration, may supply alcoholic drinks to members and guests. Under current licensing law, only functions which involve a sport, game or physical recreation may be advertised in the media. All other functions can only be advertised on club premises. Members of the public are allowed to attend functions where the whole proceeds of the function are donated to charitable or benevolent causes.

Figure 24: Responses to whether current restrictions on advertising for registered clubs is appropriate



18.2. Over a third (35%) of respondents felt that the current restrictions on advertising for registered clubs were appropriate. The same percentage (35%) disagreed, while 31% were undecided.

Figure 25: Responses to whether registered clubs should be permitted to advertise publicly



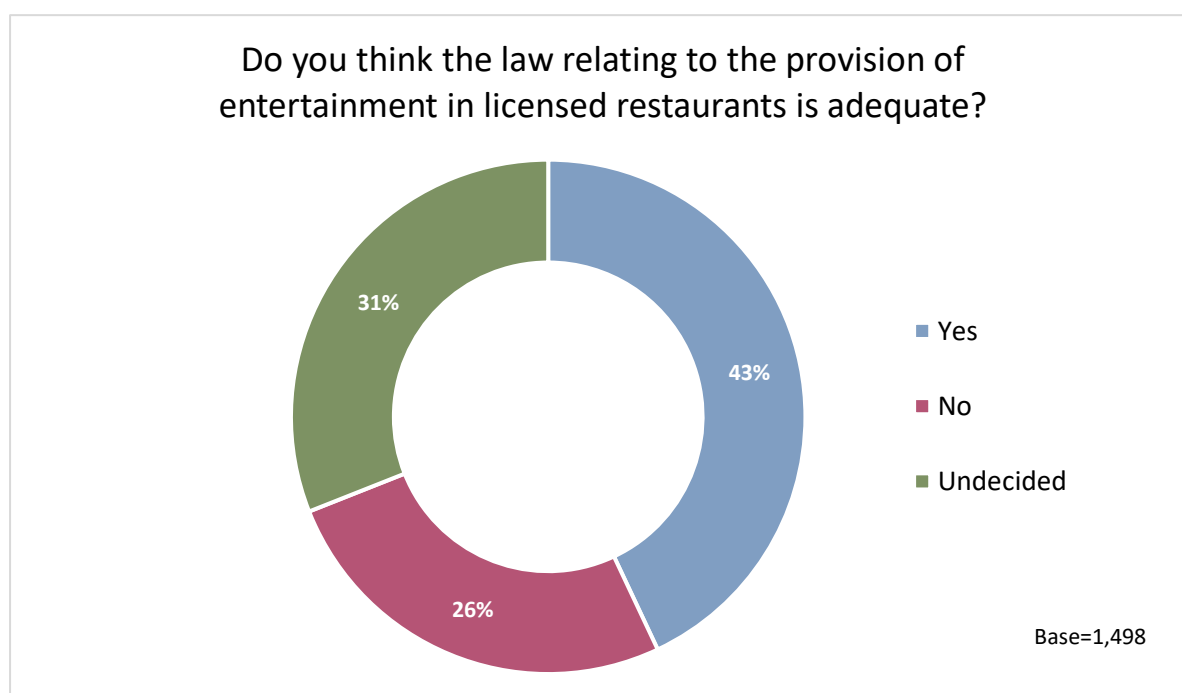
18.3. Those who answered ‘no’ were also asked ‘Do you think registered clubs should be permitted to advertise publicly?’. The vast majority (96%) responded ‘yes’. Those who responded ‘no’ were able to suggest what changes they thought were needed. Responses ranged from a full ban on advertising through to being able to advertise to members by any means.

19. Provision of entertainment in restaurants

19.1. Under current licensing law, the sale of alcoholic drinks in a restaurant is ancillary to a main table meal. It must also be paid for at the same time and on the same bill as the main table meal. Licensed restaurants may not charge an admission or entrance fee to the premises. The consultation document stated that there is evidence that some licensed restaurants have been operating into the early hours, providing entertainment and charging an entrance fee.

19.2. The 2016 Bill included a provision requiring a restaurant (whether stand alone or in a guest house) to display a notice detailing the conditions in relation to the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquor in the premises.

Figure 26: Responses regarding the law relating to the provision of entertainment in licensed restaurants



19.3. Just over two in every five respondents (43%) agreed that the law relating to the provision of entertainment in licensed restaurants was adequate, while just over a quarter (26%) did not think they were adequate, and 31% were undecided. Those who felt the law was not adequate were asked how

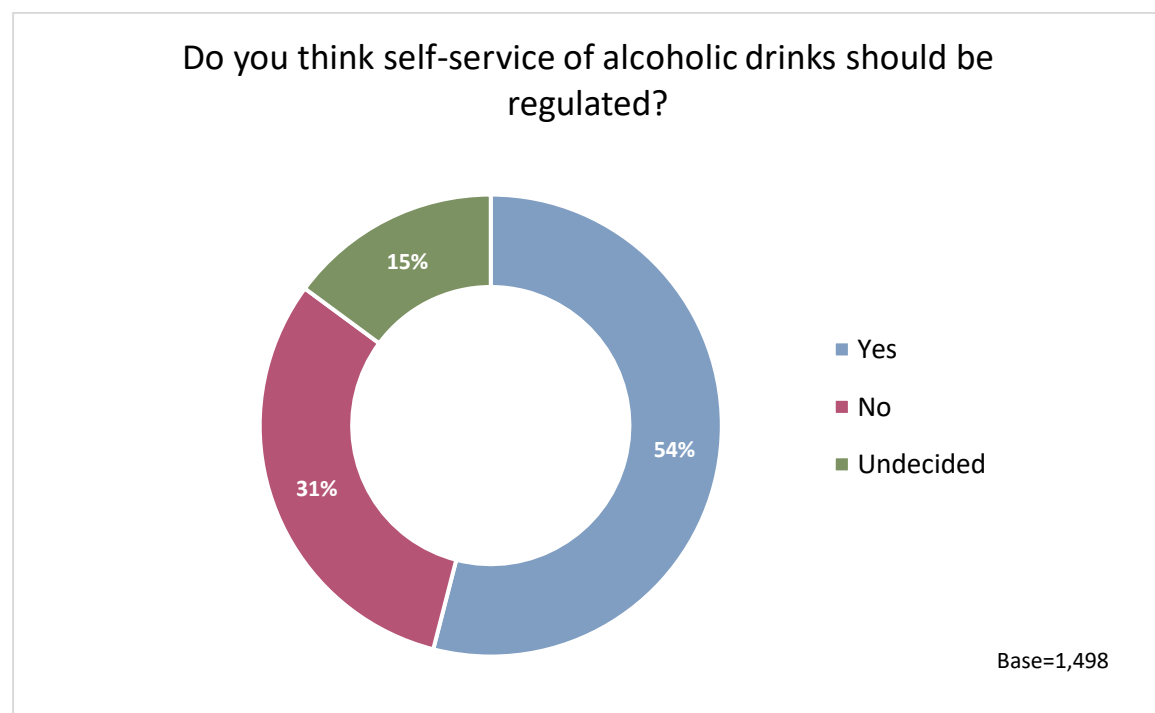
they thought the law should be changed. Comments included: be able to drink on after a meal; be able to have a drink regardless of having a meal; fall into line with legislation in the rest of the UK; and as per the 2016 Bill.

20. Self-service

20.1. Current licensing law is silent on innovations such as pour your own pint tables or alcohol vending machines, self-service tills and click and collect lockers, which provide easier access, self-service options for customers. Concerns have been expressed that self-service options may encourage underage and/or excessive drinking, allowing those who would otherwise not be served in a licensed premises access.

20.2. The 2016 Bill included a provision preventing the use of self-service, ensuring the sale and supply of alcoholic drinks is only under the direct supervision of a licence holder or member of staff.

Figure 27: Responses to whether self-service drinks should be regulated



20.3. The majority of respondents (54%) felt that 'self-service of alcoholic drinks should be regulated', 31% responded that it should not be regulated and 15% were undecided.

20.4. Those who answered 'yes' to this question were then asked 'what types of self-service do you think should be regulated?'. Results are detailed in the table below.

Table 3: Types of service to be regulated

Type of self-service	Response count	Response %
Vending machines	623	77%
Pour your own pint tables	567	70%
Self-service tills	543	67%
Click and collect lockers	476	59%
Other	35	4%
All respondents	810	100%

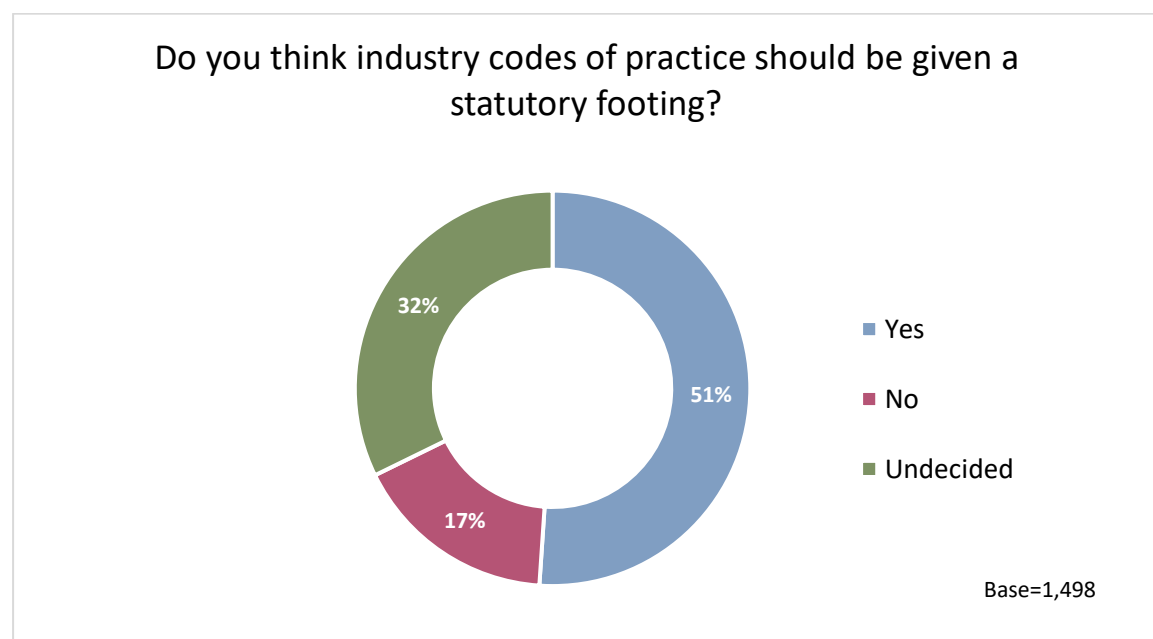
20.5. There was a total of 57 comments in relation to the regulation of self-service drinks. Most were concerned about the risk of under-age drinking or misuse of alcohol. Some felt that all sales of alcohol should be regulated, while others raised concerns over the potential lack of supervision for self-service.

21. Codes of practice

21.1. Codes of practice represent a form of self-regulation which complement rather than replace statutory regulation. In Northern Ireland, “The Responsible Retailing Code” developed by key stakeholders in the alcohol industry is the primary vehicle for tackling irresponsible drinks promotions.

21.2. The 2016 Bill included a provision allowing the Department to formally approve a code of practice, meaning adherence to such a code could affect the granting and/or renewal of a liquor licence.

Figure 28: Responses to whether industry codes of practice should be give statutory footing



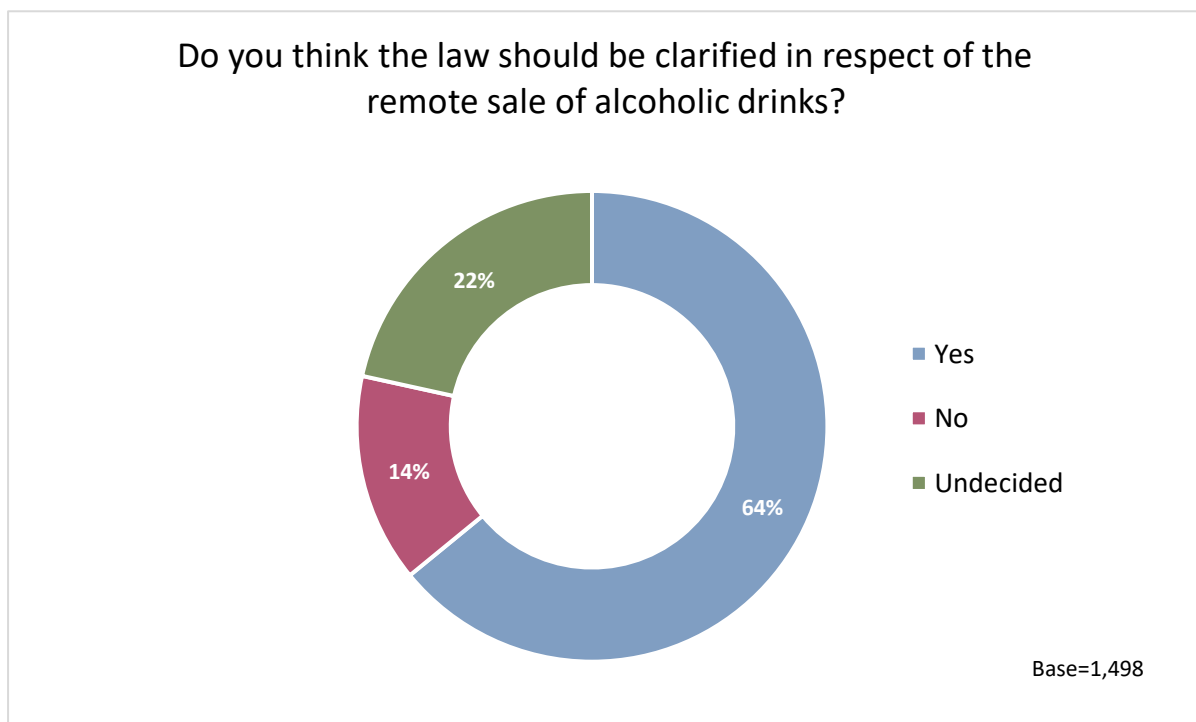
21.3. Just over half of respondents (51%) felt that industry codes of practice should be given a statutory footing, while 17% did not agree this was required and 32% were undecided.

22. Remote sale of alcoholic drinks

22.1. Current licensing law provides for the categories of premises which may apply for a liquor licence. In face-to-face sales, the question of where the sale takes place is obvious. The law is silent however on the remote sale of alcoholic drinks (alcohol delivery service), online, via app, telephone etc.

22.2. The consultation document highlights that concerns have been raised that illegal sales of alcoholic drinks to the public are taking place via these methods, with the potential for young people in particular to access alcohol. Other jurisdictions provide clarification in law that, where a sale is made online or by some other distance sale method, the premises from which the alcoholic drinks are dispatched for delivery must be licensed.

Figure 29: Responses on clarifying law in respect of remote sale of alcoholic drinks

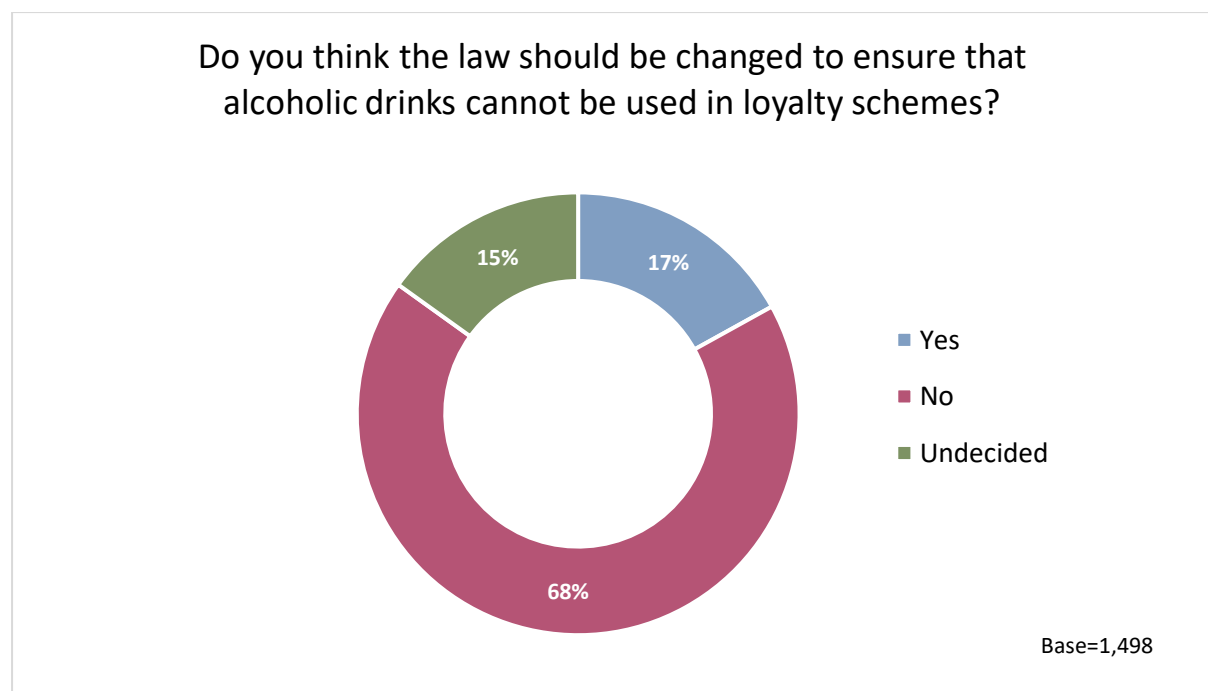


22.3. The majority of respondents (64%) felt that 'the law should be clarified in respect of the remote sale of alcoholic drinks', 14% felt it should not, and 22% were undecided.

23. Loyalty schemes

23.1. Loyalty schemes are a recognised way of rewarding regular customers. Many supermarkets in Northern Ireland run such schemes, often allowing customers to gather points on the purchase of products which are then accumulated and exchanged for discount vouchers or “free” goods at a later date for members. Points can be gained from the purchase of alcoholic drinks and points may be exchanged for the same. Some supermarkets however, within their own terms and conditions, will not allow the collection of points on spirits and liqueurs. Some public houses in England run loyalty schemes, openly advertising that you can save up your points (rewarded with each purchase) and use them on a round of drinks.

Figure 30: Responses to whether the law should be changed to ensure alcoholic drinks are not used in loyalty schemes

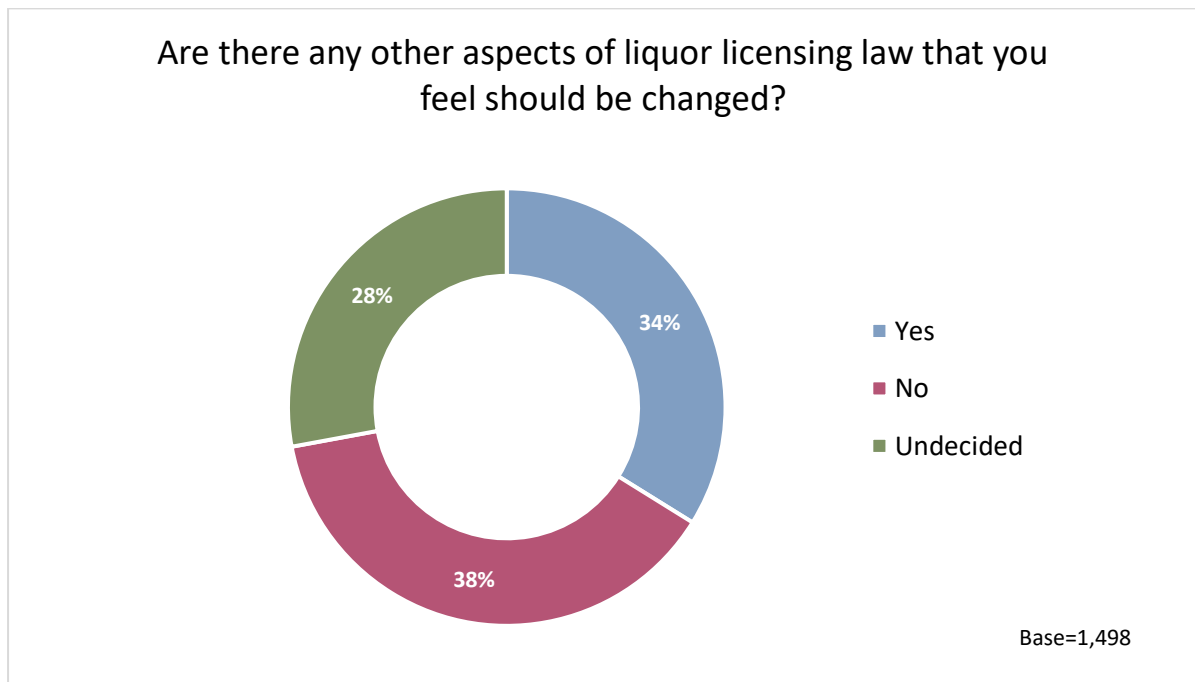


23.2. Two-thirds (68%) of respondents felt that the law should not be changed to ensure that alcoholic drinks cannot be used in loyalty schemes, 17% felt it should be, and 15% were undecided.

24. Suggested changes

24.1. Respondents were asked if there was any other aspects of liquor licensing law that they felt should be changed.

Figure 31: Responses to whether any other aspects of liquor licensing law should be changed



24.2. Just over a third (34%) of respondents answered 'yes' there were aspects of liquor licensing law that should be changed, nearly two-fifths (38%) answered 'no' and the rest (28%) were 'undecided'.

24.3. Those who answered 'yes' could provide additional comments, and a total of 514 were made. The majority of responses reiterated what had already been said earlier. However, the key messages are as follows:

- Micro-breweries should be able to sell their own product, by having a taproom licence and by being able to sell at food events.
- Bars and clubs should be open 24 hours a day.

- There should not be a monopoly on the bar industry and on the issue of licences.
- Laws in general should be relaxed, with less restrictions and more in line with a European model.
- Councils should be given the power to grant licences, not magistrates.
- Applications for liquor licences should be free, or at least reduce the cost.
- Need to remove the 'surrender principle' (i.e. the principle that a licence can only be granted when another one is given up).
- Sundays should have the same laws as rest of the week.
- Night clubs should be able to open until 4-6am.
- The tourism potential needs to be fully realised.
- Simplify legislation, especially when it comes to renewing a licence.
- Remove the requirement that entertainment should be 'live'.
- Introduce minimum unit pricing.

25. Additional evidence

25.1. Respondents were asked if there was additional evidence the Department should consider in relation to the impact of the current licensing laws.

25.2. There was a total of 349 responses to this question, 21 of which were from organisations. Most responses simply reiterated what had been previously stated, rather than highlighting additional evidence. However, some responses suggest:

- Reviewing European laws and case studies.
- Reviewing health-related research.

Annex 1: List of organisations which responded to the consultation¹

Abbey Villa FC
Alliance Party
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
ASDA
Association of Convenience Stores
BatchBuddy Ltd
Belfast Chamber
Belfast Homebrewers
Beoir
Bia Rebel
BMA Northern Ireland
British Beer & Pub Association
British Society of Gastroenterology
Bullhouse Brewing Company Ltd
CAMRA NI
CAMRA, Campaign for Real Ale
Church of Ireland Church and Society Commission
City Centre Initiative
Crossbreed Records
Dawkins & Georges Ltd
Faculty of Public Health in Northern Ireland
Farmageddon Brewing Limited
Federation of Small Businesses
FoodNI Ltd
Golf Holdings Ltd
Green Party NI
Heaney Brewery
Holiday Inn Belfast City Centre
Hospitality Ulster

¹ In a small number of cases more than one representative of an organisation has submitted a response. These have only been referenced once in the annex. Others have been excluded in order to maintain confidentiality.

Institute of Alcohol Studies
Institute of Licensing
Institute of Public Health in Ireland
Ion distillery
Ireland craft beverages
JD Wetherspoon PLC
Lacada Brewery Ltd
Law Society of Northern Ireland
Linen Quarter Business Improvement District
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
LongMeadow Cider
Mac Ivors Cider Co.
Micro Brewery
Mid Ulster Council
Mike's fancy cheese
Modest Beer
Molson Coors Brewing Company (UK) Ltd
Mourne Mountains Brewery Ltd.
Neil Mathews Architects
Newry (BID) Business Improvement District
Northbound Brewery
Northern Ireland Cider Producers
Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
Northern Ireland Drinks Industry Group (NIDIG) & the funding companies of the
Responsible Retailing Code NI (these include Diageo NI, Dillon Bass, Molson Coors,
Wine Inns and SHS)
Northern Ireland Federation of Clubs
Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association
Northern Ireland Hotels Federation
Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)
Northern Ireland Retail Consortium
Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance (NITA)
Northern Ireland Turf Guardians Association (NITGA)
Open House Festival Ltd

Portman Group
PSNI
Pub is The Hub
Retail NI
Royal College of Psychiatrists NI
The Approachablegroup
The Co-op
The Edible Flower
The Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews
The Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA)
UKHospitality
Walsh's Hotel
Whitewater Brewing co Ltd
Wineflair (Belfast Ltd)
WSTA Wine and Spirit Trade Association

Annex 2 Select comments by organisations

Royal College of Psychiatrists NI

Loyalty schemes

“Alcohol is no ordinary commodity and should not be treated as such by the use of loyalty schemes.”

Are there any other aspects of liquor licensing law that you feel should be changed?

“Aim to have a minimum unit price of 50 pence for all alcohol products sold.”

“Review the density of licensed premises around known hot spots for alcohol related public order offences.”

“Set up multidisciplinary groups involving licensing authorities, health bodies, PSNI, businesses and other relevant groups to monitor the night time economy.”

British Beer and Pub Association

Categories of licence

“Allow breweries to sell alcoholic products (principally those manufactured on their premises) on their premises, typically via a taproom, or a visitor bar, or equivalent... expand the tourism offer across Northern Ireland.”

Permitted hours

“We are supportive of greater flexibility for licensed premises to extend their opening hours. The proposed additional hour to current permitted hours, as outlined in the 2016 Bill, would support growth in tourism and the night-time economy.”

Good Friday – Suggested permitted hours

“Into line with normal opening hours. We call for the current opening hours for Easter Saturday and Sunday at Easter, to be brought into line with normal opening hours (normal permitted hours). Misalignment between both off and on trade outlets causes confusion particularly for those visiting Northern Ireland over the busy Easter period.”

Length of drinking up time

“Allow extra time for a more gradual and orderly dispersal of customers...and to alleviate pressure on taxis or public transport.”

Are there any other aspects of liquor licensing law that you feel should be changed?

“Legislation relating to an Article 44 ‘Permitted hours’ (late licence) on Sundays. We believe that the definition of entertainment under the Article 44 ‘Permitted hours (late licence) should be amended to reflect modern entertainment and the requirement for the performer to be live should be removed. e.g. to include a DJ, watching a live streamed concert, watching a Ulster Rugby play on live TV.

Simplify and remove unnecessary cost from the grant, renewal and amendment.”

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Premises added

“Permit craft breweries and distilleries to sell products made on their premises as part of a visitor centre experience (for consumption off premises), or for these small businesses to trade at markets or exhibitions...enable local producers of beer, cider and spirits to sell their products directly to the public.”

Do you think the current permitted hours for licensed premises are appropriate?

“102 late extensions for the sale of alcohol until 2.00 am. Extension of one hour, up to twice a week.”

Suggested permitted hours.

“It is unlikely that this minor change will address the issues surrounding confusion for tourists and visitors to Northern Ireland, particularly on Good Friday.”

Major events

“NILGA would be keen to see the Department introduce a provision to be able to cater for a ‘Special Event’ Licence for events of regional economic significance that require a liquor licence but fall outside normal trading hours or outside the scope of an existing licence type.”

Do you have any relevant evidence that you think should be considered in relation to the impact of the current licensing laws?

“Issues surrounding cost of licences, pricing considerations in relation to product placement in premises 'owned' by one of the small number of very large drinks companies (i.e. the majority of premises).

High cost of licences, due to the limited number of licences available and excess demand.”

Wine and Spirit Trade Association

Categories of licence

“Local producers are unable to sell their products directly to consumers. Allowing local producers to sell directly to consumers and/or businesses could lead to an increase in local producers within Northern Ireland, an increase in turnover for those businesses and greater choice for consumers.”

Restrictions on advertising in supermarkets and off-sales

“Limiting in-store promotional material to the alcohol areas would be unnecessary and ineffective regulation.

Why would alcohol advertising be allowed to continue outside a pub car park but not a supermarket car park?”

Codes of practice

“Licences should be granted, and conditions determined, on a case-by-case basis – considering business type, size, location and specific characteristics and activities taking place at the premises concerned.”

Remotes sales of alcohol

“There is no evidence to suggest that minors are accessing alcohol via distance sales.”

Northern Ireland Retail Consortium

Categories of licence

“‘Category of licence’ that will allow craft breweries and distilleries to sell alcoholic products made on their premises as part of a visitor centre experience”.

Deliveries of alcohol

“We are not aware of any evidence to show that the purchase of alcohol by underage people through home delivery or wine clubs is an issue, or that legislation is needed to tackle it.”

British Medical Association (BMA) NI

Do you think the current permitted hours for licensed premises are appropriate?

“No - I think they should be decreased.”

What do you think permitted hours should be?

“Availability is a key driver in the consumption of alcohol, the number of hours it is available is a key component in that.”

Do you think there should be restrictions placed on the advertisement of alcoholic drinks promotions from supermarkets and off-sales?

“Yes.”

What type of restrictions do you think are suitable?

“The discounting of alcohol in supermarkets has become a key driver of alcohol-related harm...consider prohibiting promotions based on bulk purchasing of alcohol, as implemented in Scotland.”

Are there any other aspects of liquor licensing law that you feel should be changed?

“Introduction of minimum unit pricing of alcohol.”

Federation of Clubs

Permitted hours

“Licensed premises, to include pubs, hotels, restaurants and registered clubs which adhere to good practice have an important role to play in the local economy and tourist industry. They should be rewarded for good practice allowing them to reflect the environment evident in other European countries.”

Additional opening – small pubs

“Unless there is a clearly defined local community purpose, pubs within this category should have no more than 40 such authorisations per annum.”

Young people in sporting clubs

“Although we welcome the consideration for the extension afforded to young people during the summer months, this consideration should be increased beyond the suggested May to September period, to one year, to facilitate young people engaged in such sports as Soccer, GAA, Rugby etc., which are played under floodlights.”

PSNI

Removal of off-sales

“...there is strong evidence to show that on some occasions the alcohol is being consumed after patrons leave licensed premises resulting in an increase in anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance.”

Provision of entertainment in restaurants

“There have been numerous complaints of restaurants acting like bars.”

Remote sale of alcohol

“We agree that the legislation requires to be amended to outline that where a sale is made online or similar, the premises from which the alcoholic drinks are dispatched for delivery must be licensed.”

Northern Ireland Hotels Federation

Categories of licence

“The federation would support the creation of a new licence for distilleries, breweries and cideries. However there would need to be a clear framework on the structure and terms of the licence.”

Permitted hours

“2016 Bill proposed an additional 1 hour, until 2am. The NIHF is fully supportive of this modest increase in permitted hours and feels it is more reflective of a contemporary society.”

Easter opening

“The current Easter regime is unfit for purpose and needs to be reviewed. While the Federation respects religious traditions around this holiday period, opening hours need to be revised in line with current permitted hours. This will allow hotels to compete on a level playing field on an island of Ireland basis and will be more reflective of a changing marketplace and the needs of a growing tourism sector.”

Removal of off-sales

“The NIHF DOES NOT support this initiative and believes it would be detrimental to all licensed premises.”

Major events

“If we are to compete for events of this nature we must ensure that there are impediments and that Northern Ireland is not disadvantaged in the bidding process.”

Alignment of entertainment and liquor licences

“People tend to go out later with modern work practices ...as we grow tourism, visitors from other destinations may choose to dine, drink and seek entertainment at a later hour. It is important that we allow for this and that hospitality businesses are given the opportunity to benefit from additional trade.”

Underage functions

“Formals and teenage gatherings took place in hotels for a number of years and in addition to being an important source of income, they provided a safe and controlled environment for young people to gather.

The current situation is that formals arrive early and in general leave by 9.00pm.

Aside from the fiscal loss, the experience is very limiting and groups of young people may leave a formal and move to other less controlled environments where alcohol is easily accessible.”

Family functions

“Those in attendance would be supervised by family members, not allowed to purchase alcohol and any concerns could be addressed by a clear Proof of Age policy.”

Other aspects

“Sunday trading needs to be amended so that Sunday night is brought into line with permitted hours under Article 44.

Entertainment needs to be redefined and include new types of activity including electronic sport, Live-streaming and electronically operated music.”

Hospitality Ulster

Categories of licence

“We support the introduction of an additional ‘Category of licence’ that will allow craft breweries, distilleries and cideries to sell alcoholic products manufactured on their premises as part of a visitor centre experience.”

Permitted hours

“These changes would also support the growth in tourism, with international visitors also looking for later entertainment and the sustainability of the hospitality industry.”

Additional hours – small pubs

“We call for an increase in ‘Additional hours’ under Article 45 (late license) from the current 20 nights per year to 104 nights per year for small pubs.”

Easter opening

“We call for the ‘current opening hours’ for Easter...to be brought into line with normal opening hours (normal Permitted hours). To allow them to meet the demands of a changing marketplace, developing tourism economy and the rising costs of running a business.”

Drinking-up time

“We call for an increase in the ‘Drinking up’ time by 30 minutes to allow for a more controlled consumption of the last drinks.”

Removal of off-sales

“We DO NOT support limiting the ‘Removal of off-sales’ to 11pm. We believe that doing so would result in customers leaving premises early and increase home drinking.”

Major events

“We support the introduction of powers to vary licence conditions to support the viability / sustainability of ‘Major Events’ of regional economic or cultural significance taking place in Northern Ireland.”

Alignment of entertainment and liquor licences

“If drinking up time was extended by 30 minutes and an additional hour for the sale of alcohol until 2am was introduced, Hospitality Ulster would reconsider its position and most likely back this proposal.”

Children’s certificate

“We believe that the need for a separate Children’s Certificate... should be removed and that the same conditions be included in the main liquor licence.”

Deliveries of alcohol

“Due to the growth of online alcohol sales and deliveries to home addresses...it has become even more important to put measures in place to ensure persons under 18 cannot access alcohol through deliveries.”

Codes of practice

“We believe that the Department should be allowed to formally approve industry codes of practice.”

Loyalty schemes

“Responsible promotions...are a legitimate way of maintaining and developing business.”

Other aspects

“Permitted hours’ (late licence) on Sundays, should be brought into line with Permitted hours for the other late nights

The definition of entertainment under should be amended to reflect modern entertainment.

We believe that Northern Ireland's rural communities could benefit from changes to the regulations that would allow pubs to provide community services, similar to Post Offices, local shops, community libraries etc., working in partnership with the charity, 'Pub is the Hub'. “

Institute of Public Health Ireland

Categories of licence

“Where a brewery or distillery is operating as a public house, we believe such premises should have the relevant on-trade licence.”

Permitted hours

“There has been no evidence that the Licensing Act 2003 in England and Wales has contributed to a relaxing continental drinking culture developing, or that the Act has led to increased diversity within the night time economy (two key aims of the Act).”

Drinking-up time

“We have found no independent evidence that extending drinking-up time actually reduces alcohol-related harm.”

Removal of off-sales

“IPH believes the ability of pubs to sell ‘carry outs’ further increases the risk of alcohol-related harm, both to those drinking and potentially family members.”

Major events

“It would seem appropriate and proportionate that for any conditions for a designated special event should be jointly agreed with both the Department of Health and Justice, or their appropriate agencies or regional/local representatives.”

Alignment of entertainment and liquor licences

“Where additional late opening licences are granted, the alignment of alcohol and entertainment licences is welcomed.”

Deliveries of alcohol

“IPH welcomes the provisions within the 2016 Bill which would require retailers to obtain documentary/ photographic evidence that the person taking delivery of alcohol is over 18 years old.”

Young people in sporting clubs

“Evidence reveals some concerning relationships between sports participation and alcohol misuse. It is important to ensure that the primary focus of sports clubs remains the promotion of the health and wellbeing of its members and that the sports club remains a community asset to support active, healthy lives free from ‘drinking culture’, particularly among children.”

Restrictions on advertising in supermarkets and off-sales

“IPH would recommend that the Department considers the provisions of Public Health (Alcohol) Act when developing similar legislation in Northern Ireland.”

Codes of practice

“IPH would recommend a statutory Code of Practice is introduced. We would suggest that the Department for Communities consult with the PSNI and Department of Health to determine the potential effects any such code would have on crime, disorder, demands on emergency services and health outcomes.”

Remote sales of alcohol

“IPH welcomes clarification of the law in respect of remote alcohol sales...ensure alcohol sales are conducted within the law.”

Loyalty schemes

“IPH would suggest the Department for Communities consider the legislative approach taken in the Republic of Ireland.”



YOUTH SERVICE CONSULTATION

Liquor Licensing Laws in Northern Ireland

Department for Communities

Rosie Thorpe
YOUTH SERVICE | EDUCATION AUTHORITY
FEBRUARY 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Department for Communities contacted the Education Authority Youth Service to request that they would carry out a consultation with young people to gain their views, and feedback, on the proposed changes to the liquor licensing laws in Northern Ireland.

PROPOSAL

This planned consultation would be specific to young people and the issues that may affect them. The process was instigated to allow the opinions and 'voice' of young people to be heard and contribute towards the overall consultation already underway. The consultation was planned to take place during January/February 2020.

The Youth Service liaised with Carol Reid from the Social Policy Unit, on the format of the engagement sessions and the key issues to focus on. The key issues identified were:

- Some elements of the permitted hours
- Deliveries of alcohol
- Underage functions
- Family functions
- Young people in sporting clubs

The consultation took place between the dates 22nd January the 4th February 2020 with 4 youth groups from the following areas:

- Ballycastle
- Lisburn and Castlereagh
- Derry/Londonderry
- West Belfast

A total 56 young people participated and were aged predominantly between 15 – 19 years.

PROCESS

The consultation took the following format:

- I. An introduction and rationale for the consultation
- II. A PowerPoint to present key issues and proposals
- III. A group discussion exercise to allow young people to discuss and form views
- IV. A questionnaire using Survey Monkey to allow young people to input their views on the proposal

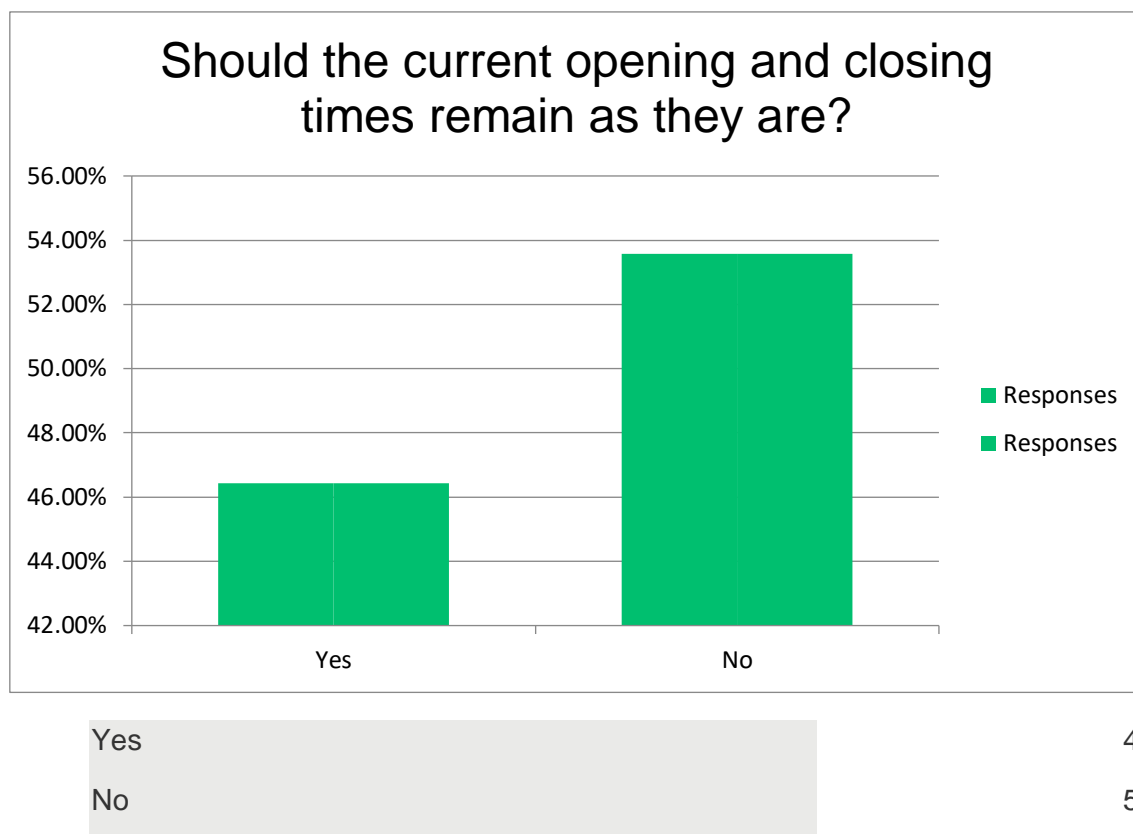
Each consultation workshop lasted around 1 hour.

The consultation process was carried out by the Regional Participation Team (Rosie Thorpe - Youth Officer, Chris Nicol - Senior Youth worker, Stuart Kennedy - Senior Youth worker).

The young people were very open and honest with their views, and participated in a cooperative and confident manner.

REPORT OF FINDING

Q: Should the current opening and closing times remain as they are?



Young People's Comments

Stay the same

Parents might be out to watch a match or listen to entertainment and cannot do so due to having a child

It would be a better to keep people off the streets.

They should be open longer for tourists etc.

It should be open later

Because some people might work weekends and want to go on a night out during the week

Because during the weekend they should open late because it might be the only time they can socialise because working during the week

Make the times later, make more money

Make the times later as it's nice to have the option to buy alcohol.

The pubs/bars will make more money

I think it an economy and more technological world there needs to be a review of the legislation, due to it being outdated.

It is the people's choice on when they should leave and it is their option to be responsible

They should be opened longer

Closing times are too early

Later, to encourage people to drink in bars as opposed to the streets

Extended to match most European countries

I like the new proposed law from 2016 for bigger establishments however for smaller pub I think it's unfair for them to only be allowed to stay open late 20 times a year as it restricts business for them

Smaller bars should be allowed to have an applied pass if there was an event to be hosted by a member of the public as to enable a more flexible use of public services

The laws should change as it will increase profits within local economies and will promote better standard of profit made by smaller businesses, benefitting tourism in particular

I want it to be until 2AM as it gives people enough time to get sorted and to wind down

They should be allowed later opening hours for more income to the businesses and for also more people to have a longer night out as it would only begin at around 9 or 10 o'clock and it would only last 2-3 hours

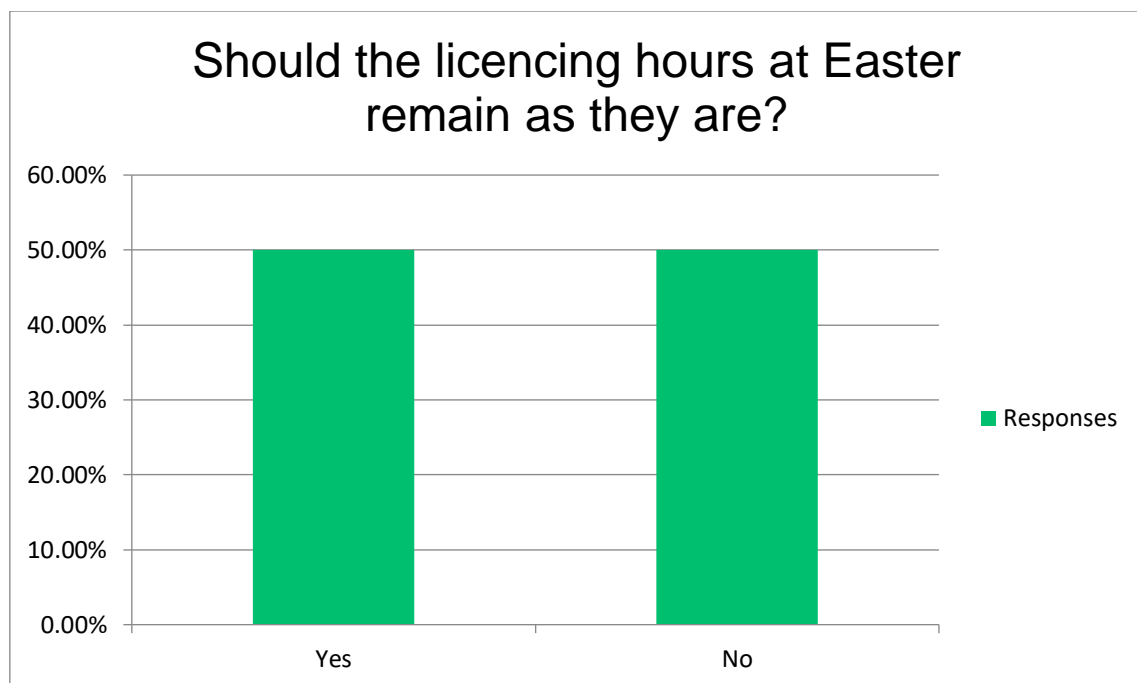
It only starts getting good at 12/1ish and if you want to keep it the same leave early not everyone has to stay the whole night

I like the proposal of 2am and that 85 occasions should be allowed so the pubs are more flexible

Extended

Changed to stay open later as in 2 am

Q: Should the licencing laws at Easter remain the same?



Yes
No

50.00%
50.00%

Young People's Comments

Stay the same

It will give people extra hours if wanted

Easter is a time for celebrations so people should be allowed to celebrate for as long as they like

Should remain later because more people become employed and people who don't have families could spend Easter at a bar socialising

Not all laws should be based around religion. It should be people choice what the buy/consume on a daily basis.

Allow people to buy alcohol on Easter Sunday, I'm not religious

It would give more people places to go and more money for the pub/bar

The good friday restriction is far too early

It's too early since Easter is a holiday

I think keeping off Sales on a Sunday is fine but on the Thursday there should be a change.

Make longer on Easter holidays to celebrate

It's a holiday, should be left opened longer

Close too early.

Not everyone celebrates Easter. It's a missed opportunity for extra revenue for businesses due to outdated legislation.

Later on Good Friday, as it is outdated

Extended to hours as normal throughout the year

As it is a religious holiday and I feel that people's religious views should be respected and also that if you are looking to drink you could just go to an off license earlier in the week or if you are a tourist buy drink in the duty free and drink at home or in the hotel

Religion is stereotyping every single public service so they should be allowed to run as normal within legal boundaries as to appease public appeal and to enable tourism to be properly expanded

Some feel as though religion is being forced upon them through laws closing on the designated religious days, and therefore it should change so that people have a choice to go out to the pubs

It's restricting people who don't believe in religion, if they are religious they can tell their boss who then makes a decision on whether to let them go early. It's also contributes to a massive loss of money which can and needs to be used to improve towns.

They should be allowed to open later on good Friday

Some people don't follow the religion and it's a week of work to have fun

It's a holiday, if religious people disagree they don't need to go out.

Because some people are not religious

These laws are only affecting non Christian's

It should be changed until 1 am at least

Additional points from group discussion

Some participants gave feedback in discussions that they felt Easter is a time for families. Therefore pubs should be closed to allow the time for families to be together.

Q: Should a young person aged under 18 years be permitted to receive deliveries of alcohol?



Yes
No

57.14%
42.86%

Young People's Comments

Should be the same as bars

They're too young and should not be able to accept it just like in a shop

The young person could take the alcohol for themselves and consume the product

That's enabling a young person to drink

People should be 18 and have to show id like they do in a shop

Because they could drink the alcohol

They might take it themselves

More than likely the parent may be out at the shop and the child may have to collect it.

Too young

If the persons parent or guardian allows them to accept the delivery it shouldn't be a problem

Children at ANY age could collect the alcohol. Children under the age of 15 are not responsible enough to have access to alcohol personally and would promote bad habits and more drinking in young people. What if parents weren't in the house and didn't know their child had access to alcohol

This is because the shopping centres do not allow under 18s but there allowed to accept deliveries

Should have to show ID.

It is no different from purchases alcohol in a shop

Depending on age, if they're younger than 12/13 then no it should not be permitted but older potentially

16+ but no younger

You should have to provide ID upon delivery

Under 18 shouldn't be permitted & id should be shown

I believe nobody under the age of 16 should be allowed to receive alcohol in a delivery unless they supply a valid ID or a student ID which should also be made a form of legal identification with a person's date of birth and face at minimum and an adult must have written out the specific purchase details of an under 18 is collecting the alcohol

There needs to be a minimum age of which they can accept the delivery. There's also an issue in which not everyone who is 18 years who don't have an ID, there needs to be a way that we as students can use our student ID as a form of identification instead of ID.

The parents should trust their children to accept the order and it is not necessarily for the young person and therefore does no harm

Additional points from group discussion

Most of the young people had not thought about this before as they didn't realise this was the law.

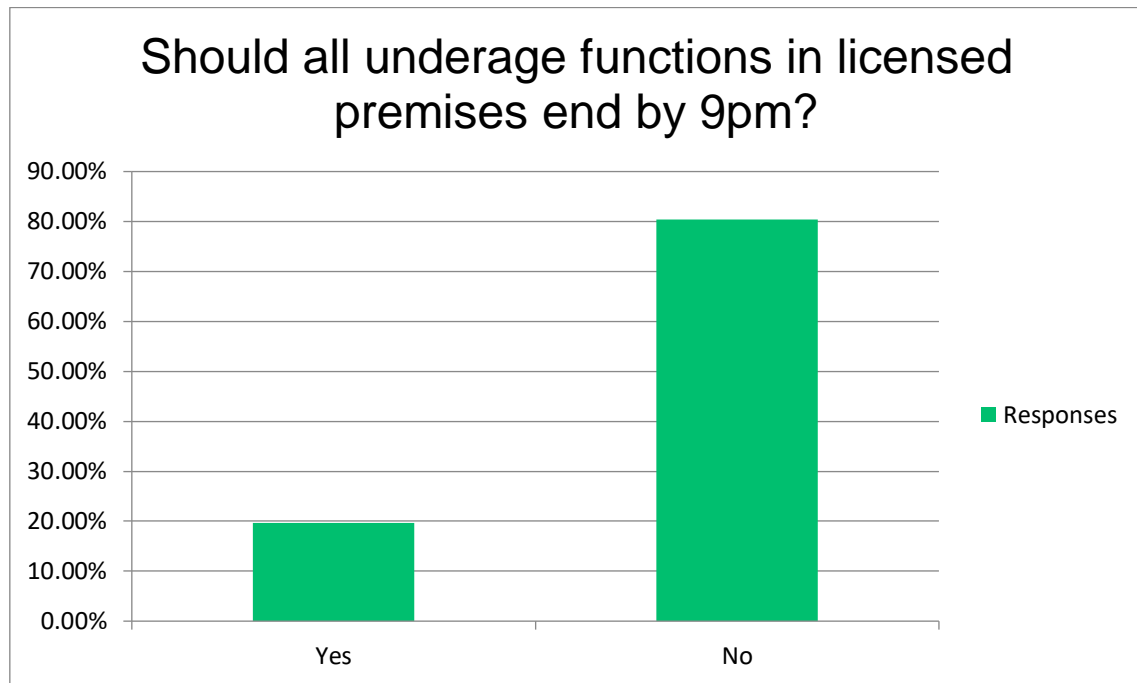
Some thought only over 17 year olds should be able to receive deliveries of alcohol at home, i.e. shopping deliveries

Others thought it should be only over 18 years should be able to receive deliveries of alcohol at home.

The Seller should insist if there wasn't an adult at home that ID should be checked, voting cards, student cards, provisional licences.

Some discussions around the law staying the same produced ideas that a Drinks License could be introduced. Young people could have written permission from your Mum & Dad. ID must be signed by Parents, Teacher's etc.

Q: Should all underage functions in licensed premises end by 9pm?



Yes

19.64%

No

80.36%

Young People's Comments

9 o'clock is far too early to finish a function even for children, they shouldn't have to be separated from their parents

Because kids should be allowed de watch football

If a big event is on and you be forced to leave is unfair

They should end at 11pm because it helps keep them off the street, and gives them somewhere to go.

There is no alcohol so no harm will come to the children let them stay longer

Children should be allowed to stay longer if their parents permit it

If no alcohol is permitted children should be allowed to stay to later hours unless their at harm

9 like? Wise up

School formals - most people are over 16 cutting the night short kind of ruins it. I think that a reasonable time would be 10:30 or 11. If alcohol is a problem just have the bar closed so that they aren't able to buy it on the premises

Make it later, people get kicked out of hotels at formals and then go out with fake ids to clubs which is unsafe.

It's not fair on formals and other events. It's better to have people drinking in a supervised manner than out on the street.

Again – makes more money

9pm is when most people would typically head out for the evening

Premises do not stick strictly to this law
Later because just cause young people are there doesn't mean they need to drink. Make longer to 12am or 1 am

Making them longer

Ends to early and will just encourage young people to go somewhere else and get a fake ID

Should extend to 10/11 pm Family events should allow younger

It should be extended to at least 11pm

Doesn't allow people during a formal to enjoy the night

Alcohol should stop being served after 9pm but the events should be able to run longer

it's unnecessary

Too early, bar should close but premises should remain open

It's too early

Many events that take place at licenses premises don't involve alcohol

After 9 if bar is closed

Match other areas.

As some functions might run over for example if there was a disco on I don't think it's fair for the kids to leave the premises if the parents' consent for them to be there later

Change the time to 11 and have protective measures implemented if children are present

The bars should be closed but the actual functions itself should be able to continue

It means there's an increase that they may have after parties which contributes to a risk of something dangerous, such as drug use, occurring. If they make the times late, they can keep an eye on people attending and make sure they're safe.

If bars are closed then teens /under 18s can still have fun but sensible

If alcohol isn't being served then there shouldn't be a problem

Because by then people are only starting to relax and have fun

People will be safer in a building rather than being out on the street at 9 where they will find somewhere else possibly not as safe to go after

Additional points from group discussion

Some felt that it would be important that these events should end before the main bars would close. This would be for safeguarding reasons, reducing the chance of underage young people leaving at same time as those who have been drinking.

Many felt that formals already have a drinking culture with young people taking alcohol before they arrive. This is putting young people at more harm because they drink too much before they arrive. Some reported this having an impact of sickness, fights etc. These young people felt that no access should be permitted to people who are already drunk.

Most felt that the events should end around midnight.

Many (in particular the more rural areas) did not feel that licensed premises were always adhering to this rule.

Some young people reported their events such as formals were being held as licensed events for those over 18 years (even though many attending may be under 18). This meant that the early closure did not affect their event.

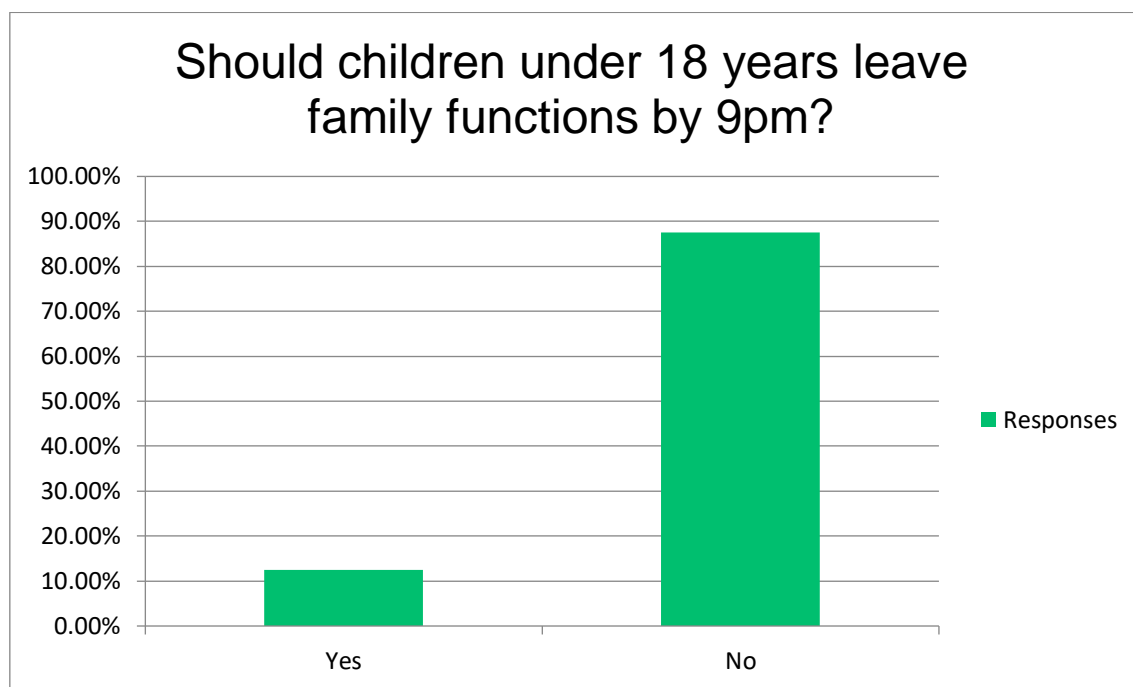
Many events around the border areas are held across the border so these laws do not have an impact.

Many young people are hiring Airbnb's for parties after the formal because they have to leave the venue too early.

They feel there is a bigger drug culture because there is no access to alcohol at the venue.

Young people are getting fake IDs to go onto other venues after the formals.

Q: Should children under 18 years leave family functions by 9pm?



Yes

12.50%

No

87.50%

Young People's Comments

It's a big day for the family so why should anyone leave

If accompanied by an adult, the child should be allowed to stay to whatever time the adults stays to.

It's a family event I don't see why they should leave no harm done we are with family

It is a family event so it should be up to the family

Children should be allowed to stay longer if their parents permit it

Unfair- unless they are at harm or person who is responsible for them is unable to care for the child, children should be allowed to stay to later hours

Just depends on how drunk their parents are

It could mean that young people are not out in the street drinking as much and may be in a safer environment which may take some pressure off police

This is completely unfair. If the parents allow their children to be there then that is their choice. Not the laws.

They shouldn't have to leave, with their family at weddings

I think that if there is at least 1 sober and responsible adult present and supervising them it should be okay

That's the night ended early. Say if it was a celebration and that's that ruined because you have to go early

If they are safe and away from harm and with their family especially I see no reason why they should be forced to leave the function this early

Your with your family, they should remain responsible for the young person

They can still join in having fun at a family event without alcohol being a problem

It would not be fair as they would be unsupervised and miss spending time with family.

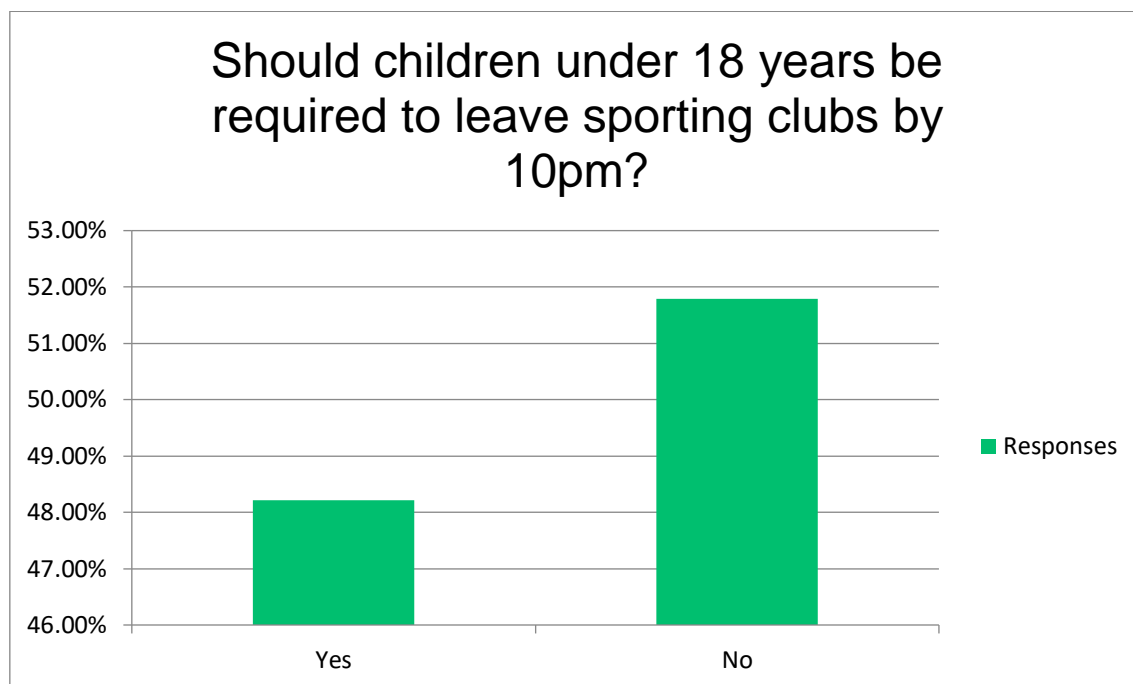
As more than likely that parents or adults have paid for this function

Ruins it for the rest of the family
 Miss out and enjoy family
 It's inconvenient and as long as everyone's behaving it should be extended
 If people are surrounded by their family it isn't a problem
 Underage people even kids should be allowed to party as well
 They're with family, if they are at harm then they should leave.
 Not unless they are in danger
 It would be inconvenient for many families
 After 9, family pose a lot of responsibility for the young people so they will be fine
 With family
 Some family events are important so it should be allowed to stay for a bit longer, i.e. Weddings
 If the parents' consent to the underage child being there and the bar manager is okay with it.
 I don't think other people can say to them about leaving because they aren't really in the place
 to dictate to someone whether or not they should leave if they have permission
 It's the parents decision however I believe the limit should be raised to a maximum of 11pm
 People who go to family functions are aware that children will be present and therefore should
 be prepared to have children present and therefore the law should not change
 It means that people who have friends who are 18 years but they aren't are having to leave
 early because of it. If people get annoyed it's an opinion and it's up to the parents to deal with
 them. This law should change to the Scotland law.
 Because it is up to the parents to look after them and if the child is 16 or 17 years of age then
 they are less likely to have a babysitter and their parents may not trust them at home
 Only if there is a possibility of harm coming to the child
 It's a family function and may be important or special, it's up to parents when children go home
 Because it should be up to the parents to decide when they're child leaves
 They could be with their parents so therefore their parents will have to leave as well which
 they won't like
 it's far too early to end someone night out, if it's for a celebration and or with family there
 shouldn't be such a harsh restriction on the time allowed for them to enjoy their evening if they
 are safe
 As it could be a special occasion and people are only starting their night and therefore don't
 have a long and relaxing night with family and friends
 Having birthday parties and family events would not be fair if it ended at 9pm.
 I think this is unacceptable due to the reason that people may be out and with their children
 they need to stay etc. and they can't also. I think it needs to be reviewed and 9pm for say 14
 to 17 is to early
 stay with family adult supervision
 It's too early for a child to leave their family
 Not fair
 As long as there's a sober adult there

Additional points from group discussion

There were discussions whether younger children should be allowed to stay after 9pm and
 some felt that they should not be allowed as there may be drunk adults present, however this
 should be relevant to an age group.

Q: Should children under 18 years be required to leave sporting clubs by 10pm?



Yes

48.21%

No

51.79%

Young People's Comments

It's too early

I think that if children are supervised by an adult they can stay until 11.

Children should be allowed to stay longer if their parents permit it

If there is a presentation or an event on, children should be allowed to stay especially on the weekends, if no alcohol is served

They shouldn't be forced out, awards night for their clubs

Let people have fun in a controlled environment.

No again that's events ruined

I think this is a reasonable hour for the night to end to help prevent sportsmen set good examples and refrain from over indulging in alcohol

Specific events go on longer than 10pm.

A sporting club should be inclusive of everyone

It doesn't make much of a difference

If they aren't drinking there's no problem

It's too early

It would be inconvenient for many families

1 event a year should be allowed to pass 10pm for award ceremonies etc

Many teams have underage players on it and having functions like this would be considered team bonding and players who have young birthdays may feel left out or isolated if they are being made to leave early

If it's an event within the sporting club that has a bar and the young people (under 18's) are accompanied by the leaders and supervisors of the sports club then it is suitable until a set time agreed by the establishment

The people on the teams could have friends that are one month off being 18 and are required to leave and it isn't fair for them to have to leave

They may have awards to collect which can happen at any time during the night. Their friends may be older than them which leaves them missing out. If they want to promote sports, then they shouldn't be drinking.

Because there may be an awards ceremony or another special occasion happening and then they wouldn't be able to stay for that

No alcohol and they have the choice to leave and not stay

It's a community event just as long as they are under supervision

Because it could be considered team bonding and just because someone is not 18 they will be excluded from the team bonding

It should be open later because some people might have older friends so they will have to leave and go home alone whilst their friends are still allowed to stay

Available in alternative formats.

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