

Labour Force Survey Local Area Database 2015



Date: 29 June 2016
Geographical Area: Northern Ireland
Theme: Labour Market
Frequency: Annual



This report provides detailed geographical analysis of the main indicators from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) Local Area Database 2015. The LFS is the largest regular household survey in Northern Ireland, providing a rich source of information on the labour force using internationally agreed concepts and definitions. It is a quarterly sample survey and is therefore subject to sampling error, which decreases as the sample size increases. The Local Area Database (LADB) is an annual database which comprises responses from four consecutive quarters of the LFS and thus contains 60% more records than the quarterly databases, facilitating more extensive sub-regional analysis.

The key points from the report are as follows:

- in 2015, the highest employment rate (16-64) was recorded in Ards and North Down (74.2%) and was 14.6 percentage points above the lowest rate, which was recorded in Derry City and Strabane (59.6%).
- the 2015 economic activity rate (16-64) was lowest in Derry City and Strabane (67.1%) and highest in Ards and North Down (77.6%).
- the NUTS III region with the highest unemployment rate in 2015 was the North of NI (10.7%), just over 6 percentage points higher than the lowest rate which was recorded in Outer Belfast (4.6%).
- while 71.8% of the economically inactive persons in North of NI were neither wanting nor seeking work, the figure for Outer Belfast was higher at 90.1%.
- the LGD with the highest proportion of persons aged 16–64 who were qualified to NVQ level 4 or above was Lisburn and Castlereagh (41.1%), while the lowest proportion was in Causeway Coast and Glens (21.9%).

The Local Area Database report contains the following chapters:

- 1. Summary**
- 2. Local Government District labour market structure**
- 3. NUTS III analysis**
- 4. Further information**

Annex Index of tables

National Statistics

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is a producer's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Local Government Districts (LGDs)

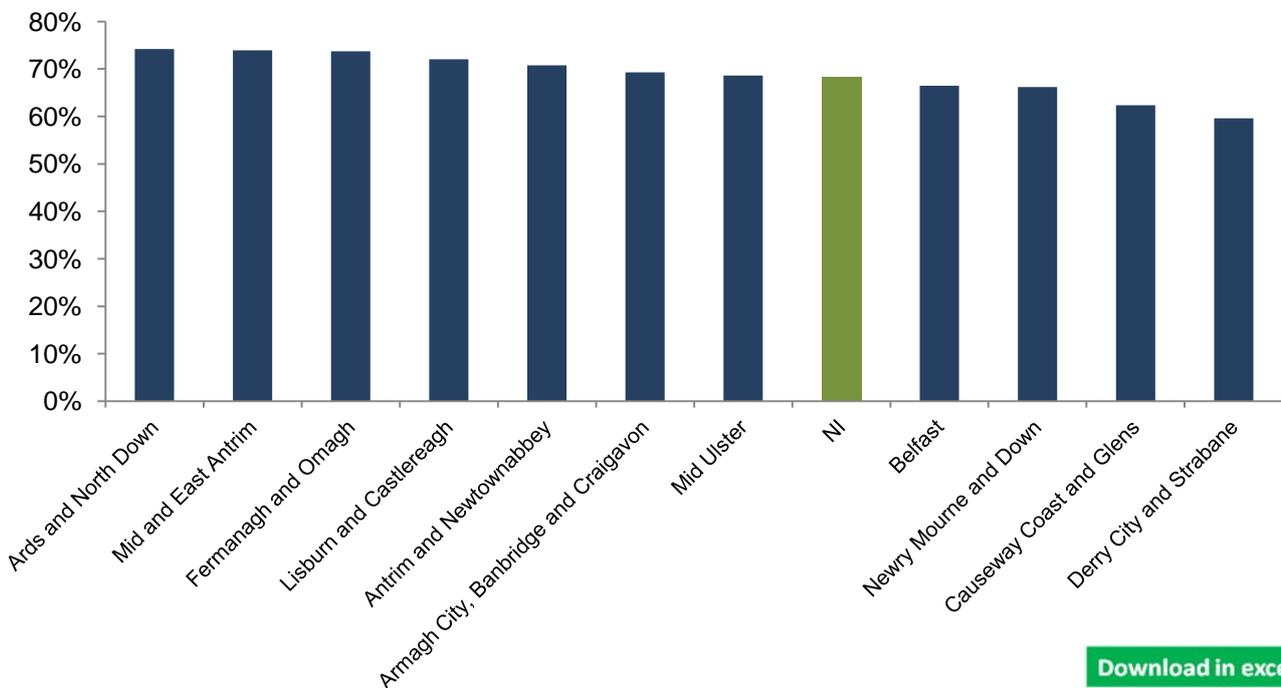
There is considerable variation in the population size of the LGDs, with the 16+ population in Belfast LGD (274,000) being over three times larger than the smallest LGD (Fermanagh and Omagh with 90,000).

Employment rates

In 2015, the 16-64 employment rate:

- was 68.4% in NI (up from 67.6% in 2014).
- varied among LGDs in Northern Ireland (see Figure 1).
- was highest in Ards and North Down at 74.2% - 14.6 percentage points higher than the lowest rate which was recorded in Derry City and Strabane (59.6%).

Figure 1: LGD employment rate (16-64), 2015



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Full-time employment

In 2015:

- an estimated 75.8% of the 16+ population in employment in NI were working full-time.
- full-time employment varied from a high of 80.4% in Lisburn and Castlereagh to a low of 71.0% in Derry City and Strabane.

Qualification levels

In terms of educational achievement,

- the LGD with the highest proportion of persons aged 16–64 who were qualified to NVQ level 4 or above was Lisburn and Castlereagh (41.1%), while Causeway Coast and Glens had the lowest proportion at 21.9%.
- Derry City and Strabane (21.2%) and Mid Ulster (19.5%) had the highest proportion of persons with 'no qualifications' – the NI average was 16.5%.

NUTS III areas

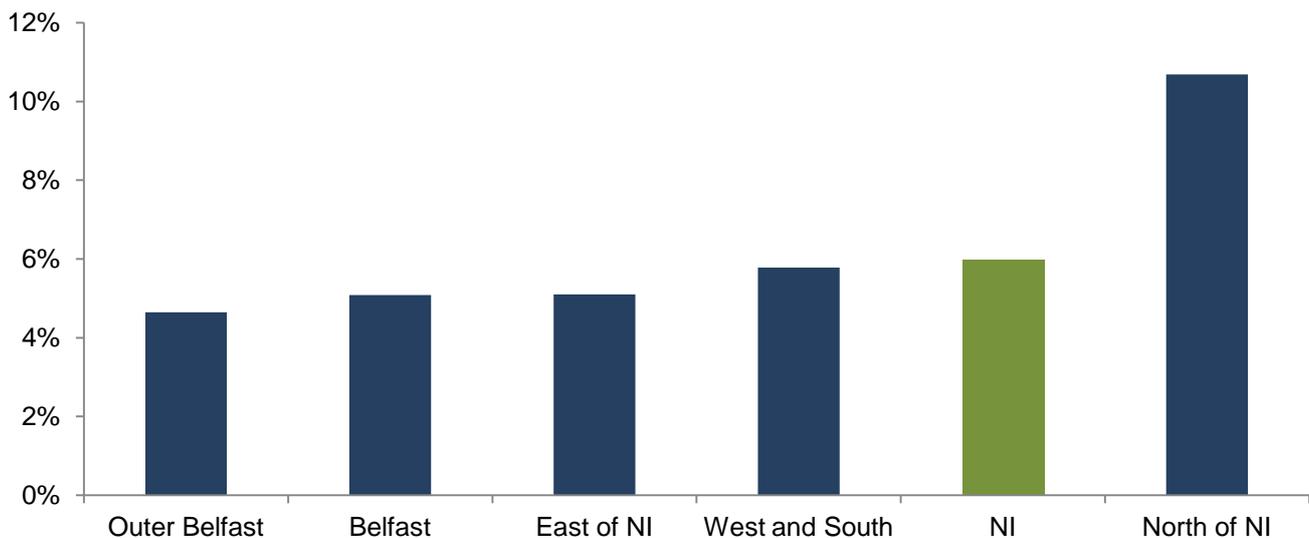
NUTS III (Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics) regions are the European Office for Statistics (Eurostat) classification of sub-national areas for statistical purposes in the European Union. They are amalgamations of district council areas and facilitate analyses by region due to the larger LFS sample sizes involved.

Unemployment

The NI unemployment rate for 2015 was estimated at 6.0%, which was:

- a decrease over the year from 2014 (from 6.4%).
- highest in the North of NI (10.7%) and lowest in Outer Belfast (4.6%).

Figure 2: Unemployment rate (16+) by NUTS III area, 2015



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NUTS III economic activity

The overall NI working age activity rate for 2015 was 72.9%, however there was a considerable difference across the NUTS III regions in terms of labour market participation, with:

- North of NI recording the lowest working age activity rate at 68.4%, which was eight percentage points lower than the highest rate that was recorded for the Outer Belfast (76.6%).

NUTS III employment by industry

In terms of industry sector:

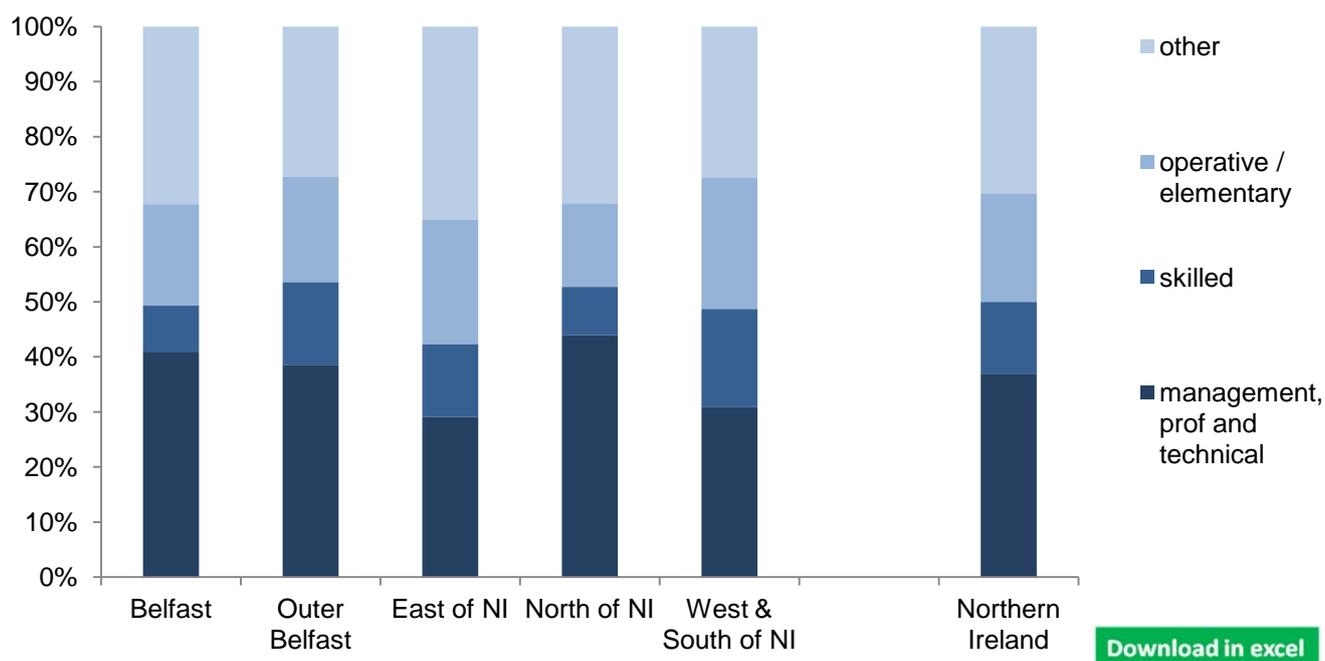
- public services represented the major employment industry for each of the NUTS III regions, with their impact varying from 40.4% of total employment in Outer Belfast to 26.7% in the West & South of NI.
- other major industries in terms of NI employment were distribution, hotels & restaurants (18.0%), banking & finance (11.7%) and manufacturing (11.4%).

NUTS III employment by occupation

Figure 3 shows that:

- professional occupations formed a higher proportion of the total workforce in Belfast (15.9%) and Outer Belfast (15.7%), compared to 10.8% of people in the North of NI and 11.9% in the West and South of NI working in these occupations.
- the skilled trade professionals have higher proportions in West and South of NI (17.9%) and East of NI (15.0%) compared to Belfast (8.4%) and Outer Belfast (8.8%).

Figure 3: Occupation in main job (16-64) by NUTS III area, 2015



Socio-economic classification

Among the 16-64 population in NI:

- the largest socio-economic classification was those that have never worked, were unemployed or unclassified. This group accounted for one-quarter (25.0%) of the NI population as a whole and 31.2% of those from the North of NI.

NUTS III education and training

In terms of qualifications:

- the proportion of the 16-64 population in NI with no discernible qualifications was 16.5% in 2015.
- levels vary by region with 19.8% of those from the North of NI having no qualifications, compared to just 13.6% of those in Outer Belfast.

Commentary

Performance against the key economic indicators varied across the NUTS III regions. The North of NI reported the highest rates of unemployment and the highest proportion of 16-64 year olds who had never worked, were unemployed or unclassified. The proportion of the 16-64 population with no qualifications was also highest in the North of NI. This was accompanied by lower rates of employment and economic activity in the North of NI than in any other NUTS III region in 2015. In contrast, Outer Belfast had the lowest rates of unemployment, those who had never worked and those with no qualifications, alongside highest rates of employment and economic activity.

At Local Government District level, Derry City and Strabane had lower rates of employment and economic activity (16-64) than the other LGDs. In addition, Derry City and Strabane had highest proportion of those with no qualifications. The highest rates of economic activity and employment were recorded in Ards and North Down, while Lisburn and Castlereagh fared best in terms of qualifications, with the highest proportion of those achieving NVQ level 4 and above coupled with the lowest proportion of those with no qualifications.

Public services accounted for the majority of employment across all NUTS III areas. Industries such as manufacturing and agriculture employed a larger proportion in the West and South which also had the highest proportion of skilled trade occupations. In contrast, Belfast had higher proportions employed in banking and finance as well as distribution, hotels and restaurants and the largest occupational group was professional occupations.

Context

The Local Area Database report is an annual publication analysing key labour market statistics by geographical area within Northern Ireland. It includes key labour market information such as employment, qualifications and unemployment at Local Government District, NUTS III and Northern Ireland level.

Key users of Northern Ireland labour market statistics include government departments, in particular the Department for the Economy (DfE) and the Department for Communities (DfC), to design and monitor the impact of economic and labour market policy. Other government departments such as the Executive Office, the Department of Finance (DoF) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), as well as bodies such as Invest NI and Belfast City Council, regularly require specific ad hoc labour market analysis in order to monitor policies for example, equality and employment. In addition, significant 'non-governmental' users of labour market statistics include the media, banks, academics, private consultants and the general public, primarily for reporting or researching the performance of the economy in general. Labour market statistics attract widespread media coverage, with a number of broadcasters publishing articles on the labour market on a monthly basis, generally on the day of publication of the Labour Market Report.

Labour market statistics feature in the [DfE Economic Briefing](#) which provides an overview of the state of the Northern Ireland economy, setting it in context with the UK and Republic of Ireland. The most up-to-date official statistics on the economy and labour market are available on the [Economic Overview section](#) of the website.

Further information on using labour market statistics can be found on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website:

- [Explaining the concepts of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity](#)
- [Interpreting Labour Market statistics](#)
- [Guide to Labour Market Statistics](#)
- [Glossary](#)

Local Government District (LGD) analysis

The 11 LGD areas were established across Northern Ireland in 2015 and their respective councils form the single tier of local government in NI.

Population structure

Table 1 below provides a summary of the labour market structure in NI's LGDs. There is considerable variation in the population size of these areas, with the 16+ population in Belfast (274,000) being over three times larger than the smallest LGD (Fermanagh and Omagh with 90,000). Due to this variation in population it is better to look at rates rather than levels when comparing LGDs.

Table 1: Labour market structure by Local Government District, 2015

	Total 16+ (000's)	16+					16-64	
		Economically active (000's)	In employment ¹ (000's)	In full-time employment (000's)	In part-time employment (000's)	Economically inactive (000's)	Economic activity rate (%)	Employment rate (%)
Antrim and Newtownabbey	106	67	63	49	14	40	75.2	70.7
Ards and North Down	121	75	72	54	18	47	77.6	74.2
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	167	101	95	74	21	66	73.7	69.3
Belfast	274	157	149	108	40	117	69.9	66.4
Causeway Coast and Glens	114	63	57	43	13	51	69.9	62.3
Derry City and Strabane	116	68	60	42	17	48	67.1	59.6
Fermanagh and Omagh	90	59	56	41	14	31	77.1	73.7
Lisburn and Castlereagh	108	68	64	51	13	40	76.5	72.1
Mid and East Antrim	108	67	64	46	17	41	77.4	73.9
Mid Ulster	107	71	67	53	13	37	72.9	68.6
Newry Mourne and Down	134	82	77	58	19	52	70.4	66.2
Total	1446	876	823	621	199	570	72.9	68.4

¹ Includes those on government training and employment schemes and unpaid family workers, and some who did not state if working full or part-time.

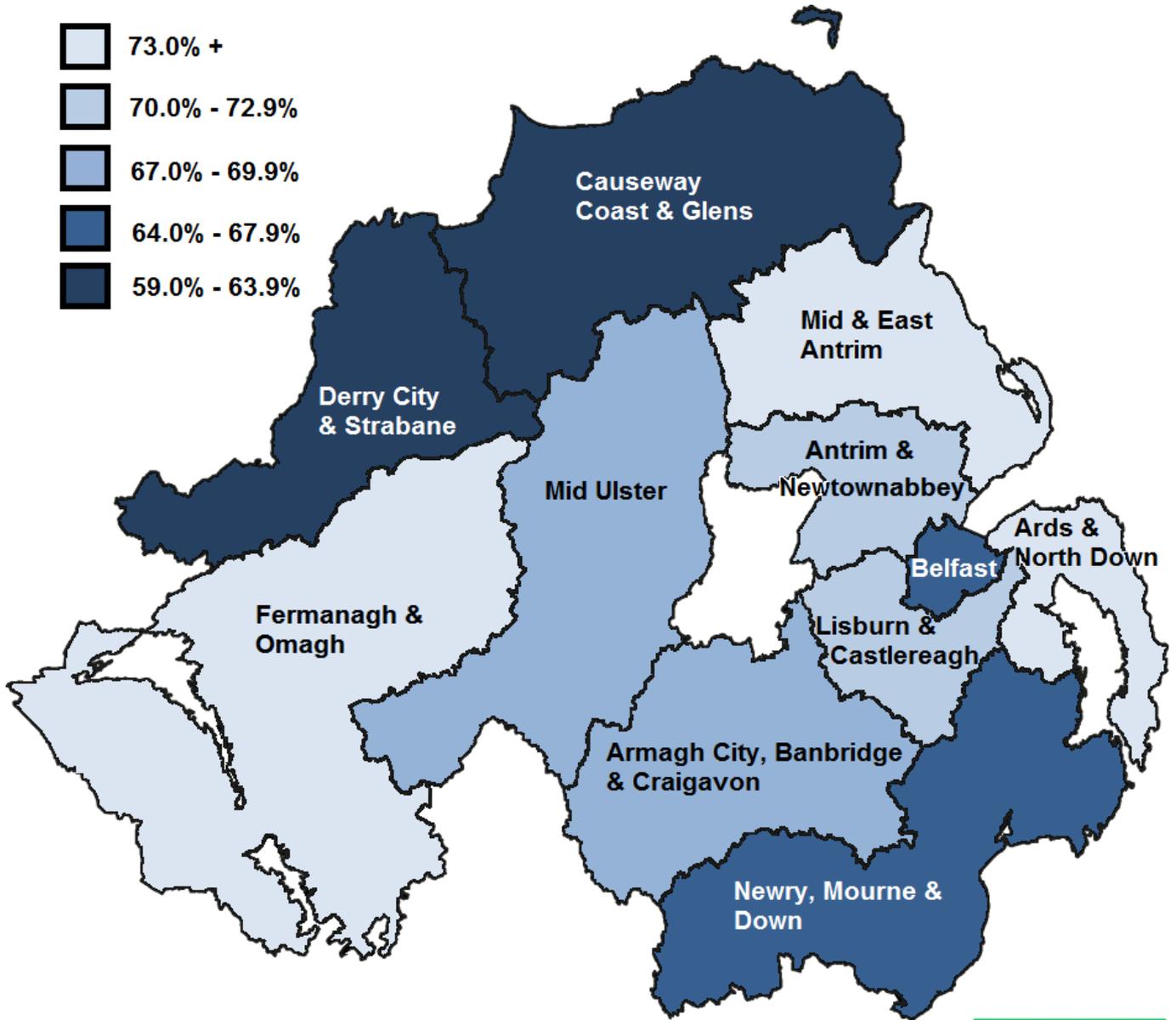
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Employment rate

In 2015, the 16-64 employment rate for NI was 68.4% and was:

- higher than the rate for 2014 (67.6%).
- highest in Ards and North Down (74.2%) and Mid and East Antrim (73.9%).
- lowest in Derry City and Strabane (59.6%), Causeway Coast and Glens (62.3%) and Newry, Mourne and Down (66.2%).

Figure 4: Employment rate (16-64) by Local Government District, 2015



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Economic activity

Figures for NI economic activity (16-64) showed that in 2015:

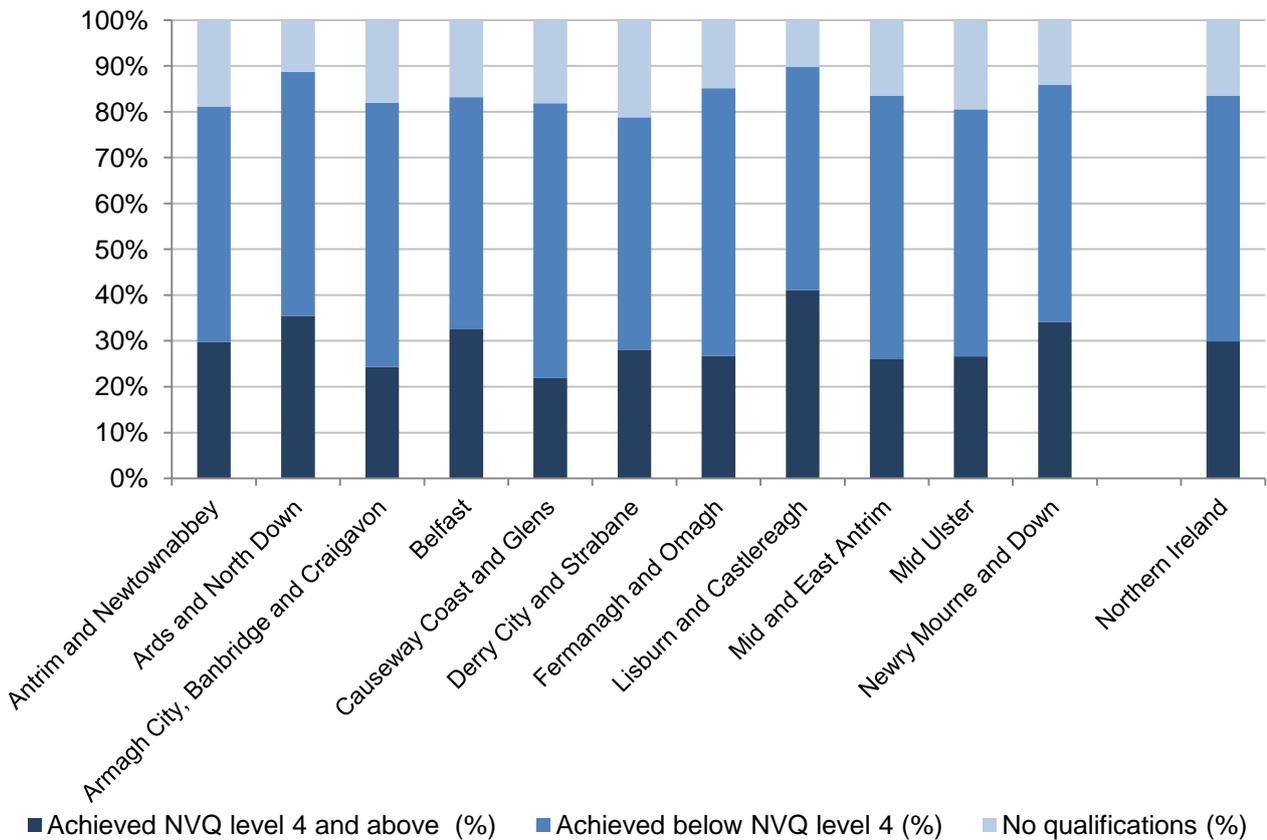
- there was a slight increase from the 2014 rate of 72.5% - to 72.9%.
- the lowest economic activity rates were Derry City and Strabane (67.1%), Belfast (69.9%) and Causeway Coast and Glens (69.9%)
- the LGD with the highest rate was Ards and North Down (77.6%).

Qualification levels

In terms of qualifications achieved in 2015:

- the average for NI as a whole was 16.5% with no qualifications - this was a decrease from 17.4% in 2014.
- Derry City and Strabane (21.2%) and Mid Ulster (19.5%) had the highest proportion of persons aged 16 – 64 with no qualifications.
- the NI average for those qualified to NVQ level 4 or above was 29.9% in 2015, a slight increase on the rate of 29.6% in 2014.
- the LGDs with the highest proportion of persons qualified to NVQ level 4 or above were Lisburn and Castlereagh (41.1%) and Ards and North Down (35.5%).

Figure 5: Highest level of qualification attained (16-64) by Local Government Area, 2015



¹Includes degree level and above.

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NUTS III labour market structure

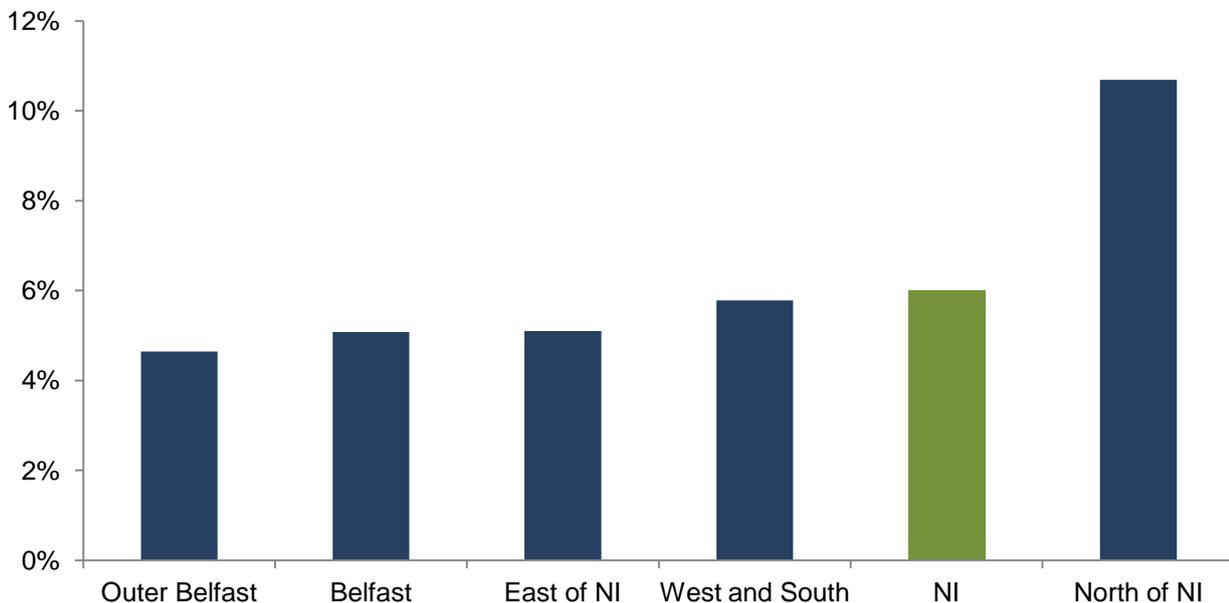
As many of the figures at council level fall below the 6,000 (grossed) suppression threshold, LGDs have been aggregated into NUTS III regions as shown on page 15. NUTS (Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics) are the European Office for Statistics (Eurostat) classification of sub-national areas for statistical purposes in the European Union, which facilitate socio-economic analyses of regions. Further detail on the NUTS III area can be accessed via the Index of tables section on Page 17.

Unemployment

In 2015, the unemployment rate (16+) was:

- 6.0% for Northern Ireland as a whole - this was down over the year from 6.4% in 2014.
- highest in the North of NI at 10.7% which was six percentage points higher than the lowest rate for Outer Belfast (4.6%) – see figure 6.

Figure 6: Unemployment rate (16+) by NUTS III area, 2015



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Economic activity

Figure 7 shows that:

- the overall NI working age activity rate for 2015 was 72.9%, however there was a difference across the NUTS III regions in terms of labour market participation.
- North of NI (68.4%) had the lowest working age activity rate, eight percentage points lower than the highest rate, which was recorded in East of NI (76.6%).

Figure 7: Economic activity rate (16-64) by NUTS III area, 2015



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Economic inactivity

There were also regional differences in the breakdown of the economically inactive population of working age in NI in 2015, with:

- 71.8% of the inactive persons in North of NI neither wanting nor seeking work, compared to 90.1% in Outer Belfast.
- 82.8% of the working age economically inactive population in NI overall (262,000 persons) neither wanting nor seeking work.

Employment by industry

Table 2 below shows the industry breakdown of those aged 16-64 in employment in 2015 and highlights:

- the importance of public services (which incorporates public administration, health and education) as a source of employment in NI, accounting for over one-third (34.5%) of all persons in employment in NI.
- that public services represent the major employment industry for each of the NUTS III regions with its impact varying from 40.4% of total employment in Outer Belfast to 26.7% in the West & South of NI.
- the other major industries in terms of NI employment were distribution, hotels & restaurants (18.0%), banking & finance (11.7%) and manufacturing (11.4%).
- that although the NI manufacturing sector has been in decline for some years, it is still a particularly important source of employment for certain areas, with 15.8% of those in employment from the West & South of NI working in the manufacturing sector.
- that while the agriculture sector is a relatively small employer for NI as a whole (2.5% of total employment) it accounts for 5.6% of the employed in the West & South of NI.
- that Belfast (20.3%) and Outer Belfast (13.1%) have the highest proportion of employment in the banking and finance sector compared to other regions (NI average = 11.7%).

Table 2: Percentage of total employed (16-64) by industry and NUTS III area, 2015

Occupation	Belfast (%)	Outer Belfast (%)	East of NI (%)	North of NI (%)	West & South of NI (%)	Northern Ireland (%)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	*	*	*	*	5.6	2.5
Energy and water	*	*	*	*	*	1.7
Manufacturing	7.2	9.1	13.8	7.9	15.8	11.4
Construction	*	7.1	8.1	6.9	12.9	7.9
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	21.1	17.5	16.3	19.1	17.8	18.0
Transport and communication	6.0	5.7	8.5	10.7	6.2	7.3
Banking and finance	20.3	13.1	8.7	10.2	8.8	11.7
Public admin, education and health	37.1	40.4	35.4	33.7	26.7	34.5
Other services	5.3	5.2	5.1	6.0	4.2	5.1
Total (000's)	118	176	194	111	182	781

* Sample size too small for a reliable estimate.
Total excludes those who did not state industry.

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Employment by occupation

Table 3 below shows that:

- the largest occupational group for NI as a whole was the professional occupations group at 13.3% of the total in employment. Professional occupations comprise science, research, engineering & technology professionals, health professionals, teaching and educational professionals and business media and public service professionals.
- professional occupations formed a higher proportion of the total workforce in Belfast (15.9%) and Outer Belfast (15.7%), compared to 10.8% of people in the North of NI working in these occupations.
- the skilled trade occupations had a higher proportion in West and South of NI (17.9%) and East of NI (15.0%) compared to Outer Belfast (8.8%) and Belfast (8.4%).

Table 3: Percentage of total employed (16-64) by occupation and NUTS III area, 2015

Occupation	Belfast (%)	Outer Belfast (%)	East of NI (%)	North of NI (%)	West & South of NI (%)	Northern Ireland (%)
1 - Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	11.9	10.5	13.0	7.7	9.8	10.8
2 - Professional Occupations	15.9	15.7	12.1	10.8	11.9	13.3
3 - Associate professional and Technical Occupations	13.2	17.8	13.5	10.6	9.2	13.0
4 - Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	11.4	14.9	11.9	15.9	10.6	12.7
5 - Skilled Trades Occupations	8.4	8.8	15.0	13.3	17.9	13.0
6 - Caring Leisure and Other Service Occupations	7.8	10.0	9.7	9.2	8.9	9.2
7 - Sales and Customer Service Occupations	13.1	7.3	5.6	10.0	7.9	8.3
8 - Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	6.1	6.6	10.9	11.1	12.1	9.5
9 - Elementary Occupations	12.4	8.6	8.3	11.5	11.7	10.2
Total (000's)	120	177	196	112	185	789

Figures are based on the respondent's main job and exclude those who did not state occupation.

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Socio-economic classification

Among the working age population in NI:

- the largest socio-economic classification was those that have never worked, were unemployed or unclassified, with this group accounting for one-quarter (25.0%) of the NI population as a whole.
- North of NI (31.2%) recorded the largest proportion that have never worked, were unemployed or unclassified and Outer Belfast (20.3%) the lowest.
- 34.1% of the population in Outer Belfast were in the managerial and professional classifications, compared to just 20.8% in the North of NI.

Qualification levels

The proportion of the working age population with no discernible qualifications:

- was 16.5% for Northern Ireland in 2015.
- varied by region, with 19.8% of those from the North of NI having no qualifications, compared with 13.6% of those from Outer Belfast.

Background

The Labour Force Survey Annual Local Area Database is derived from four consecutive quarters of the regular LFS database. Each quarter's LFS sample of around 2,000 households in NI is made up of 5 waves each of just over 400 private households, with a total of around 5,000 individuals included. Individuals in each wave are interviewed in five successive quarters, such that in any quarter one wave will be receiving their first interview, one wave their second, and so on, with one receiving their fifth and final interview. The annual database is created by selecting the relevant cases from each quarter and combining them to create an annual dataset of unique cases. Over a period of four quarters, eight non-overlapping waves are interviewed. Selecting waves one and five allows the maximum number of respondents over a one-year period to be included. The resulting sample size is approximately 3,000 households, 7,500 individuals, for NI, where each household is interviewed only once.

The LFS collects information from a sample of the population living in households. To convert this information to give estimates for the entire population the data must be grossed.

This is achieved by creating grossing factors often referred to as weights, that can be applied to each sampled individual so that grossed results match published population data in terms of age distribution, sex and region of residence. Mid year population estimates and projections are used to ensure that the LFS is grossed to the most up to date population data available. The range of variables on the LADB is restricted in order to protect the confidentiality of respondents, and minimise the potential for identification of individual responders to the survey.

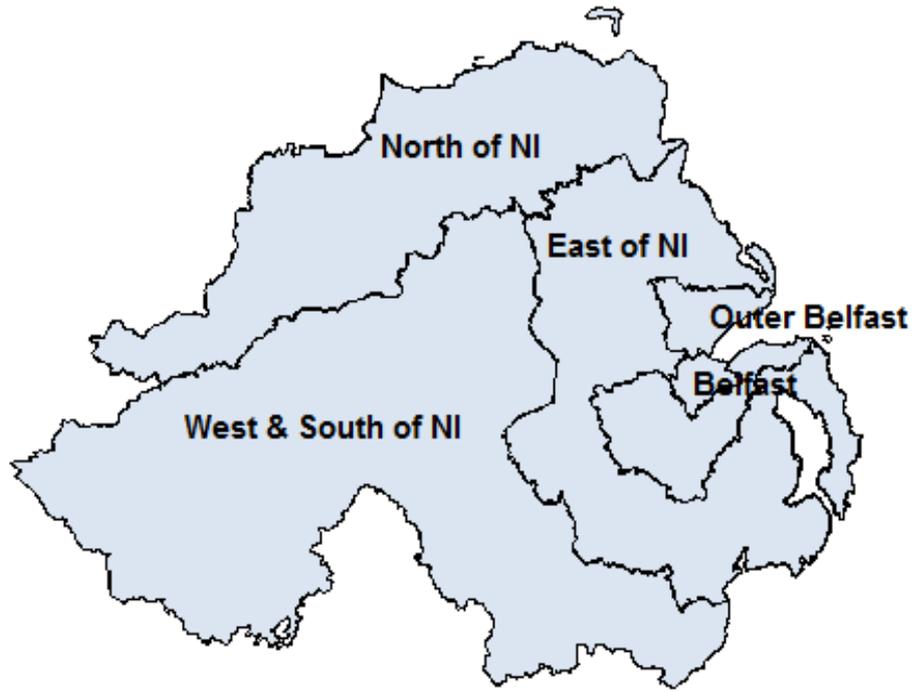
Precision of estimates

The LFS is a sample survey and therefore the estimates are subject to sampling variability. The Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency (NISRA) does not publish estimates below 6,000 (grossed) from the LADB as it is not deemed sufficiently reliable for quotation. In general, the smaller the estimate, the greater the margin of error as a proportion of the estimate.

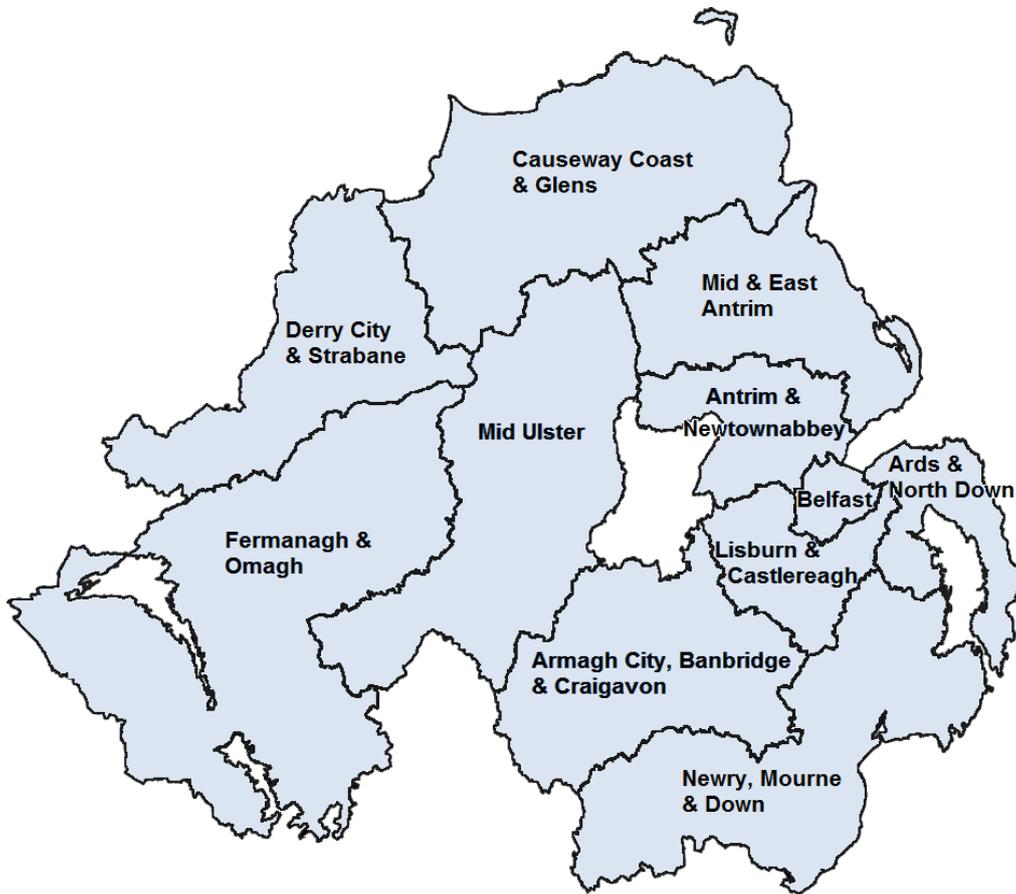
Local areas

The local areas currently available are the new local government districts (LGD2014), however as some of the figures at this level fall below the 6,000 (grossed) suppression threshold some data are presented by NUTS III regions as shown overleaf. NUTS (Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics) is the European Commission's classification of sub-national areas for statistical purposes, which facilitate socio-economic analyses of regions.

NUTS III regions



Northern Ireland Local Government District (LGD2014) areas



LFS definitions

In employment

The LFS defines employment as those aged 16 and over who did at least one hour's paid work in the reference week (either as an employee or self-employed); those who had a job which they were temporarily away from (on holiday for example); those participating in government training and employment programmes; and those doing unpaid family work.

Employment rate

The percentage of people of a specified age who are in employment.

Employees/self-employed

The division between employees and self-employed is based on survey respondents' own assessment of their employment status.

Full-time/part-time

The classification of employees, self-employed, those on government work-related training programmes and unpaid workers in their main job as full-time or part-time is on the basis of self-assessment. People on government-supported training and employment programmes who are at college in the survey reference week are classified as part-time.

Unemployment

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) measure of unemployment refers to people without a job who were available to start work in the two weeks following their LFS interview and had either looked for work in the four weeks prior to interview or were waiting to start a job they had already obtained.

Unemployment rate

The percentage of economically active people who are unemployed.

Industry

The classification of respondents' industry of employment is based on the Standard Industrial Classification 2007 (SIC07).

Occupation

The classification of respondents' occupations is based on the SOC2010 (Standard Occupational Classification) codes adopted since January – March 2011.

Further Information

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Publication now available on NISRA-ELMS web site:

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