

Wellbeing and engagement in culture, arts, heritage and sport by adults in Northern Ireland

Findings from the Continuous Household Survey 2021/22

Annual publication

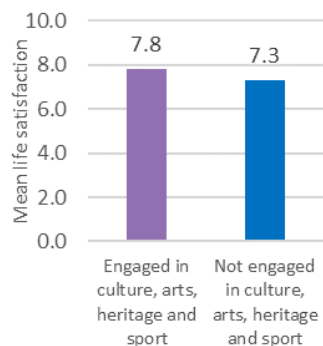
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Coverage: Northern Ireland

Main Story

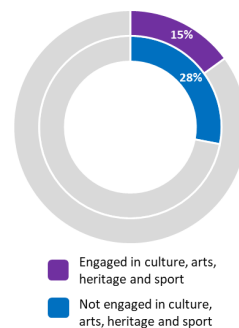
- Across a range of measures of personal wellbeing: life satisfaction, self-efficacy, locus of control and loneliness, analysis shows higher personal wellbeing among adults who engaged in culture, arts, heritage and sport than among adults who had not engaged in these activities. Whilst this report shows a link between engagement and personal wellbeing it does not show that one causes the other. For example, previous analyses have shown that individuals' poor health is a key barrier to their full participation in culture, arts and sporting activities.

Life satisfaction



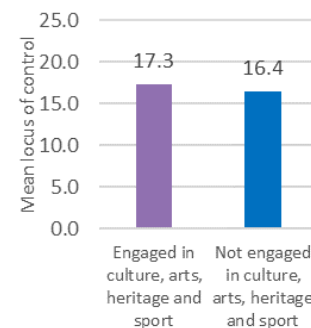
For adults engaging in culture, arts, heritage and sport, the estimated mean life satisfaction score was 7.8 in 2021/22. The estimated mean life satisfaction score for all adults in Northern Ireland was 7.7.

Low self-efficacy



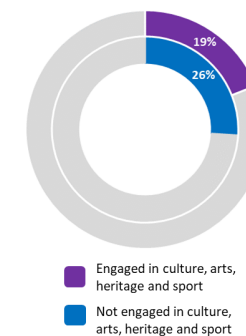
For adults engaging in culture, arts, heritage and sport, 15% had low self-efficacy in 2021/22. Considering all adults in Northern Ireland, 18% had low self-efficacy.

Locus of control



For adults engaging in culture, arts, heritage and sport, the estimated mean locus of control score was 17.3 in 2021/22. The estimated mean locus of control score for all adults in Northern Ireland was 17.1.

Loneliness



For adults who engaged in culture, arts, heritage and sport, 19% reported feeling lonely at least some of the time. Considering all adults in Northern Ireland, 20% reported feeling lonely.

Note: Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data collection for the 2021/22 survey moved from face-to-face interviewing to telephone mode with a reduction in the number of questions. The results from the CHS 2021/22 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content.

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This report presents the findings from the 2021/22 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) in relation to wellbeing and engagement with culture, arts, heritage and sport in Northern Ireland and also wellbeing and volunteering. In addition, the report presents an analysis of the relationship of loneliness and general health to engagement with culture, arts, heritage and sport and volunteering.

Note: As with 2020/21, data collection for the 2021/22 survey moved from face-to-face interviewing to telephone mode, with a reduction in the number of questions, due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Therefore, the results from the CHS 2021/22 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content. The output from the survey, in terms of the range and depth of topics covered, has been reduced from that of previous years, with the subsequent capacity for detailed analysis constrained. More information is available on the [NISRA website](#). While the results for 2021/22 cannot be compared with previous years, it should be noted that engagement in culture, arts, heritage and sport and volunteering were impacted by the various closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Executive Office is responsible for publishing [estimates of self-efficacy, locus of control, life satisfaction and loneliness](#) for the population of Northern Ireland. This report looks at the relationship of these metrics to engagement in culture, arts, heritage and sport.

Continuous Household Survey

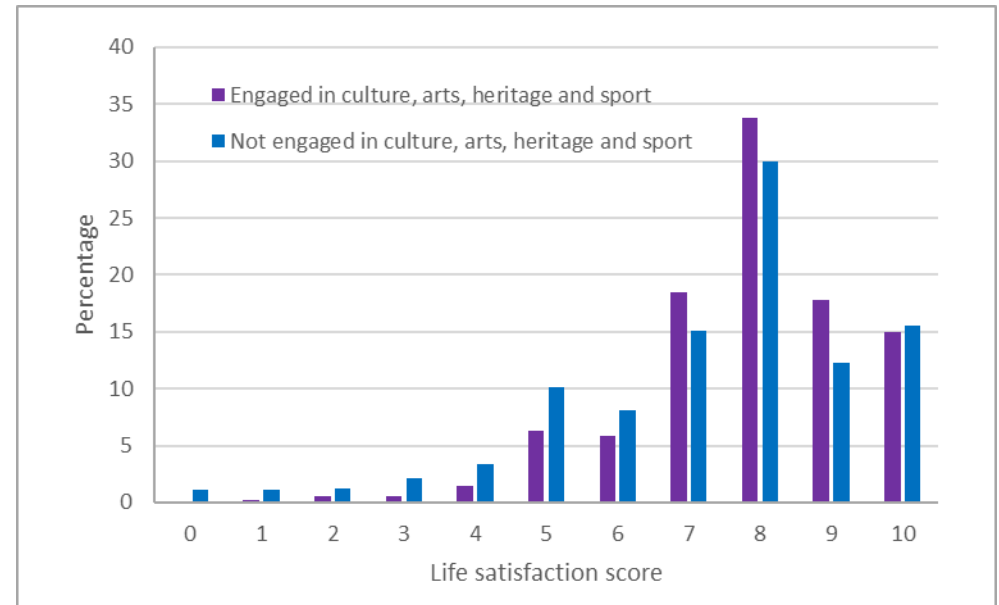
More information relating to the CHS, methodology, definitions, wellbeing questions and the interpretation of figures can be found in the definitions and technical notes section. The questions that were asked in the CHS 2021/22 relating to culture, arts, heritage, sport and volunteering are available [here](#). Data tables are available in [Excel](#) and [ODS format](#).

Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction relates to an individual's satisfaction with their life overall. Respondents were asked: 'Overall, how satisfied are you with life nowadays?' and asked to give their response on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is 'not at all satisfied' and 10 is 'completely satisfied'. Higher scores on the life satisfaction scale represent a greater sense of contentment with life. Life satisfaction, is one of four measures currently being used by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to explore and measure national wellbeing¹.

In 2021/22, the estimated mean life satisfaction score for adults in Northern Ireland was 7.7. For adults engaging in culture, arts, heritage and sport the estimated mean score was 7.8 which was higher than for those not engaging (7.3). Higher average life satisfaction scores were found for those who engaged in the arts, visited a museum or science centre, visited a place of historic interest or participated in sport in comparison with those who did not engage in these activities. A higher average life satisfaction score was also found for those who volunteered in comparison with those who did not. No statistically significant difference was found for those who used the public library service or used PRONI services compared with those who did not.

Distribution of life satisfaction scores for adults in Northern Ireland

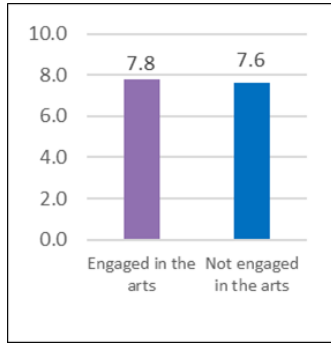


¹ See: [Personal well-being in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/personal-well-being-in-the-uk)

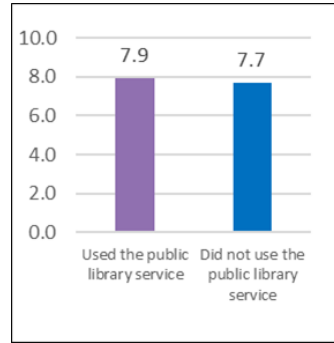
Life satisfaction

Culture, arts, heritage and sport

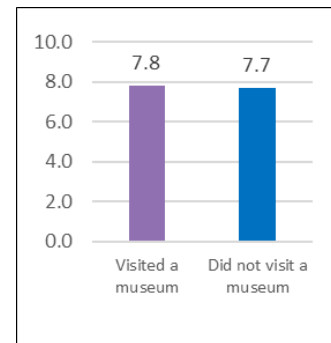
Arts



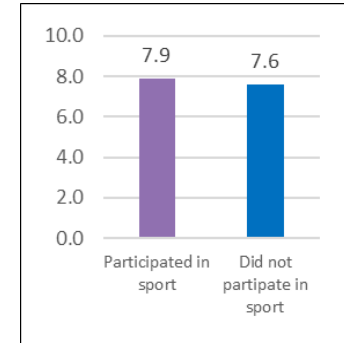
Libraries



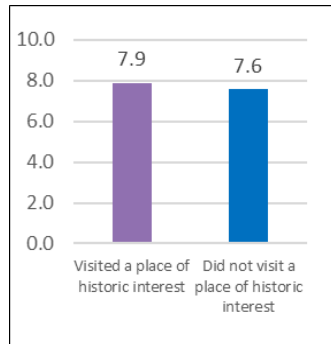
Museums



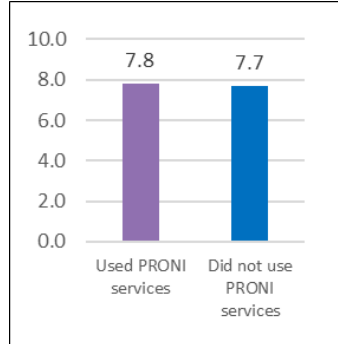
Sport



Heritage

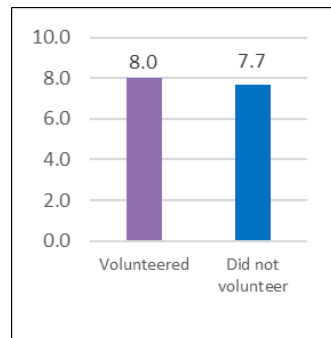


PRONI



Other Activities

Volunteering



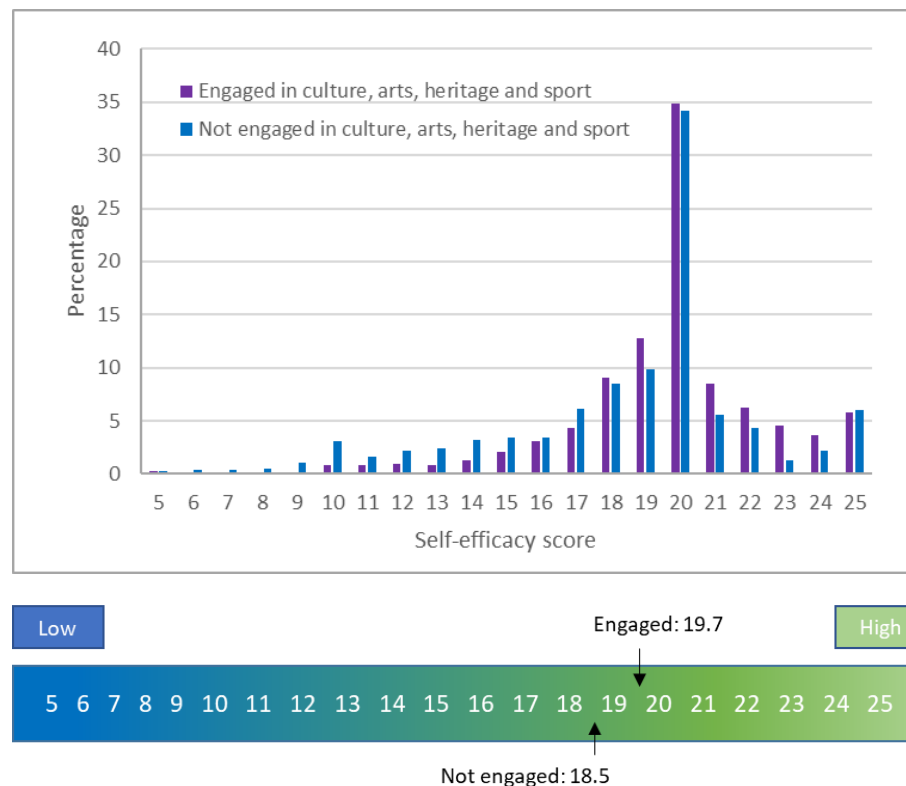
Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is the extent or strength of an individual's belief in their own ability to complete tasks and reach goals. Those with high self-efficacy have confidence in their abilities and make sustained efforts to achieve goals. Those with low self-efficacy often doubt their capabilities, are less ambitious and give up on aims when challenged. This can limit the choices a person makes and how much effort they are willing to invest. Self-efficacy affects the decisions a person makes and what they see as achievable and has been shown to influence physical and mental health, learning and achievement, career and job satisfaction and family relations.

Self-efficacy is measured using five statements (see Definitions) to which an individual indicates how much they agree or disagree on a five point Likert scale. It is presented as an overall score which is the sum total of the 5 statement questions, with a maximum of 25 and a minimum of 5. Higher scores indicate a higher level of self-efficacy.

In 2021/22, the estimated mean self-efficacy score for adults in Northern Ireland was 19.4. For adults engaging in culture, arts, heritage and sport the estimated mean score was 19.7, which was higher than for those not engaging (18.5). Higher average self-efficacy scores were found for those who engaged in the arts, visited a museum or science centre, visited a place of historic interest or participated in sport in comparison with those who did not engage in these activities. A higher average self-efficacy score was also found for those who volunteered in comparison with those who did not. No statistically significant difference was found for those who used the public library service or used PRONI services compared with those who did not.

Distribution of self-efficacy scores for adults in Northern Ireland

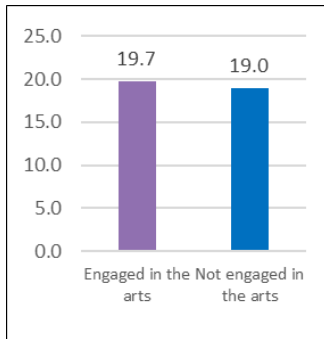


Low self-efficacy refers to self-efficacy scores ranging from 5 to 17. In 2021/22, 18% of all adults in Northern Ireland had low self-efficacy. For adults who engaged in culture, arts, heritage and sport, 15% had low self-efficacy, a lower proportion than among those who did not engage (28%). Lower proportions of adults who engaged in the arts, visited a museum or science centre, visited a place of historic interest or participated in sport over the previous 12 months had low self-efficacy in comparison to those who did not engage in these activities. No statistically significant difference was found for those who used the public library service or used PRONI services compared with those who did not. A lower proportion of adults who volunteered over the previous 12 months also had low self-efficacy in comparison to those who did not.

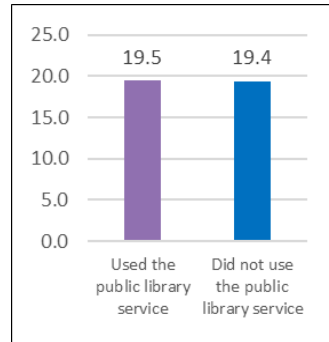
Self-efficacy

Culture, arts, heritage and sport - Average self-efficacy scores

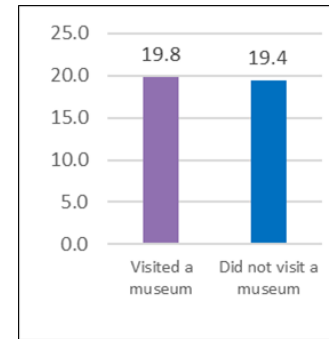
Arts



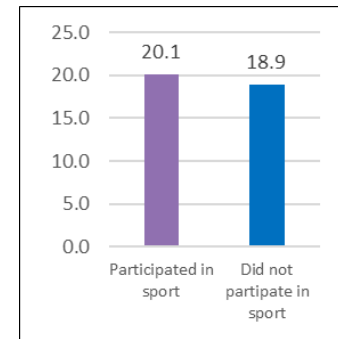
Libraries



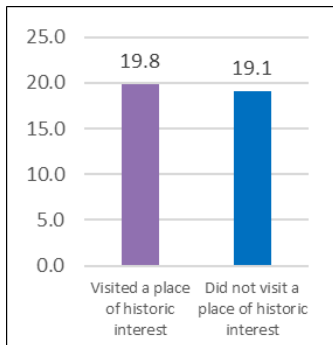
Museums



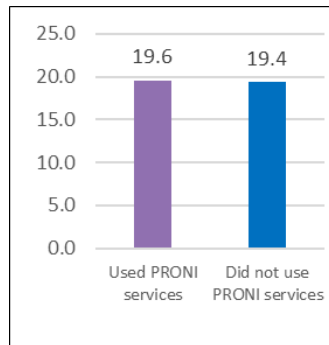
Sport



Heritage

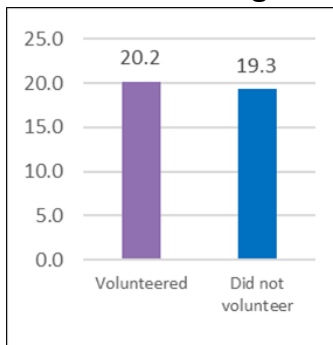


PRONI



Other Activities - Average self-efficacy scores

Volunteering



Locus of control

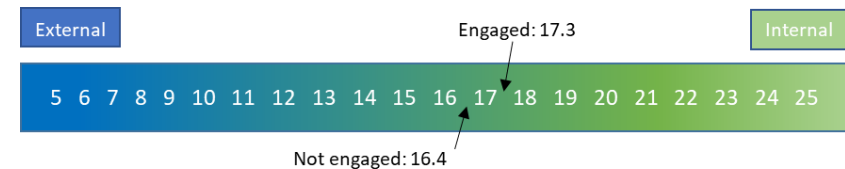
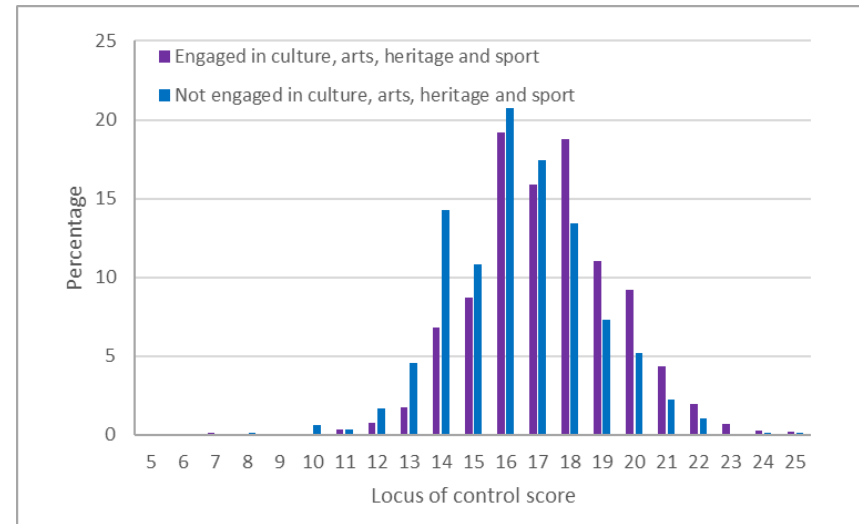
Locus of control explains the degree to which a person feels in control over their life.

Locus of control is classified as either external or internal. Those with an internal locus of control believe in their own influence and control, while those with an external locus of control believe control over their life is determined by outside factors.

Locus of control is measured using five statements (see Definitions) to which an individual indicates how much they agree or disagree on a five point Likert scale. It is presented as an overall score which is the sum total of the 5 statement questions, with a maximum of 25 and a minimum of 5. The locus of control scale is not a measurement of higher or lower, rather it is a continuum from external to internal.

In 2021/22, the estimated mean locus of control score for adults in Northern Ireland was 17.1. For adults engaging in culture, arts, heritage and sport the estimated mean score was 17.3, a more internal locus of control than for those not engaging (16.4). More internal locus of control scores were found for those who engaged in the arts, used the public library service, visited a museum or science centre, visited a place of historic interest, participated in sport or used PRONI services in comparison with those who did not engage in these activities. A more internal locus of control score was also found for those who volunteered in comparison with those who did not.

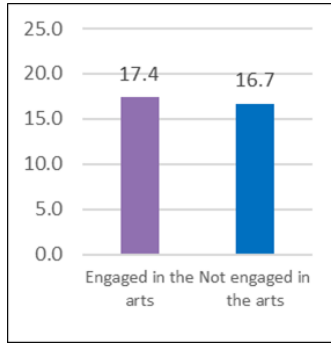
Distribution of locus of control scores for adults in Northern Ireland



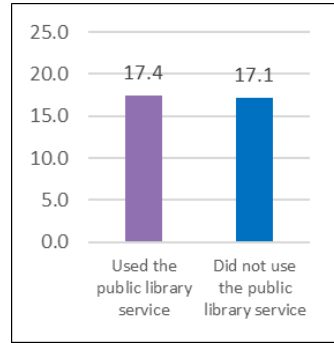
Locus of control

Culture, arts, heritage and sport

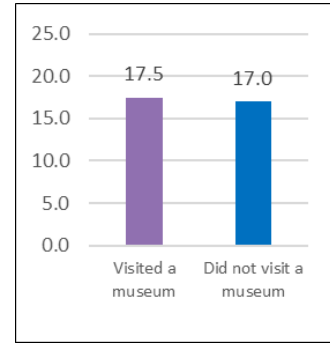
Arts



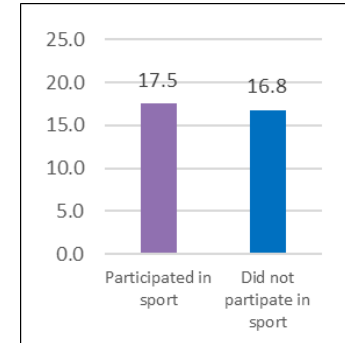
Libraries



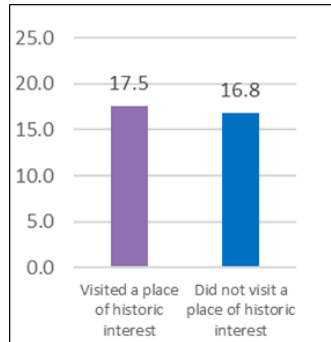
Museums



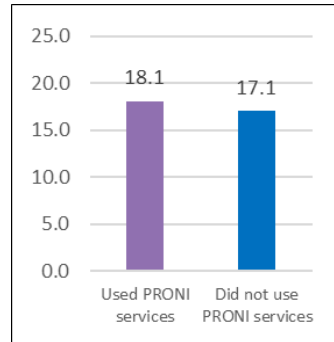
Sport



Heritage

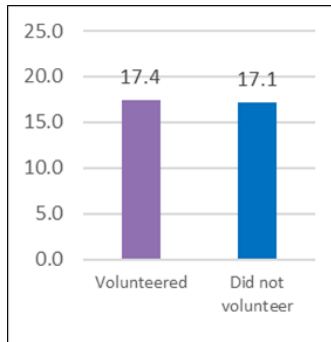


PRONI



Other Activities

Volunteering



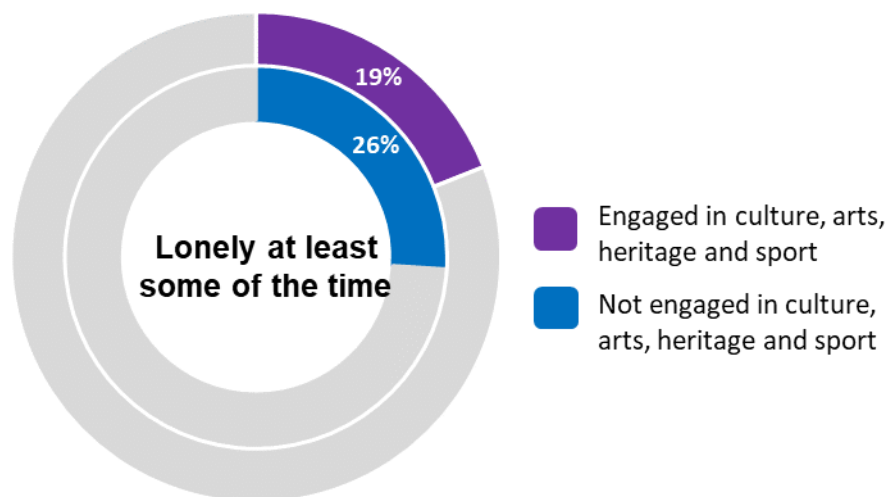
The results from the CHS 2021/22 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content.

Loneliness

The Continuous Household Survey includes the following direct measure of loneliness: 'How often do you feel lonely?' with the five response options 'often/always', 'some of the time', 'occasionally', 'hardly ever' and 'never'. An analysis of engagement in culture, arts, heritage and sport and loneliness of adults in Northern Ireland is presented below. For ease of understanding and interpreting results, the responses 'often/always' and 'some of the time' were grouped into a single category called 'lonely at least some of the time'.

In 2021/22, 20% of all adults in Northern Ireland reported feeling lonely 'often/always' or 'some of the time' and were therefore described as 'lonely at least some of the time'. For adults who engaged in culture, arts, heritage and sport, 19% reported feeling 'lonely at least some of the time', a lower proportion than among those who did not engage (26%).

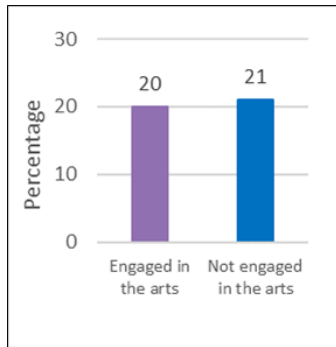
A lower proportion of adults who participated in sport over the previous 12 months, reported feeling 'lonely at least some of the time' in comparison to those who did not. No statistically significant difference was found for those who engaged in the arts, visited a museum or science centre, visited a place of historic interest, used the public library service or used PRONI services compared with those who did not engage in these activities. A lower proportion of adults who volunteered over the previous 12 months also reported feeling 'lonely at least some of the time' in comparison to those who did not.



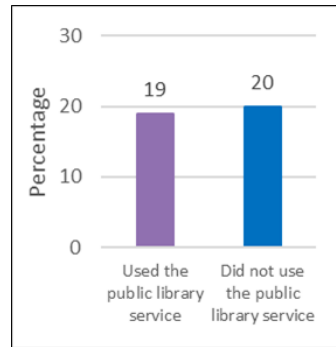
Loneliness - Lonely at least some of the time

Culture, arts, heritage and sport

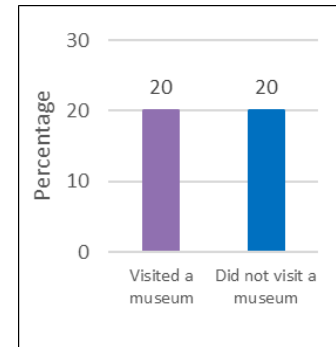
Arts



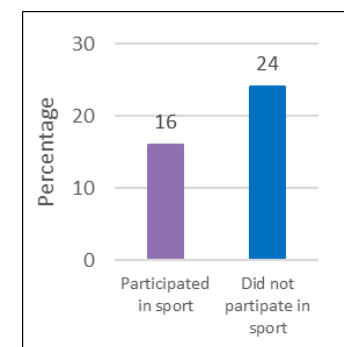
Libraries



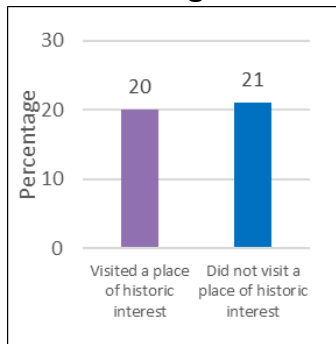
Museums



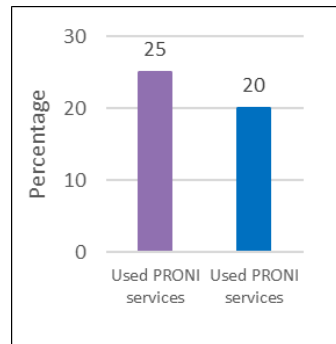
Sport



Heritage

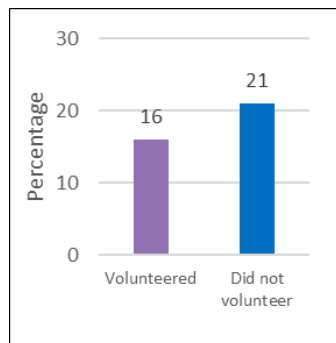


PRONI



Other Activities

Volunteering

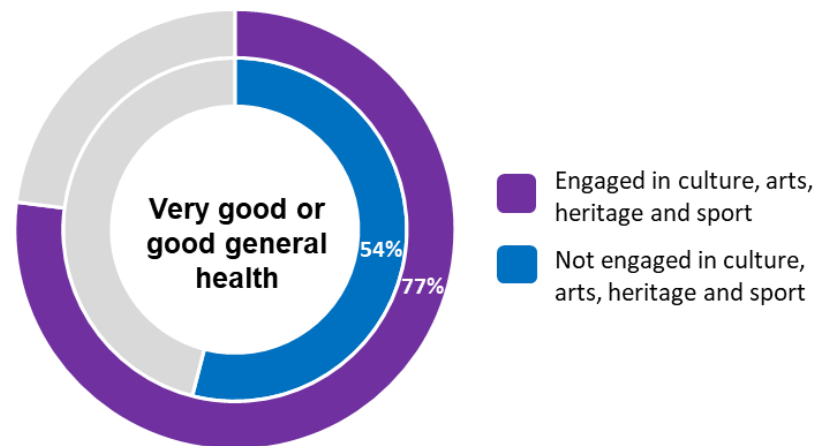


General Health - Very good or good health

The Continuous Household Survey asks the following question in relation to general health: 'How is your health in general? Would you say it was very good, good, fair, bad or very bad?'. An analysis of engagement in culture, arts, heritage and sport and the general health of adults in Northern Ireland is presented below.

In 2021/22, 72% of all adults in Northern Ireland rated their health as 'very good' or 'good'. For adults who engaged in culture, arts, heritage and sport, 77% rated their health as 'very good' or 'good', a higher proportion than among those who did not engage (54%).

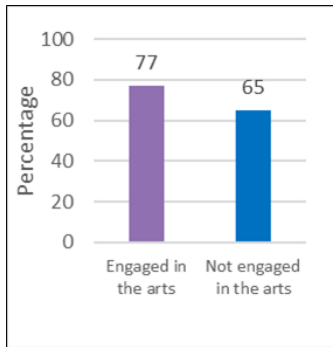
Greater proportions of adults who engaged in the arts, used the public library service, visited a museum or science centre, visited a place of historic interest or participated in sport over the previous 12 months rated their health as 'very good' or 'good' in comparison to those who did not engage in these activities. No statistically significant difference was found for those who used PRONI services. A greater proportion of adults who volunteered over the previous 12 months rated their health as 'very good' or 'good' in comparison to those who did not.



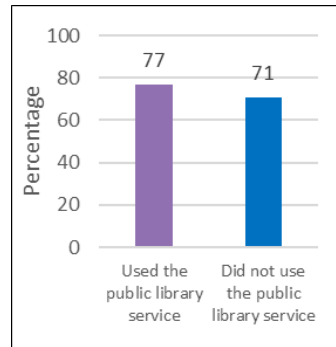
General Health - Very good or good health

Culture, arts, heritage and sport

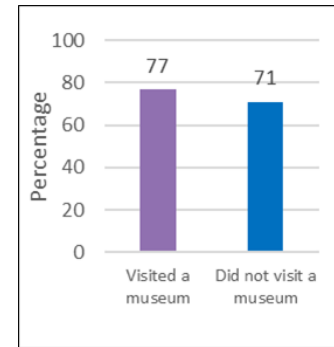
Arts



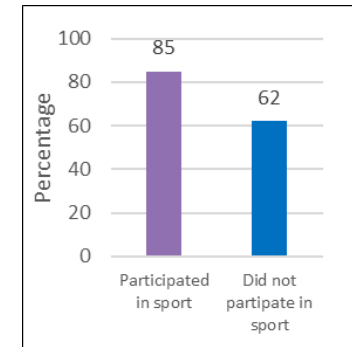
Libraries



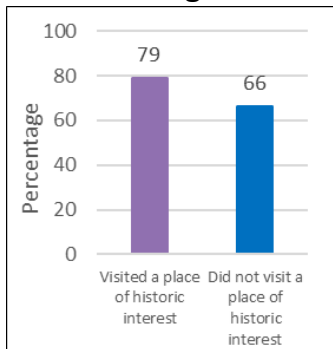
Museums



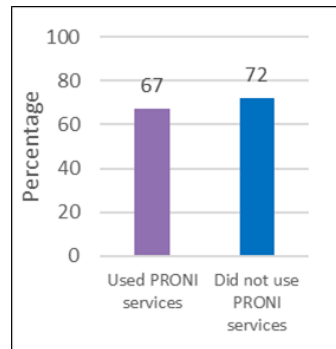
Sport



Heritage

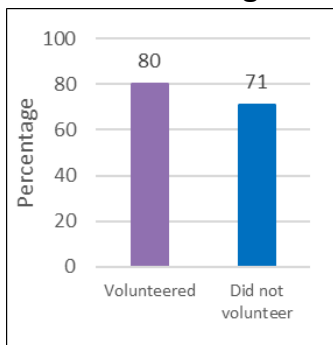


PRONI



Other Activities

Volunteering



Definitions and technical notes

Continuous Household Survey

The Continuous Household Survey is a Northern Ireland wide household survey administered by Central Survey Unit, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. The sample for this survey consists of a systematic random sample of 9,000 addresses selected from the Land and Property Service's list of private addresses. The findings reported for 2021/22 are based on 4,103 respondents, aged 16 and over.

Note: As with 2020/21, data collection for the 2021/22 survey moved from face-to-face interviewing to telephone mode, with a reduction in the number of questions, due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Therefore, the results from the CHS 2021/22 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content. The output from the survey, in terms of the range and depth of topics covered, has been reduced from that of previous years, with the subsequent capacity for detailed analysis constrained. More information is available on the [NISRA website](#). While the results for 2021/22 cannot be compared with previous years, it should be noted that engagement in culture, arts, heritage and sport and volunteering were impacted by the various closures during the COVID -19 pandemic.

Weighting the Continuous Household Survey

Analysis of the culture, arts, heritage and sport modules of the CHS have been weighted for non-response. A chi square goodness-of-fit test showed that the CHS sample was not representative of the population by age and sex when compared with the 2021 Mid Year Population Estimates for Northern Ireland (NISRA 25 June 2021). As a result, separate weights were produced for age and sex and combinations of these variables.

Non-response weighting sometimes increases standard errors, although the impact tends to be fairly small, i.e. the adjustment may be less or greater than 1, but will generally be reasonably close to 1. In the case of the culture, arts, heritage and sport modules of the CHS, the values of the adjustment for all three weighting systems are so close to one, it is not necessary to take account of this in the calculation of standard error and confidence intervals.

While weighting for non-response (also called post-stratification) should reduce bias, it must be acknowledged that it will not eliminate bias. The reasons individuals choose to take part in surveys are complex and depend on lots of factors specific to the individual. As a result, the non-response biases in surveys are likely to be complex. Post-stratification works on the assumption that, by aligning the survey to the population along a small number of dimensions such as age and gender, many of these complex biases will reduce. However, it would be misleading to suggest that they will be eliminated.

Engaged in culture, arts, heritage and sport - Have done at least one of the following in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Participated in sport
- Engaged in the arts
- Used the public library service
- Visited a museum or science centre
- Visited a place of historic interest
- Used PRONI services

Arts engagement – Either participated in arts activities or attended arts events in the 12 months prior to the CHS.

Arts participation – Participated in at least one of the following arts activities in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Ballet or any other type of dance (traditional or modern but not keep fit)
- Sang or Played a musical instrument to an audience or rehearsed for a performance (not karaoke)
- Written music/songs (including creating music digitally)
- Rehearsed or performed in a play, a drama, or an opera
- Painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture
- Took photographs or made films or videos as an artistic activity (not family or holiday snaps/videos)
- Used a computer to create original artworks or animation
- Textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting
- Wood crafts such as wood turning, carving or furniture making
- Other crafts such as calligraphy, pottery or jewellery making
- Written any stories, plays or poetry

Arts attendance – Attended at least one of the following arts events in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Film at cinema or other venue
- Exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture or crafts
- Event connected with books or writing (such as poetry reading or storytelling)
- A circus or carnival
- An arts or community festival
- A play, drama other theatre performance (such as musical or pantomime)
- A live music performance (opera, classical, rock, pop, jazz, folk or world music)
- A live dance performance (ballet, Irish dance performance or other dance event)

A National Museum - visited any of the following museums in the past 12 months:

- Ulster Museum, Belfast
- Ulster Folk Museum, Cultra
- Ulster Transport Museum, Cultra
- Ulster American Folk Park, Omagh

A Local Museum - visited any of the following museums in the past 12 months:

- Andrew Jackson & US Rangers Centre
- Ardross House
- Armagh County Museum
- Armagh Robinson Library
- Ballycastle Museum
- Ballymoney Museum
- Barn Museum
- Carrickfergus Museum
- Castle Ward
- Coleraine Museum
- Craigavon Museum Services
- Down County Museum
- Downpatrick & Co. Down Railway Museum
- F E McWilliam Gallery and Studio
- Fermanagh County Museum
- Flame - The Gasworks Museum of Ireland
- Florence Court
- Garvagh Museum & Heritage Centre
- Green Lane Museum
- Hezlett House
- Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum
- Limavady Museum
- Linen Hall Library
- Mid Antrim Museum
- Milford House Collection
- Mount Stewart
- Museum at the Mill
- Newry & Mourne Museum
- North Down Museum
- Northern Ireland War Memorial
- Police Museum
- Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum
- Royal Ulster Rifles Museum
- Sentry Hill
- Somme Museum
- Springhill
- The Argory
- The Inniskillings Museum
- Tower Museum
- Whitehead Railway Museum

Visited a museum or science centre – Visited a museum or science centre in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months prior to CHS:

- A National Museum Or
- A Local Museum

Or Which, if any, of the following science centres have you visited in the last 12 months?

- W5
- Armagh Planetarium

Used the public library service – Used the public library service at least once in the 12 months prior to the CHS, e.g. visited a public library or mobile library; used the Libraries NI website; attended a library event outside a library; downloaded free eBooks/eMagazines/audiobooks using a library membership on an app on a smartphone or tablet. Public library does NOT include school, college, or university libraries. A library event outside a library is an event run by Libraries NI which has taken place in a venue other than a library.

Used PRONI services – Have done one of the following in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Visited the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)
- Contacted PRONI by email to request information
- Used the PRONI website or engaged with PRONI through social media, e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Flickr
- Viewed a PRONI exhibition at another public building, e.g. a library, museum or community centre
- Engaged with PRONI in some other way

Visited a place of historic interest – Visited one of the following places of historic interest in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- A city or town with historic character
- A historic building open to the public (non-religious)
- A historic park or garden open to the public
- A place connected with industrial history (e.g. an old factory, dockyard or mine) or historic transport system (e.g. an old ship, canal or railway)
- A historic place of worship attended as a visitor (not to worship)
- A monument such as a castle, fort or ruin
- A site of archaeological interest (i.e. an earthen fort ancient burial site)
- A site connected with sports heritage (e.g. a historic cricket pitch) (not visited for the purposes of watching sport)

Sport participation - Participated in at least one of the following activities in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Football (indoors or outdoors)
- Gaelic games (football, hurling, camogie)
- Racket sports (tennis, badminton, squash)
- Basketball or netball
- Jogging
- Cycling for recreation
- Walking for recreation
- Bowls (indoor or outdoor) or tenpin bowling
- Swimming or diving
- Angling or fishing
- Keep fit/aerobics/yoga/dance exercise/weight training
- Snooker or pool
- Golf or pitch and putt
- Other

Volunteered – Have carried out any voluntary work or activity in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Volunteering is defined as ‘the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one’s immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice.’

Instruments for measuring self-efficacy, locus of control and life satisfaction

The instruments for measuring self-efficacy and locus of control are each a simple statement based survey tool. They each take the form of five simple statements to which the individual indicates to what extent they agree or disagree on a five point Likert scale. Self-efficacy and locus of control are each presented as an overall score, minimum 5 and maximum 25, taken from the summated total of the five statement questions.

Self-efficacy statement questions:

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
3. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
4. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
5. No matter what comes my way, I'm usually able to handle it.

Locus of control statement questions¹:

1. I am in control of my life.
2. If I take the right steps, I can avoid problems.
3. Most things that affect my life happen by accident.
4. If it's meant to be, I will be successful.
5. I can only do what people in my life want me to do.

Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction is presented as a single statement question, 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' to which the individual responds on an 11 point Likert scale (0-10). Life satisfaction is scored out of 0-10, with 10 being the highest achievable score.

Loneliness

'How often do you feel lonely? Often/always, Some of the time, Occasionally, Hardly ever, Never'.

General Health question

'How is your health in general? Would you say it was very good, good, fair, bad or very bad'.

¹ Locus of control statement questions 3, 4 and 5 were reversed and recoded prior to analysis.

Statistical significance in this report

Any statements in this report regarding differences between groups are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that we can be 95% confident that the differences between groups are actual differences and have not just arisen by chance. The base numbers, sizes of percentages (relating to low self-efficacy, loneliness and general health) or variance of scores (relating to wellbeing) have an effect on statistical significance. Therefore on occasion, a difference between two groups may be statistically significant while the same difference in percentage points or mean score between two other groups may not be statistically significant. The reason for this is because the larger the base numbers or the closer the percentages are to 0 or 100 or the smaller the variance in scores, the smaller the standard errors. This leads to increased precision of the estimates which increases the likelihood that the difference between the proportions or mean scores is actually significant and has not just arisen by chance.

Other notes

The following should be noted when interpreting figures and tables:

- Detailed tabulations are not provided where the number of respondents is too small to allow meaningful analysis.
- The base number of responses to each question, which is shown in each table, is the unweighted count. The base may vary due to some respondents not answering certain questions.