



**Public Appointments:
Annual Report for Northern Ireland, 2017/18**

Published: 30th September 2020

Key findings of Public Appointments in Northern Ireland: 2017/18



Applications received
from 1st April 2017
to 31st March 2018
(Gender is known for
82%)

Members



42% female

Chair



45% female



Appointments made
from 1st April 2017
to 31st March 2018
(Gender is known for
96%)

All appointments made



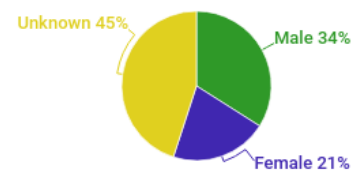
47% female



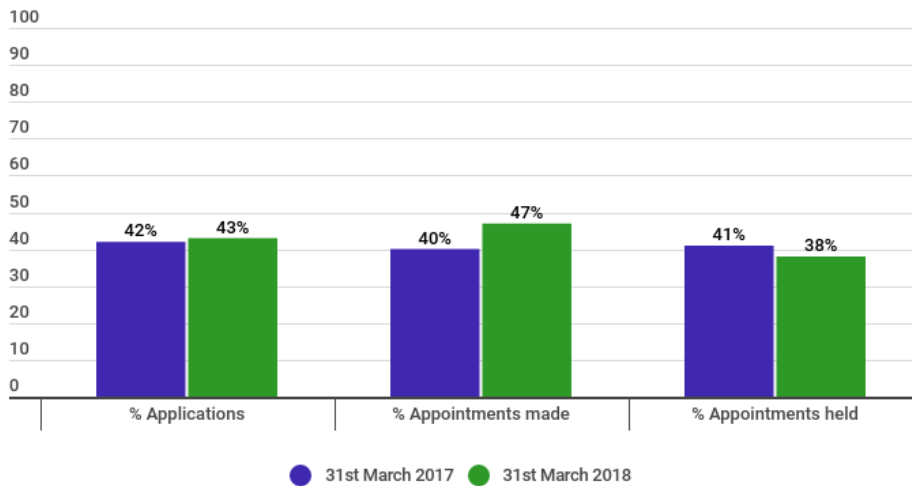
929

Appointments held at
31st March 2018
(Gender is known for 55%)

All appointments held



Female representation (where gender is known): 2016/17-2017/18



Made with infogram

*Figures above for Applications, Appointments made and Female representation do not include unknowns.

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Introduction

Background

This report presents data on Public Appointments between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018. The report has been prepared using information provided by the nine Government Departments and the Food Standards Agency. Data on multiple appointments have been derived separately from the Public Appointments Database as this information cannot be derived from the information provided by individual departments.

This report includes information on:

- **Applications received** between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018 for public appointment competitions;
- **Public appointments made** between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018; and
- **Public appointments held** (including multiple appointments, reappointments and extensions) as at 31st March 2018.

This report covers the applications received in response to vacancies advertised with a closing date within the 2017/18 financial year. If the subsequent appointments were not made within the 2017/18 year, the data for these appointments will appear in the Public Appointments report for 2018/19. Similarly, for any public appointments made in 2017/18, where the applications were received prior to 1st April 2017, the application data will have been included in the 2016/17 report.

Therefore, care should be taken when considering the numbers of applications received and appointments made within a given financial year, as these figures are not directly comparable.

On 8th May 2016 the number of Northern Ireland Executive Departments reduced from twelve to nine. It is therefore not possible to directly compare the Departmental breakdown in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 reports; nor these two reporting periods with previous reports.

Copies of this report and the underlying data tables are available online at The Executive Office (TEO) website: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/public-appointments-annual-report-201718>.

This report also refers to the 2016/17 report and data tables, these are available online at:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/public-appointments-annual-report-201617>

What is a public appointment?

A public appointment is generally an appointment, made by a government Minister, to the Board of a public body. Public Bodies are not part of Government Departments, but carry out their functions, to differing extents, at arm's length from their sponsoring Department.

Ministers of the Northern Ireland Executive are ultimately accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly for the activities of the Public Bodies which their Department sponsors. In most cases – unless, for instance, there is separate statutory provision – Ministers make the appointments to the boards of Public Bodies.

In the absence of Executive Ministers, Departments must give consideration to the public body's founding legislation to determine what action can be taken in relation to appointments; and also seek advice from the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI).

The CPANI regulates the public appointment process to ensure that appointments are made in accordance with the principles set out in the Commissioner's Code of Practice.¹ Public appointments falling within the Commissioner's remit are shown in this Report as "CPANI Regulated"; all other public appointments are shown as "Unregulated." When Departments make public appointments to unregulated bodies, they still apply the Commissioner's Code of Practice.

The overarching principle for public appointments is that selection should be made on merit, using fair, open and transparent procedures that ensure that the best available candidate is selected and appointed to each post.

Ministerial targets relating to public appointments

In March 2016, the Northern Ireland Executive introduced official targets relating to public appointments.² The two official targets are to achieve gender equality, at the aggregate level, in public appointments:

1. By 2017/18 for all appointments in-year;
2. By 2020/21 for all appointees in post, with gender equality reflected at both membership and Chairperson level.

With no functioning Executive in place from January 2017, the absence of Ministers to perform their role in the public appointment process (during the period of this report) had an adverse impact on the making of appointments and achievement of the Diversity Targets.

¹ Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland, https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/sites/cpani/files/media-files/CPANI_Code_of_Practice_JL2_December_2016.pdf

² Northern Ireland Executive, <https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/diversity#:~:text=Ministers%20agree%20ground%20breaking%20targets%20for%20achieving%20gender.2020%2F21%20sets%20a%20new%20standard%20for%20the%20UK.>

Technical notes

Data quality & assurance

Staff of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), out-posted to The Executive Office, have produced this report and the underlying data tables.

The statistics in this report have been compiled from data provided by the nine Northern Ireland Executive Departments and the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland), both in the form of direct Departmental submissions to NISRA staff and, in the case of multiple appointments, to The Executive Office's Central Appointments Unit database.

Due to a change in the data collection process for the 2016/17 statistics, some data relating to characteristics such as gender, age and ethnicity are unknown. Where there are unknown data, proportions such as male-female are calculated with reference to those individuals for whom the information is known.

The underlying data tables which inform these statistics are available and note where data are unknown.

Percentages

Percentages in this report and the underlying data tables may not always sum to 100, due to the effect of rounding.

Disclosure prevention

Statistical disclosure control has been applied to this report: in order to minimise the likelihood of individuals being identified, counts of less than five have been suppressed. Other figures in the report have also been suppressed in order to prevent values of less than five from being calculated. It is not possible to identify those who are unknown and therefore, disclosure control has not been applied to this group.

Contextual figures

Throughout the report, contextual figures are provided for the population aged 18 years and over. Figures for community background, disability and ethnicity have been sourced from the 2011 Census³, while figures for age have been sourced from the 2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates.⁴

³ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/census/2011-census>,

⁴ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NI_sya_7117.xlsx

1. Applications, 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018

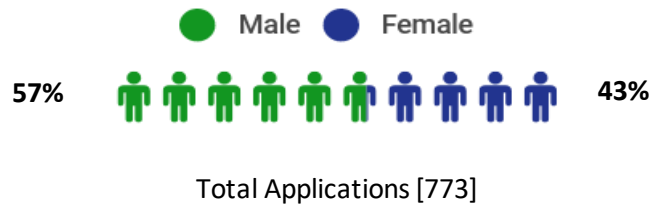
Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms are included in the application pack for Public Appointments, however completion is on a voluntary basis, in line with Equality Commission's guidance.

Between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018, 942 applications were received for Public Appointment posts, 752 of the applications were for CPANI regulated appointments and 31 were for unregulated appointments. Board of Governor (BOG) Appointments are neither regulated nor unregulated (159 applications).

1.1 Gender

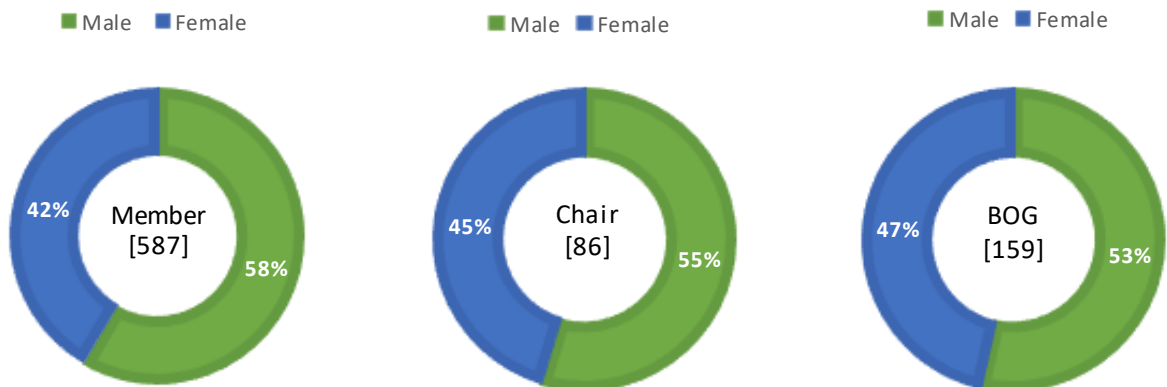
Equal Opportunities information was not provided by 18% of applicants. For applications where gender was known, 57% of applications were from males and 43% were from females (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Public Appointment Applications from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, by Gender



1.1a Board Position

Figure 2: Public Appointment Applications, by Gender and Board Position



*Please note those who applied for both member and chair positions are included in both charts above.

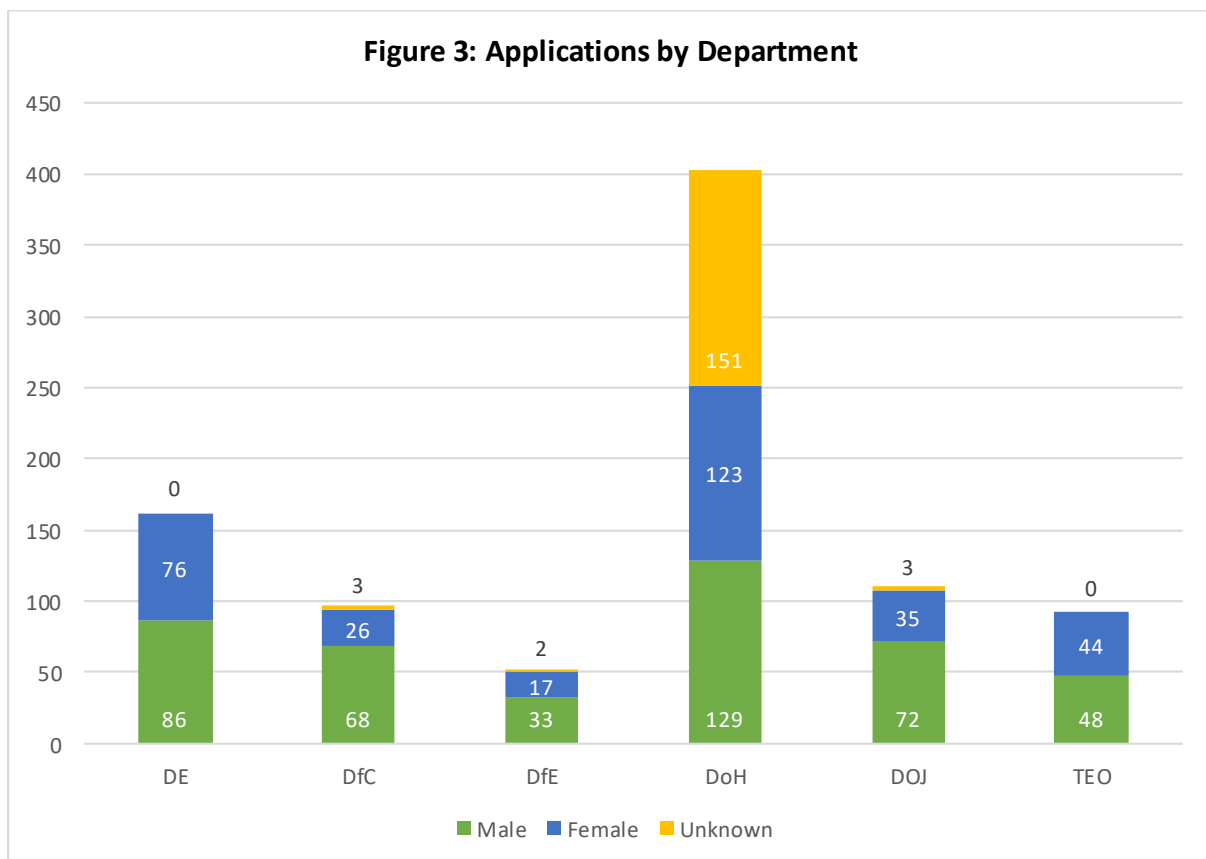
1.1b Trends over time

Applications decreased by 7% between 2016/17 (1,014) and 2017/18 (942).

For applications where gender is known there has been a 1 percentage point increase in female applicants between 2016/17 (42%) and 2017/18 (43%).

Comparisons prior to 2016/17 are not possible due to a change in data collection methodology.

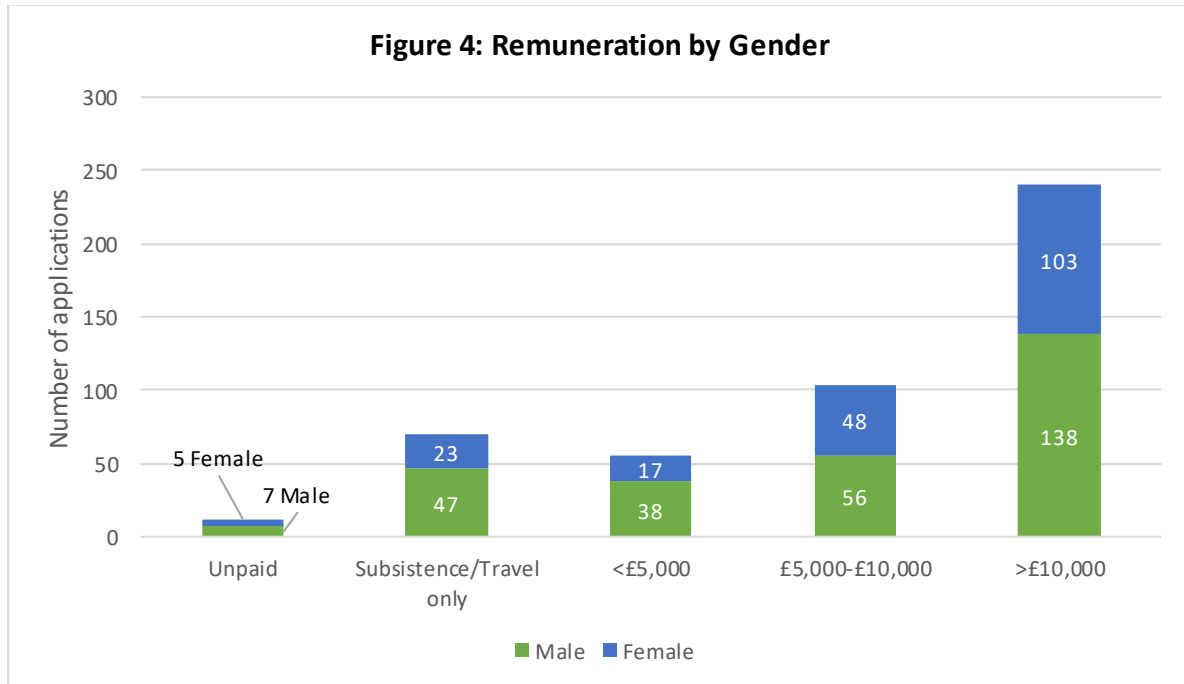
1.1c Individual Departments



Due to disclosure control, gender breakdowns of applications can only be provided for 6 departments. At a departmental level, there is much variation in the total number of applications received for Public Appointments in 2017/18. The Department of Health received the most applications (403) of any department and had the largest proportion of applications where gender was unknown (37%).

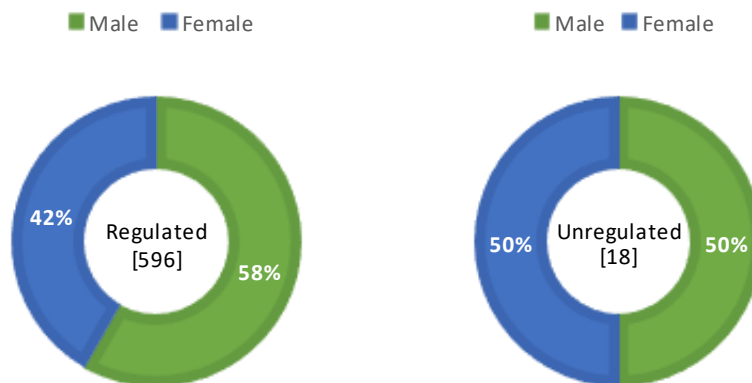
1.1d Remuneration

There were 15 new competitions in the 17/18 year. Whilst some were unpaid or covered Subsistence and Travel only, 10 of the competitions had remuneration of £5,000 or more. The proportion of females applying for Public Appointments with remuneration greater than £10,000 has increased by 9 percentage points from 34% in 2016/17 to 43% in 2017/18.



1.1e CPANI Regulated and Unregulated Appointments

Figure 5: Regulated and Unregulated Appointments by Gender



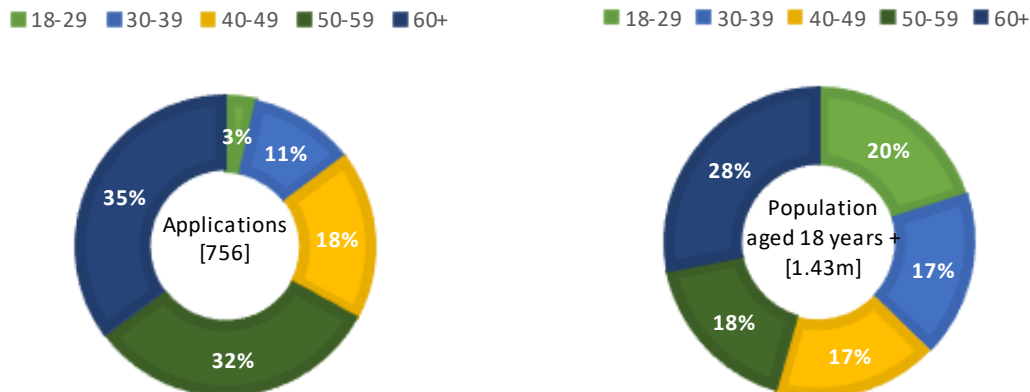
Of the 783 applications received for CPANI Regulated or Unregulated posts, gender was declared for 78% (614 applications) of applicants.

As Board of Governors Public Appointments are neither regulated nor unregulated, the 159 Board of Governors applications are not included in figure 5.

1.2 Age

Age is known for 80% of all applications received in 2017/18.

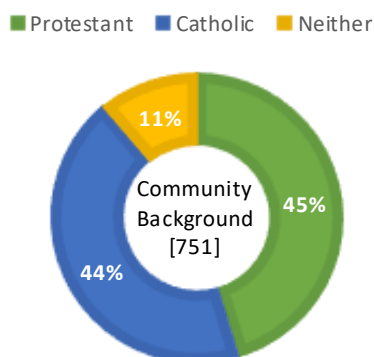
Figure 6: Applications by Age



Where age is known, 3% of all applications received were from individuals aged 18-29 years of age, while 11% were aged 30-39 years of age. These figures are significantly lower than the most recent population estimates for Northern Ireland, where 20% of the population are estimated to be in the 18-29 age group and 37% aged 18-39 years.⁵ Two thirds (67%) of the applications made in 2017/18 were from individuals aged 50 years and over, this age group represents less than half (46%) of the population aged 18 years and over.⁶

1.3 Community Background

Figure 7: Applications by Community Background



Community background is known for 80% of all applications in 2017/18. Similar proportions of applications received in 2017/18 where community background is known, were from individuals of a Protestant (45%) and a Catholic (44%) background. This compares to 44% of the population aged 18 years and over who were either Catholic or brought up as Catholic, and 51% who belonged to or were brought up in Protestant, other Christian or Christian-related denominations⁷.

⁵ https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NI_sya_7117.xlsx

⁶ To note, population figures (and breakdown by age) presented are for those aged 18 years and over; population figures are not affected by unknowns.

⁷ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20\(s\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20(s).zip)

1.4 Ethnicity

Ethnicity is known for 80% of all applications in 2017/18; 3% of applicants where ethnicity is known were from a minority ethnic group. In the most recent Census data, 2% of the population of Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over belong to a minority ethnic group⁸.

1.5 Disability

Disability is known for 80% of all applications in 2017/18; 6% of applicants where disability is known considered themselves to have a disability. This compares to 25% of the population aged 18 and over who had a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities.⁹

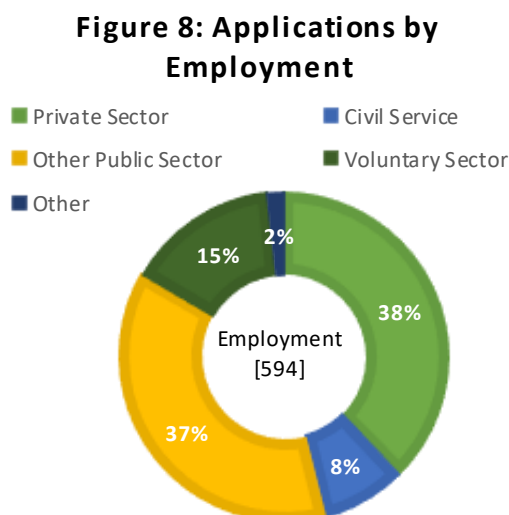
1.6 Marital Status

Marital status is known for 72% of all applications in 2017/18; 81% of these applicants were married or in a civil partnership.

1.7 Dependants

Information on whether applicants had dependants or not is known for 59% of applications. 44% of these applicants had dependants and 41% of these were female.

1.8 Employment



Employment status is known for 63% of all applications with 38% working in the Private Sector, 8% working in the Civil Service, 37% working in other Public Sector, and 15% working in the Voluntary Sector.

Females make up 35% of applicants (where gender is known) with most working in the Private Sector, Civil Service or other Public Sector.

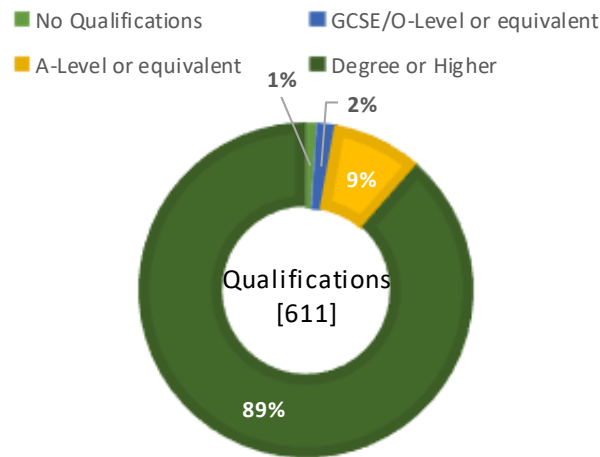
⁸ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20\(a\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20(a).zip),

⁹ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/CT0251NI.ods>

1.9 Qualifications

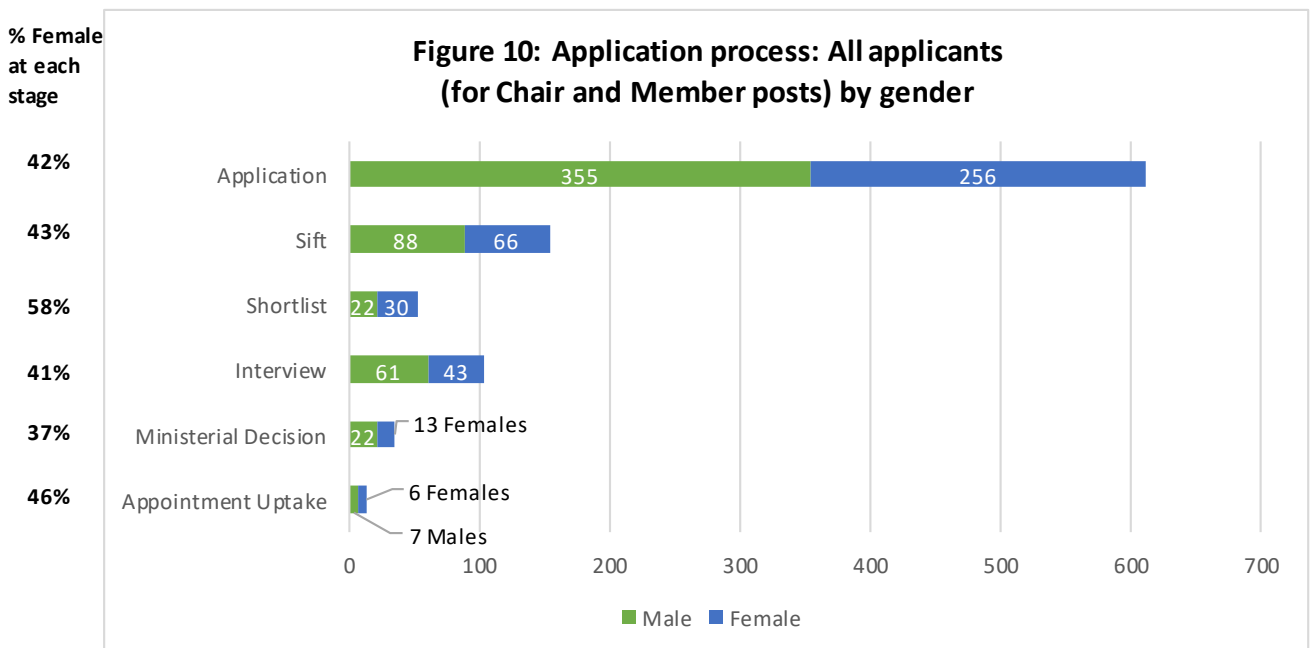
Qualification information is known for 65% of all applications, 89% of these applicants have a degree qualification or higher.

Figure 9: Applications by Qualifications



1.10 Application Process

*Please note that not all appointments go through the same application process and therefore, not all applications go through each stage shown in figure 10.



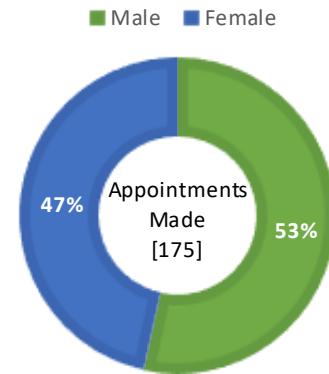
2. Appointments Made, 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018

2.1 Gender

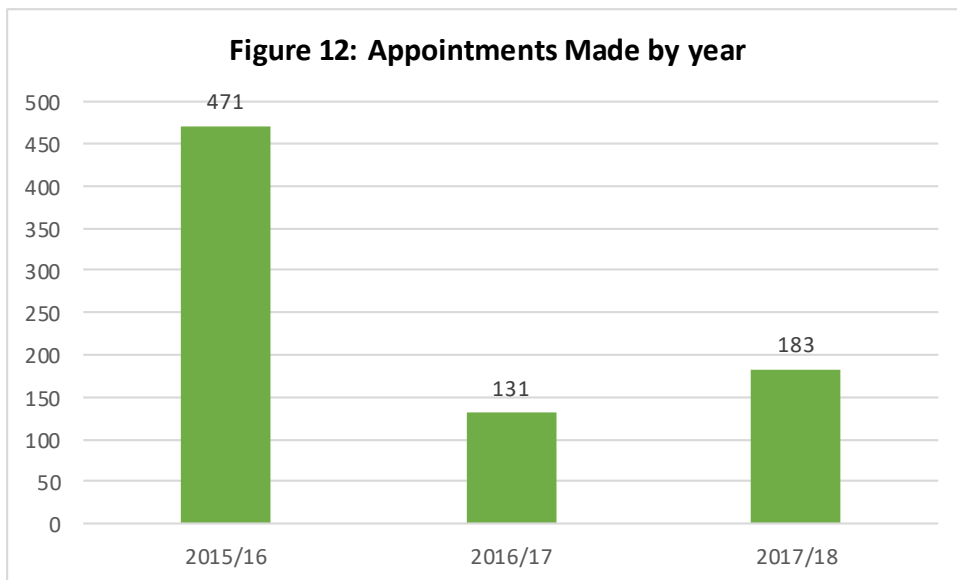
Between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018, 183 appointments were made; with gender known for 96% of these appointments.

Of the 175 appointments made in 2017/18, where gender is known, 47% (82 Member, Chair and Board of Governor appointments) were females.

Figure 11: Appointments Made by Gender



2.1a Trends over time



The absence of Ministers from 9th January 2017 potentially contributed to some of the reductions shown in Figure 12.

There was a 7 percentage point increase in female appointments in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17 (40%).

2.1b Individual Departments

Due to disclosure control, appointments by gender can only be provided at Departmental level for one Department: Education. Of the 162 appointments made to the Department of Education, 47% (of those where gender is known) were to females.

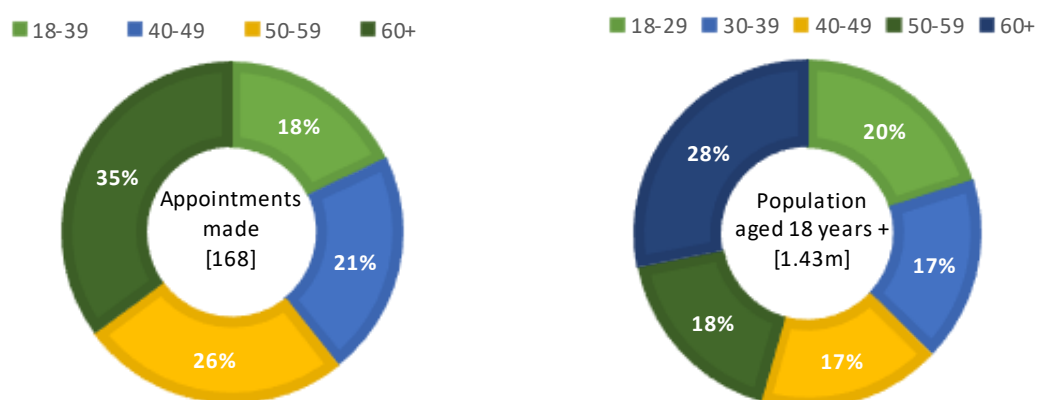
2.1c Remuneration

As remuneration data is unknown for 174 of the 183 appointments made in 2017/18, further breakdowns cannot be provided due to disclosure control.

2.2 Age

Age data¹⁰ was provided for 168 of the 183 appointments made in 2017/18. Of those appointed in 2017/18, 82% were aged 40 years and older, compared with 63% of that age group in the population aged 18 years and over.¹¹

Figure 13: Appointments Made by Age



2.3 Community Background

88% of those appointed provided information on their community background. Equal percentages (50%) of appointments made in 2017/18 were to those from Catholic and Protestant community backgrounds. In the most recent census data, 44% of the population aged 18 years and over were Catholic or brought up Catholic and 51% belonged to or were brought up in Protestant, other Christian or Christian-related denominations.¹²

¹⁰ Due to disclosure control, and one age group with a count of five or fewer, the 18-29 and 30-39 age groups were merged.

¹¹ To note, population figures (and breakdown by age) presented are for those aged 18 years and over; population figures are not affected by unknowns.

¹² See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20\(s\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20(s).zip)

2.4 Ethnicity and disability

Of those whose ethnicity is known, five or fewer appointments in 2017/18 were individuals from a minority ethnic group. (The precise figure and percentage cannot be released due to disclosure control.)

Of appointments made in 2017/18 where disability is known, 4% were to individuals who considered themselves to have a disability. This compares to 25% of the population of Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over who have a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities. ¹³

¹³ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency,
<https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/CT0251NI.ods>

3. Appointments held, 31st March 2018

At 31st March 2018, 929 Public Appointments were held (858 Board Members and Vice-Chairs; and 71 Chairs).

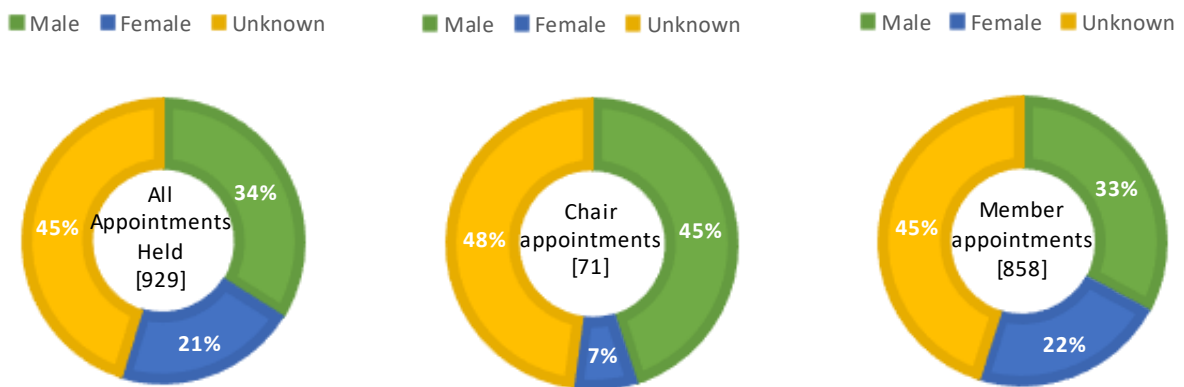
Gender is known for 55% of all appointments held at 31st March 2018; of the 508 appointed where gender is known, 38% were female and 62% were male.

3.1 Gender

With gender unknown for almost half of all appointments held at 31st March 2018, these 'unknowns' are included in figure 14, to provide a more meaningful overall context.

Figure 14 shows the gender breakdown of Appointments held, with Board of Governors included in all appointments held and the Member appointments.

Figure 14: Appointments held by Gender and Board Position

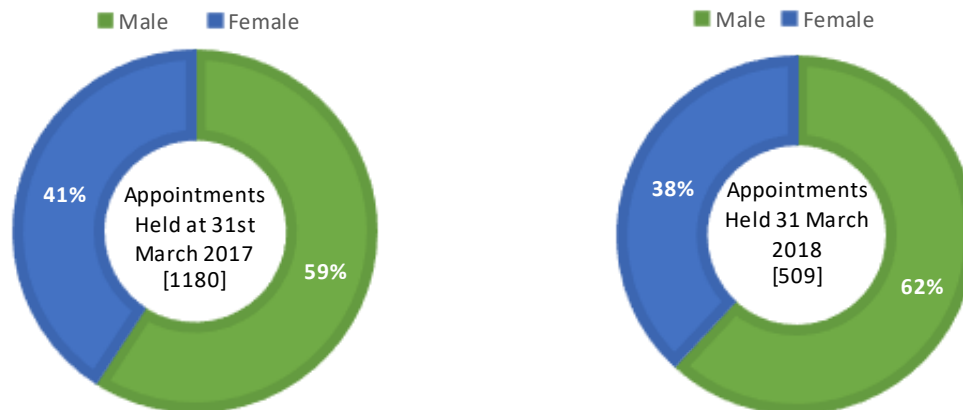


3.1a Trends over time

There were 1,298 Public Appointments held at 31st March 2017 compared with 929 held at 31st March 2018.

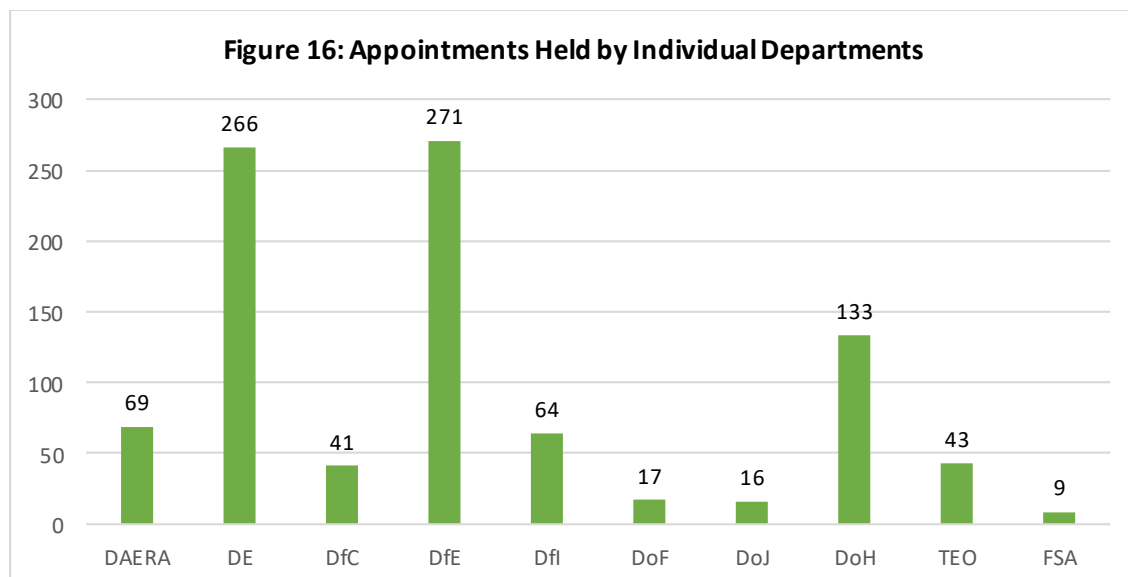
The proportion of public appointments held by females, where gender is known, has dropped by 3 percentage points from 31st March 2017 (41%) to 31st March 2018 (38%).

Figure 15: Appointments held - trends over time



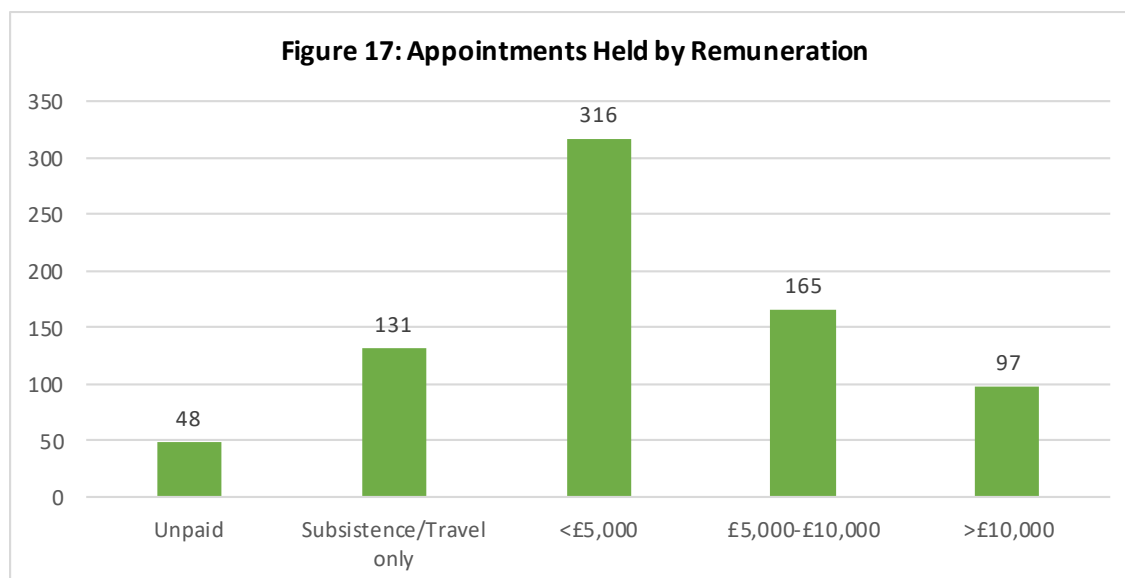
3.1b Individual departments

There is much variation across departments in the number of Public Appointments held, ranging from FSA's 9 Public Appointments to DfE's 271.



3.1c Remuneration

Remuneration details are known for 81% of appointments held; of these, 6% of appointments were unpaid and 35% had remuneration of £5,000 or more.



3.2 Age

Age is known for 40% of appointments held at 31st March 2018. Of those appointments held (where age is known) at 31st March 2018, 90% were aged 40 years and older; compared with 63% of the population aged 18 years and over.¹⁴

3.3 Community Background

Community background is known for 52% of appointments held. Of the 52% of appointments where community background is known, at 31st March 2018, almost an equal proportion of appointments held at were to those individuals from Catholic (45%) and Protestant (47%) community backgrounds. In the most recent Census data, 44% of the population aged 18 years and over were Catholic or brought up Catholic and 51% belonged to or were brought up in Protestant, other Christian or Christian-related denominations. ¹⁵.

¹⁴https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NI_sya_7117.xlsx

¹⁵See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20\(s\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20(s).zip),

3.4 Ethnicity

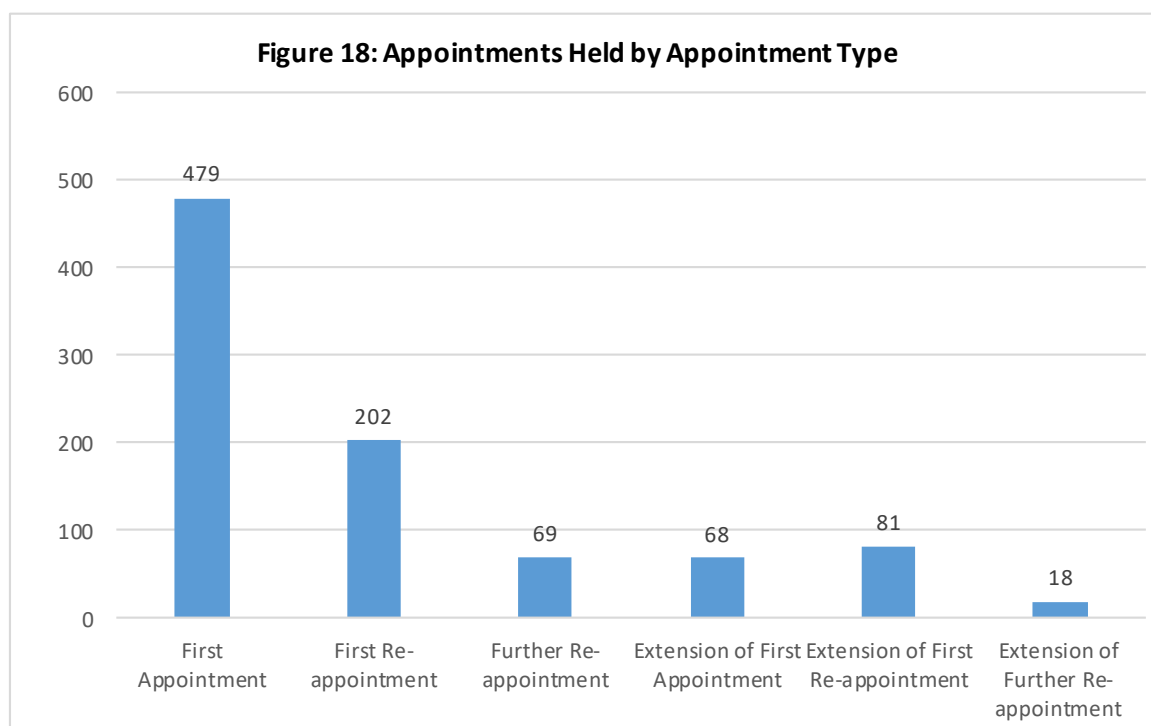
Ethnicity is known for 53% of all appointments held at 31st March 2018. Of the appointments held in 2017/18 where ethnicity is known, 1% were from individuals from a minority ethnic group. In the most recent Census data, 2% of the population of Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over belong to a minority ethnic group.¹⁶

3.5 Disability

Disability is known for 53% of appointments held at 31st March 2018, with 4% of appointees where disability is known stating that they had a disability. This compares to 25% of the Northern Ireland population aged 18 years and over with a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities.¹⁷

3.6 Appointment type

Of appointments held at 31st March 2018, 52% were first appointments and 22% were first re-appointments. The lowest proportion of all appointments held were extensions of further re-appointments (2%).



*Appointment type is unknown for 12 appointments of the appointments held at 31st March 2018.

¹⁶ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20\(a\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20(a).zip)

¹⁷ See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/CT0251NI.ods>

3.7 Multiple Appointments

There is currently no limit on the number of Public Appointments an individual can hold at one time. A judgement is made by the appointing department on a candidate's availability for a new appointment in light of the time commitment involved in his/her existing appointments. The table below shows that at 31st March 2018, 18% of those holding Public Appointments held more than one appointment.

The total number of appointments held at 31st March 2018, detailed in section 3.1, are based on departmental returns; whilst the total number of appointments given in Figure 19 below are extracted from the Public Appointments Database. Data from the two sources are not comparable.

Figure 19: Number of Appointments Held

Number of Appointments held	Number of people	Number of appointments
1	825	825
2	160	320
3 or more	25	75
Total	1,010	1,220

Glossary & definitions

1. Government Departments and agencies:
 - **DAERA** – Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs
 - **DE** – Department of Education
 - **DfC** – Department for Communities
 - **DfE** – Department for the Economy
 - **DfI** – Department for Infrastructure
 - **DoF** – Department of Finance
 - **DoH** – Department of Health
 - **DoJ** – Department of Justice
 - **TEO** – The Executive Office
 - **FSA (NI)** – Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland)
2. **“CAU”**: The Central Appointments Unit.
A unit of the Executive Office with policy responsibilities including encouraging best practice across Departments in public appointments; and advertisement of vacancies.
3. **“CPANI”**: The Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland.
The role of the Commissioner was created in 1995 and regulates, monitors and reports on the process for making public appointments. Not all public appointments fall within the Commissioner’s remit – see page 6.
4. **“Community Background”**: Data from Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms were used to determine an individual’s community background. Individuals chose either: ‘I have a Protestant community background’; ‘I have a Roman Catholic community background’; or ‘I have neither a Protestant or Roman Catholic community background’.
5. **“Disability”**: Data from Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms were used to determine the proportion of individuals who considered themselves to have a disability. The definition of disability used on the Form is derived from the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which defines disability as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”
6. **“Minority ethnic”**: Data from Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms were used to determine the proportion of individuals from a minority ethnic background. Individuals were classified as being minority ethnic if they self-classified as any ethnic group other than “white”.
7. **“NISRA”**: The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.
This statistical report and underlying data tables are produced by NISRA staff out-posted to The Executive Office.