

Belfast City Council

Council Area Profile

September 2019

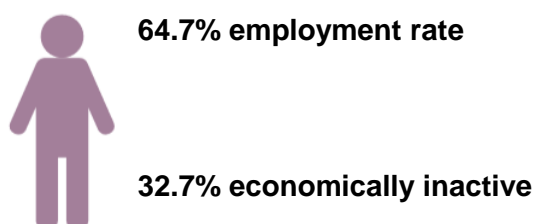
GVA

GVA in Belfast in 2017 was £16.3bn. This represented 41.1% of the NI total¹.

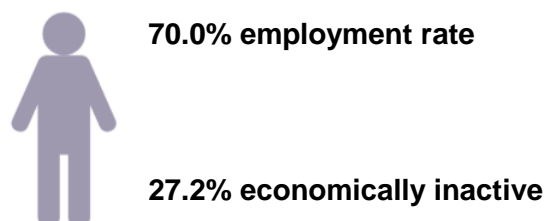
Labour Market Structure

In 2018, the employment rate for NI was 70.0% and the economic inactivity rate was 27.2%. By comparison, Belfast reported one of the lowest employment rates of 64.7% and an inactivity rate of 32.7%, which was one of the highest rates amongst all Local Government Districts (LGDs).

Belfast

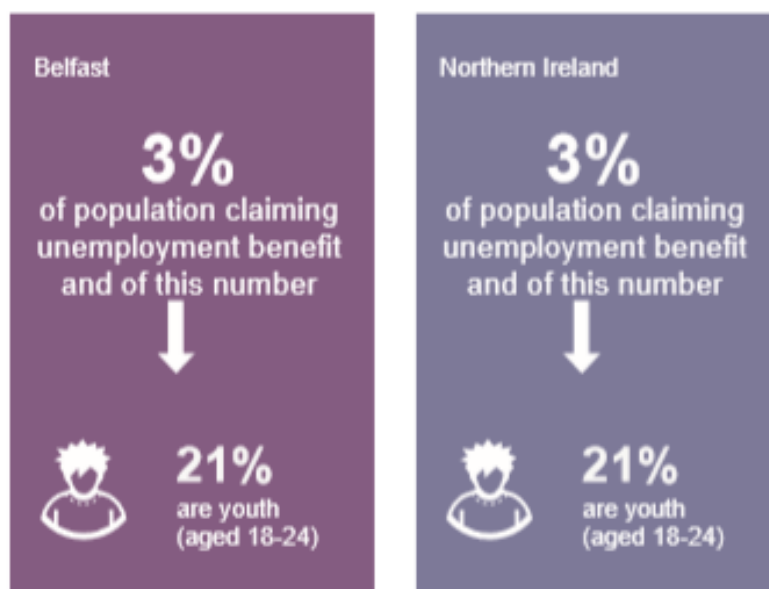


Northern Ireland



In 2017 Belfast had the lowest self-employment rate across all LGDs at 10% which was well below the NI average of 16%.²

In 2018, 3% of the population in Belfast were claiming unemployment benefit and was second highest across all council areas. Approximately one-fifth of those in receipt of claiming benefits were young people (aged 18-24).³



¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS)

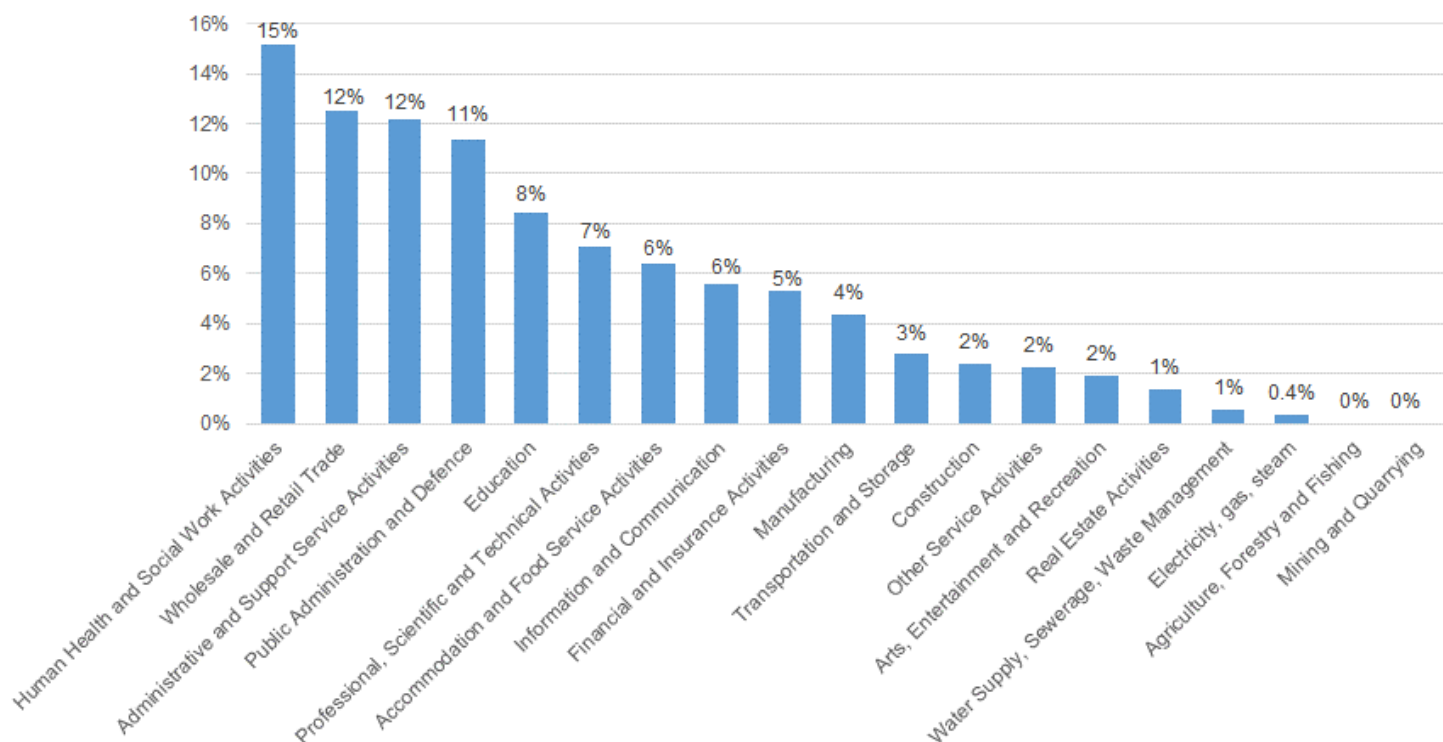
² Labour Force Survey, January-December 2018

³ Claimant Count, NISRA

Employee Jobs

In 2018, there were 226,045 jobs within Belfast representing 30% of the NI total. Human Health and Social work activities is Belfast's largest sector (15%) followed by Wholesale and Retail (12%) and Administrative & Support Service Activities (12%)⁴.

Figure 1: Employee Jobs by Industry, 2017



In terms of professional services, Belfast has the largest share of the NI total by far of employee jobs in Financial and Insurance Activities; Information and Communication; and Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities. Each of these 3 sectors represent between 5-7% of Belfast District Council Area's total employee jobs (18% in total).

The private sector accounted for 70% of all employee jobs in Belfast in 2018 compared to the NI average of 73%.⁵

Table 1: Public / Private Sector, 2018

District Council	Total	Public Sector %	Private Sector %
Belfast	226,045	30%	70%
Total	759,359	27%	73%

⁴ Industry statistics refer to 2017 data. Data for employee jobs by industry is published every 2 years.

⁵ NI Business Register and Employment Survey

Redundancies

In 2018 there were 2,498 redundancies across NI. Approximately one-quarter (24%) of redundancies were in Belfast⁶.

Earnings

In 2018 annual median earnings by place of residence (£22,422) and by place of work (£25,912) for Belfast were higher than the median annual earnings figure for NI (£21,923).⁷



Agriculture⁸

The number of farms in Belfast is very low at 31 in total and representing 0.1% of total NI farms. Of those, the majority of farm businesses in Belfast are classified as very small (81%), which is a similar position to the NI average.

Table 2: Number of farms by farm business size⁹ and by District Council in Northern Ireland, June 2018

District Council	Average SO/farm (€ '000)	Number of farms					Total
		V. Small	Small	Medium	Large		
Belfast	94.8	25	1	3	2	31	
NI Total	77.6	19,188	2,824	1,190	1,693	24,895	

⁶ NISRA, Council Area Statistics

⁷ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, NISRA

⁸ DAERA, June Agricultural Census 2018

⁹ Note: Farm business size classification is calculated from Standard Labour Requirements (SLR). The total SLR for each farm is calculated by multiplying its crop areas and livestock numbers by the appropriate SLR coefficients and then summing the results for all enterprises on the farm. A standard labour unit is equivalent to 1,900 hours of work per year.

Cattle and Sheep farms constitute 84% of farms in Belfast.

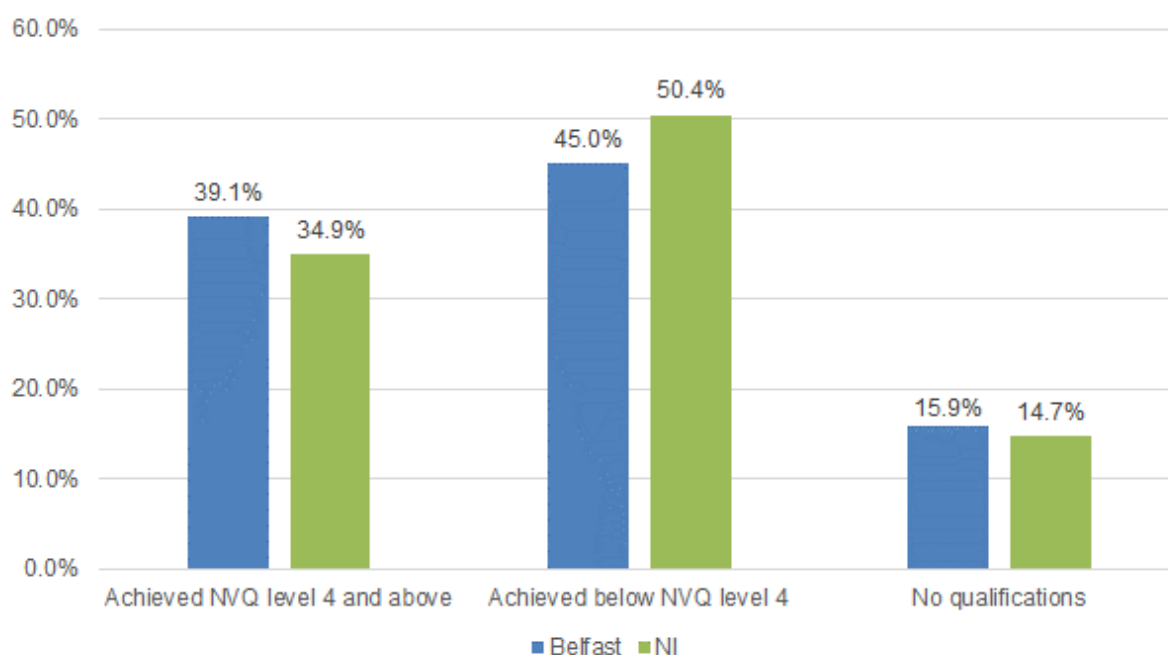
Table 3: Top 3 farm types by number of farms by District Council in Northern Ireland, June 2018

District Council	General cropping	Dairy	Cattle & Sheep		Total number of farms
			LFA ¹⁰	Lowland	
Belfast	3	1	19	7	31
NI Total	574	2,545	14,700	5,109	24,895

Qualifications

In 2018, Belfast had a higher rate than the NI average in terms of 16-64 year olds who had NVQ level 4 and above¹¹ and was the second highest across LGDs (39.1%).¹² Those with no qualifications was higher than the NI average (15.9% and 14.7% respectively).

Figure 2: Qualifications based on working age population (16-64), 2018



¹⁰ Less Favoured Area

¹¹ This relates to those at degree level and above which includes foundation degrees, higher degrees, teaching and nursing degrees.

¹² NISRA, [Labour Force Survey 2018](#)

Cross Border Movements

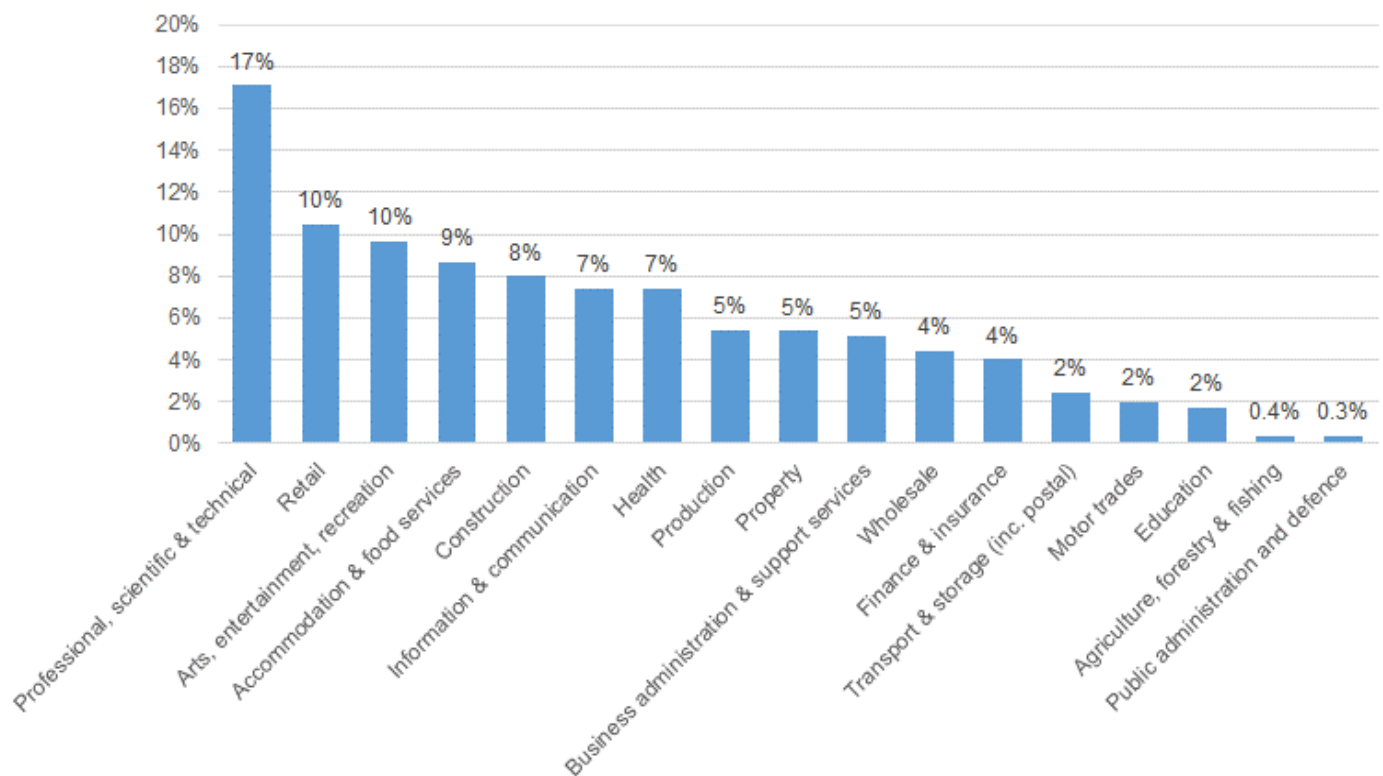
Analysis of Mobile Network Operator (MNO) information¹³ finds that 2% of cross border trips from NI to ROI by NI residents started in Belfast City Council. Just over 1% of crossings from ROI to NI by ROI residents ended in Belfast.

On average residents made around 1 cross border trip per fortnight. 33% of cross border travel was for work purposes and 67% was for social/leisure purposes.

Business Profile

In 2019 there were 10,705 businesses located within Belfast representing 14% of the NI population. The majority (80%) are classified as micro (0-9 employees). The top 3 sectors in Belfast are: Professional, Scientific & Technical (17%), Retail (10%) and Arts, Entertainment, Recreation (10%)¹⁴.

Figure 3: Number of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses Operating in Belfast by Broad Industry Group, 2019



Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

According to Invest NI's Belfast Council Briefing¹⁵, over the period 2014/15 to 2018/19, 181 externally owned businesses were offered support that contributed towards investment commitments of £840m and assisted 8,630 jobs in the area.

¹³ DfE (2018) [Cross Border Movements: The movement of people across the NI-ROI border](#)

¹⁴ NISRA, Inter-Departmental Business Register

¹⁵ <https://secure.investni.com/static/library/invest-ni/documents/investni-support-council-area-belfast-2019.pdf>

Web-links to useful data sources

[Labour Force Survey](#)

[Claimant Count](#)

[Regional analysis and trends](#)

[Quarterly Employment Survey](#)

[Business Register and Employment Survey](#)

[Annual Business Inquiry](#)

[Redundancies](#)

[Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings](#)

[Regional Gross Value Added \(Balanced\)](#)

[NI Composite Economic Index](#)

[Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics](#)

[Inter Departmental Business Register](#)

[Agricultural Census 2018](#)

[Local Government Tourism Statistics](#)

[Invest NI Regional Profiles](#)

- [Eastern](#)
- [North Eastern](#)
- [North Western](#)
- [Southern](#)
- [Western](#)

[Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2018](#)

[Northern Ireland Trade and Investment Under 'No Deal'](#)

[The movement of people across the Northern Ireland - Republic of Ireland border](#)

[An analysis of migrant workers from the NI census](#)