

Change of Methodology: Recruitment Report

Information Paper

March 2024

Following the [Review of the Annual Analysis of NICS Recruitment Competitions](#), further consultation with the Northern Ireland Civil Service Commissioners (NI CSC) resulted in a revised methodology for selecting competitions for this output and presenting comparator information.

Background

Recruitment in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is governed by [NICS Recruitment Policy & Procedures Manual](#). *NISRA's role to the Recruitment and Selection process is to publish annual NICS Recruitment Statistics in a format which the Commissioners may specify ([NI CSC, Recruitment Code](#)).*

Following the Review of the Annual Analysis of NICS Recruitment Competitions, further consultation with NI CSC explored the format of these statistics in detail.

What is the current method?

➤ Competition Selection

From 2009 to 2022, the report provided analysis of competitions which closed to applications in a calendar year. Due to the dynamic nature of recruitment, these competitions were at various stages by 31 December, resulting in incomplete coverage for all competition stages.

For example, a competition which closed to applications by mid-December was included in the analysis even though all stages of the competition had not completed. Equality information relating to applicants was reported but it was not possible to present information on the remaining stages of this competition i.e. invited to interview, passed interview or appointed. As a result, it was necessary to provide updated summary applicant and appointee equality figures in subsequent annual reports.

The same principle applied to other competitions which did not close to applications and close to further activity in the same calendar year. For example, a large scale NICS-wide competition may not close for four years. All equality information would be reported in the year in which the competition closed to applications and three further summary updates would be required to report all appointees.

➤ **Comparator Information**

From 2009 the reports compared the profile of applicants and appointees at different stages in the recruitment competitions with what might be “expected” if the groups within each equality category (e.g. males and females) had been equal in terms of merit. This analysis did not compare to the NI population.

Historical statistics using the former methodology are available on the [NISRA website](#).

What is the new method and what are its advantages?

➤ **Competition Selection**

The NI CSC considered it more appropriate to select competitions which had closed in a particular year. Using this methodology, the equality information would reflect the complete end-to-end recruitment process for the selected competitions and not require future updates.

➤ **Comparator Information**

The NI CSC were particularly interested in comparisons with the NI population, rather than the previously reported “expected” analysis. It was agreed to provide 2021 Census comparators on a consistent basis to the [Equality Statistics for the NICS](#) report.

What to expect from the coming annual report?

The output for 2023 provides a high-level statistical summary, from an equality perspective, of the recruitment of staff to the NICS through competitions which closed during the year in the new tabular and graphical format.

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