

Northern Ireland Gambling Licencing and Industry Data – Background Quality Report (BQR)¹

Background

Professional Services Unit (PSU) of the Department for Communities produces the publication *Northern Ireland Gambling Licencing and Industry Data*. The publication was first produced in December 2023 and it is anticipated it will be updated on an annual basis. It provides information on the following:

- The number of gaming machines in operation and the number of gaming machine permits;
- The number of amusement arcade permits;
- The number of track betting licences;
- The number of bingo clubs, bookmaking offices and bookmakers' licences;
- The number of registered gambling businesses;
- The number of people employed in the gambling industry;
- The volume of gambling turnover; and
- The volume of betting and gaming duty.

The publication is available to the general public. It is produced in response to a request from Social Policy Unit (SPU) of DfC to publish statistics in relation to gambling. It is anticipated that the data will help support policy development and will be of interest to other key stakeholders, including elected representatives.

Data Quality

Relevance

The publication is of relevance to those in government who are responsible for the monitoring of the various gambling licences that are operational and the economic impact of gambling, and to the wider public.

¹ Date document last reviewed: 18/12/2023

Accessibility and clarity

Publications are published on the Department's website. The publication is produced in HTML format and accompanying tables are produced in Excel and ODS. As these are Official Statistics publications, an assessment of administrative data included in the publication has been carried out. The Quality Assurance of Administrative Data (QAAD) is available [here](#).

Accuracy

The publication is produced using the following: administrative data supplied by Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS); administrative data supplied by each of the eleven councils; Official Statistics publicly available; and additional data provided by NISRA at our request. PSU carries out the following quality checks on the data:

- Cross-checking data across tables provided (where applicable);
- Re-calculating totals presented in tables (where applicable);
- Comparisons with data from previous years.

It is anticipated that as more data becomes available, further comparisons with data received in previous years will be possible and incorporated into the quality check process.

Figures in the publication are collated by the statistician producing the report and quality assured by a second statistician in the team and the G7 Statistician responsible for the work area.

Timeliness

The first release of the publication was in December 2023 and it is anticipated that it will be produced on an annual basis. It is anticipated that as the publication becomes established data requests will be issued on a timely basis with a view to publishing the report as soon as practicable.

Coherence and comparability

Data from NICTS was initially provided to SPU. Statisticians from PSU met with staff in NICTS to discuss the processes in place in each courthouse in relation to the issuing and recording of the various gambling licences that the publication covers. NICTS staff use a paper-based records system to capture and monitor information in relation to gambling licences. As such, each courthouse completed a manual count of the various types of gambling licences that they held as well as the additional pieces of data that were requested. This was provided to SPU in excel form and collated to arrive at an overall Northern Ireland figure. Staff in each courthouse would be familiar with the types and numbers of licences issued.

Data on amusement permits was provided by the eleven local government councils. Statisticians from PSU met with representatives from two of the eleven councils to discuss the process in relation to the issue of amusement permits. This process was then summarised and emailed to the other nine councils for their review. Councils were asked to confirm if their process were broadly similarly. There was overall consensus on the issue of amusement permits, the provision of annual visits to said premises, and the use of electronic systems to record data on amusement permits.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information relating to the quality of the *Northern Ireland Gambling Licences and Industry Data* publication please contact: psu@communities-ni.gov.uk