



BELFAST

Profiling Health,
Wellbeing & Prosperity



THE DATA BEHIND THE PEOPLE & THE CITY

PARTICIPATION

Contents

List of Figures	4
List of Tables.....	10
INTRODUCTION	12
SECTION 1: Feelings of Satisfaction	
1.1 Life Satisfaction.....	16
1.2 Job Satisfaction	23
1.3 Satisfaction with Amount of Leisure Time, Northern Ireland	26
SECTION 2: Feelings of Loneliness	
2.1 Frequency of Feelings of Loneliness	29
SECTION 3: Caring Responsibility	
3.1 People Aged 16 Years and Over with Caring Responsibility	42
3.2 Children and Young People Aged 0-19 Years with Caring Responsibility	50
3.3 Experience of Being a Carer in Northern Ireland	64
3.4 Claimants of Carer’s Allowance.....	68
3.5 - Carers’ Assessment Offered.....	73
- Carers’ Assessments Accepted/Completed.....	73
- Carers’ Reassessments Offered and Accepted/Completed	73
SECTION 4: Volunteering	
4.1 Volunteering in the Last 12 Months	82

SECTION 5: Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

5.1	- Sport Participation in the Last 12 Months or 4 Weeks	92
	- Sport Participation Normally on At Least One Day a Week	92
5.2	Membership of a Sports Club or Organisation.....	103
5.3	- Walking for Recreation within the Previous Year, Northern Ireland.....	109
	- Walking for Recreation within the Last Four Weeks, Northern Ireland.....	109

SECTION 6: Engagement in Culture, Arts and Leisure

6.1	- Engagement with the Arts in the Last 12 Months	115
	- Participation in Arts Activities in the Last 12 Months.....	115
	- Attendance at Arts Events in the Last 12 Months	115
6.2	Use of the Public Library Service in the Last 12 Months	126
6.3	Visited a Museum or Science Centre in the Last 12 Months.....	133

SECTION 7: Influence on Local and Northern Ireland Decision-making

7.1	- Influence on Local Decisions.....	139
	- Influence on Decisions Made about Northern Ireland	139

Figures

SECTION 1: Feelings of Satisfaction

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 1:

Average (mean) rating of life satisfaction (out of a scale of 10) by LGD, Northern Ireland, and the UK, 2019/20..... 19

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 2:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' score (9 or 10 out of 10) for life satisfaction by LGD, Northern Ireland and the UK, 2019/20 20

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 3:

Percentage (%) of employees in Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their job by age group, skill level, and sex, 2019..... 25

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 4:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over satisfied with their amount of leisure time in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England, and the UK, January 2016-December 2017 28

SECTION 2: Feelings of Loneliness

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 5:

Percentage (%) of people in Belfast LGD aged 16 years and over by frequency of loneliness, 2019/20..... 31

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 6:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20 33

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 7:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by deprivation (Quintiles 1-5), 2019/20 34

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 8:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by sex, sexual orientation, and marital status in Northern Ireland, 2019/20 35

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 9:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by age group, 2019/20..... 36

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 10:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by self-reported health status, 2019/20..... 37

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 11:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by aspects of wellbeing, 2019/20..... 38

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 12:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by employment status and level of educational qualification, 2019/20..... 39

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 13:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt "More often lonely" by household and area characteristics, 2019/20..... 40

SECTION 3: Caring Responsibility**PARTICIPATION FIGURE 14**

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by HSCT and Northern Ireland, 2010/11 and 2018/19..... 45

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 15:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by deprivation, 2019/20..... 46

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 16:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by sex and age group, 2019/20..... 47

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 17:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by sex and age group, 2019/20..... 48

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 18:

Percentage (%) of boys and young men in Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011..... 52

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 19:

Percentage (%) of girls and young women in Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011 53

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 20:

Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast’s assembly areas and Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band, 2011 55

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 21:

Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast’s assembly areas and Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by sex, 2011 56

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 22:

Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast’s assembly areas and Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011 57

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 23:

Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast LGD and Northern Ireland aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band, sex, and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011 59

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 24:

Percentage (%) of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2011 60

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 25:

Number of claimants for and recipients of Carer’s Allowance by Belfast assembly area, November 2019 70

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 26:

Percentage (%) of the eligible population claiming Carer’s Allowance by LGD, November 2019 71

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 27:

Percentage (%) of carers’ assessments offered to people caring for different client groups in Belfast HSCT, October-December 2019 74

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 28:

Percentage (%) of carers’ assessments accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility for different client groups in Belfast HSCT, October-December 2019 75

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 29:

Percentage (%) of Northern Ireland’s carers’ assessments offered to and accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility by HSCT, October-December 2019 77



PARTICIPATION FIGURE 30:

Reasons for declining a carer’s assessment in Northern Ireland as a percentage of all carers’ assessments declined, October-December 2019 78

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 31:

Percentage (%) of Northern Ireland’s carers’ reassessments offered to and accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility by HSCT, October-December 2019 79

SECTION 4: Volunteering

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 32:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20..... 85

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 33:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, urban/rural environment, occupational group, paid/unpaid employment, and economic activity/inactivity, 2019/20..... 87

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 34:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months by HSCT and Northern Ireland, 2013 and 2017 91

SECTION 5: Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 35:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over participating in sport by frequency and LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20 96

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 36:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years who participated in sport in the last 12 months, in the last four weeks, and normally on at least one day per week by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20 99

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 37:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2013/14-2015/16 105

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 38:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20..... 107

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 39:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who walked for recreation within the previous year by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20..... 112

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 40:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who walked for recreation in the last four weeks by sex and age group, 2019/20 113

SECTION 6: Engagement in Culture, Arts and Leisure

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 41:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over engaging with the arts, participating in arts activities, and attending an arts event in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20..... 119

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 42:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who had engaged with the arts, participated in arts activities, and attended an arts event in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20..... 122

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 43:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20..... 129

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 44:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20..... 131

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 45:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20..... 135

SECTION 7: Influence on Local and Northern Ireland Decision-making

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 46:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who had visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20..... 137

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 47:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over by self-reported degree of influence over local decisions, 2019 142

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 48:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over by self-reported degree of influence over decisions made about Northern Ireland, 2019..... 143

Tables

SECTION 1: Feelings of Satisfaction

PARTICIPATION TABLE 1:

Average (mean) rating (out of a scale of 10) of life satisfaction and percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over by grouping of life satisfaction scores (from 'Low' to 'Very high') in Belfast LGD and the UK, including England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, 2019/20 21

SECTION 3: Caring Responsibility

PARTICIPATION TABLE 2:

Numbers of children and young people aged 0-19 years in Belfast's assembly areas with caring responsibility by age band, sex, and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011 58

PARTICIPATION TABLE 3:

Aspects of caring responsibility for children and young people aged 0-19 years in Belfast's assembly areas with higher percentages (see shaded cells) when compared with Northern Ireland, 2011 63

PARTICIPATION TABLE 4:

Percentage (%) of respondents from Northern Ireland and the UK overall to specific questions in the Carers UK survey, 2019 66

SECTION 5: Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

PARTICIPATION TABLE 5:

Population groups in Northern Ireland with lower percentages (see shaded cells) of sport participation by frequency when compared with Northern Ireland, 2019/20 101

SECTION 6: Engagement in Culture, Arts and Leisure

PARTICIPATION TABLE 6:

Population groups in Northern Ireland with lower percentages (see shaded cells) of engagement in the arts, participation in arts activities, or attendance at an arts event in the last 12 months when compared with Northern Ireland, 2013/14-2015/16 124

SECTION 7: Influence on Local and Northern Ireland Decision-making

PARTICIPATION TABLE 7:

Population groups in Northern Ireland with lower combined percentages (see shaded cells) of feeling they have influence on local decisions and decisions made about Northern Ireland when compared with Northern Ireland, 2019..... 144

Introduction

The core themes in Phase VII (2019 – 2025) of the World Health Organization's European Healthy Cities Network are:

- investing in the **people** who make up our cities;
- designing urban **places** that improve health and wellbeing;
- fostering greater **participation** and partnerships for health and wellbeing;
- improving community **prosperity** and access to common goods and services;
- promoting **peace** and security through inclusive societies; and
- protecting the **planet** from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production.

These six themes are interdependent and mutually supportive. WHO advocate cities will achieve more in these areas by linking up policies, investments and services, and by focusing on leaving no one behind. Combining governance approaches to make health and wellbeing possible for everyone will foster innovation and orient investments towards promoting health and preventing disease.

Belfast was successfully designated to the WHO Phase VII Network in 2021 and, whilst developing a city health profile is a requirement of being a designated member of the WHO Network, the profile is an invaluable resource for agencies and citizens in the city.

A summary of the City Health Profile, 'BELFAST Profiling Health, Wellbeing & Prosperity', for the city of Belfast, provides data and analysis from an expanded range of sources according to this '6P' framework and, although a large amount of the comprehensive range of data provided are publicly available, the added value of the City Profile is the presentation in an accessible, concise, and integrated format.

In addition to the summary document, a full chapter is available on each of the six P themes:

- **The People** chapter focuses on Demography; Population health; Pregnancy and early years; Adult health and wellbeing; Mental health and wellbeing and Use of health care services.
- **The Prosperity** chapter focuses on the Labour Market; Income; Poverty & Deprivation and Education.

- The Place chapter focuses on Transport; Housing stock; Housing conditions; Household characteristics, Housing demand; Housing supply; Private rented sector; Social rented sector; Housing-related benefits and Homelessness.
- The Planet chapter focuses on Carbon Emissions; Climate Change Impacts; Carbon Emission Projections for Belfast; Climate Change Projections; Energy consumption; Decarbonisation of electricity supply; Decarbonisation of private transport; Climate change adaptation and mitigation; Resource use; Surface water status; Public drinking water quality; Air quality and Noise
- The Peace chapter focuses on Police-recorded crime; Experience of Crime; Crime and Deprivation. Crime with a Domestic Abuse Motivation; Hate Crime; Perceptions of Crime and Anti-social Behaviour; Confidence in Policing; Child protection; Interface Structures of Barriers; Community Relations in Northern Ireland and Perceptions of Shared and Open spaces in Northern Ireland. It also includes a Case-study: The Belfast PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

This Participation chapter focuses on:

- Feelings of satisfaction
- Feelings of loneliness
- Caring responsibility
- Volunteering
- Participation in sport and physical activity
- Engagement in culture, arts, and leisure
- Influence on local and Northern Ireland decision-making

Where possible, trends over time are assessed, with an evaluation on whether those trends are favourable or unfavourable. The health inequalities potential for population groups is outlined, where feasible; this information provides the basis for targeted action to improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities across the many determinants affecting the lives of people in the city. Data on some issues referenced by WHO within the Participation theme are not routinely collected in Northern Ireland and are, therefore, not included in this chapter.

PARTICIPATION: FOSTERING GREATER PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

A healthy city leads by example by ensuring the participation of all individuals and communities in the decisions that affect them and the places they live, work, love and play.

Priority issues

Under this theme, the following issues are highly relevant to most cities and represent areas of promise for improving health and well-being.

Healthy older people

Social support, especially social relationships with family and friends, is one of the most important factors influencing quality of life among older people. One of the most powerful strategies for promoting health and well-being in older age is therefore preventing loneliness and isolation.

Reduced vulnerability

Training health workers, involving vulnerable populations in designing, delivering and evaluating services, and addressing gender inequities and discrimination supports and promotes improved life opportunities and independence in older age.

Increased physical activity

Taking part in physical activity increases opportunities for social interaction and a sense of belonging in the community. Inactive groups empowered to engage in some activity will experience the greatest health gains. Local partnerships with communities, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector can maximize participation in physical activities for significantly improved health outcomes.

Transformed services delivery

Partnerships that create new working cultures and strengthen the capacity of institutions and city departments to support people-centred services are at the heart of cities fit for the 21st century. Health and social services, and especially primary care services, that reach out to families in their homes, to employees at their workplaces and to local community groups are important entry points for systematically supporting individuals and communities over the life course and especially during critical periods. Close collaboration and coordination between primary health care and public health services is also essential.

Increased health literacy

Empowerment is a multidimensional social process through which individuals and populations gain better understanding of and control over their lives. For people to see themselves as the coproducers of their own health, increased health literacy and access to good health-related information are necessary. Inadequate or problematic health literacy in populations across Europe results in less-healthy choices, riskier behaviour, poorer health, less self-management and more hospitalization.

Through innovative partnerships with civil society, including with key populations at higher risk, cities can advocate for and support health literacy programmes and services.

Culture and health

Culture is at the heart of cities in the form of cultural sites and customs, and promoting it can stimulate a city's tourism sector, contribute to its attractiveness, and act as a bridge to inclusion and cohesion among diverse groups. Cities can harness culture as a vehicle for improving health and well-being through celebration and inclusion, and for building health literacy through cultural understandings of health.

Cultural diversity adds to the rich social fabric of urban spaces, but also calls for services that are sensitive to the special needs and cultural contexts of communities. This allows the public sector to strengthen services and adaptive responses to population needs.

SECTION 1

Feelings of Satisfaction

1.1 Life Satisfaction

IMPORTANCE

In the Canadian national health survey, life satisfaction was strongly associated with self-reported mental health, even after taking account of factors such as income, general health, and gender. People with poor-self-reported mental health had a particularly low level of life satisfaction.¹ In a Canadian study, after adjustment for several confounding variables, poor life satisfaction was associated with hospitalisation for ambulatory-care sensitive conditions, which are avoidable: the magnitude of the relationship was greater for people who were more socio-economically disadvantaged.²

In the University of Michigan Health and Retirement Study (12,998 adults aged 50 years and over), at four years' follow-up, when compared with people with the lowest life satisfaction, people with the highest life satisfaction had a lower risk of pain, of limitations to physical functioning, and of mortality, a lower number of long-term illnesses and a higher self-reported health status; in addition, they had a lower risk of sleep problems, a higher level of physical activity, and lower levels of depression, of depressive symptoms, of hopelessness, and of loneliness, and higher levels of optimism, and of purpose in life.³

In a blog on the Nevin Economic Research Institute website, three factors are suggested to explain the difference between higher levels of self-reported life satisfaction and happiness in Northern Ireland when compared with other parts of the UK considering the material circumstances of Northern Ireland's population, such as higher levels of deprivation and lower levels of employment and disposable income:

1. The fundamental association between mental health and life satisfaction: results from successive waves of a Canadian national survey | BMC Public Health | Full Text (biomedcentral.com) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
2. Relationship between life satisfaction and preventable hospitalisations: a population-based cohort study in Ontario, Canada | BMJ Open (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
3. Life Satisfaction and Subsequent Physical, Behavioral, and Psychosocial Health in Older Adults (wiley.com) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

1. People in Northern Ireland may interpret/respond to the survey questions differently from people in other parts of the UK
2. Responses in Northern Ireland might reflect ongoing 'positive but fragile' expectations arising from the peace process
3. Northern Ireland's communities have higher levels of social capital than communities in other parts of the UK⁴

Information about life satisfaction is used to understand and monitor wellbeing for the Measuring National Well-being programme.

DEFINITION

In the Annual Population Survey (APS) of adults aged 16 years and over across the UK,⁵ people are asked to respond on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "Not at all" and 10 is "Completely", to the following question:

"Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?"

Data are presented for:

- The estimated average (mean) ratings
- The grouped distribution of ratings – ratings are grouped as: 0-4 (low); 5-6 (medium); 7-8 (high) and 9-10 (very high)

Information is from the ONS, Personal well-being in the UK: April 2019 to March 2020, Section 2. Personal well-being interactive maps, Figure 1.⁶

-
4. Is everybody happy? The economics of happiness in Northern Ireland | NERI (nerinstitute.net) (Last accessed 3 October 2022)
 5. The APS is not a stand-alone survey but uses data from two waves of the main LFS with data collected on a local sample boost. The data comprise 12 months of survey data and are disseminated quarterly. The achieved sample size is approximately 320,000 respondents. Background information and data from the APS were obtained from Annual population survey (APS) QMI - Office for National Statistics (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
 6. Personal well-being in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD:

- The average (mean) rating for life satisfaction was 7.57 out of a scale of 10
- The percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' rating of life satisfaction (9 or 10 out of 10) was 29.43%

Between 2012/13 and 2019/20, in Belfast LGD:

- The average (mean) rating for life satisfaction increased by 0.3 points (out of a scale of 10), from 7.27 to 7.57
- The percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' rating of life satisfaction (9 or 10 out of 10) increased by 3.50 percentage points, from 25.93% to 29.43%

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland:

- The average (mean) rating for life satisfaction was lower by 0.31 points (out of a scale of 10) in Belfast LGD, 7.57 compared with 7.86 (see Participation Figure 1)
- The percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' rating of life satisfaction (9 or 10 out of 10) was lower by 6.82 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 29.43% compared with 36.25% (see Participation Figure 2)

Between 2012/13 and 2019/20, the average (mean) rating for life satisfaction increased:

- In Belfast LGD by 0.30 points, from 7.27 to 7.57 (a percentage increase of 4.13%)
- In Northern Ireland by 0.16 points, from 7.70 to 7.86 (a percentage increase of 2.08%)

Between 2012/13 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' rating of life satisfaction (9 or 10 out of 10) increased:

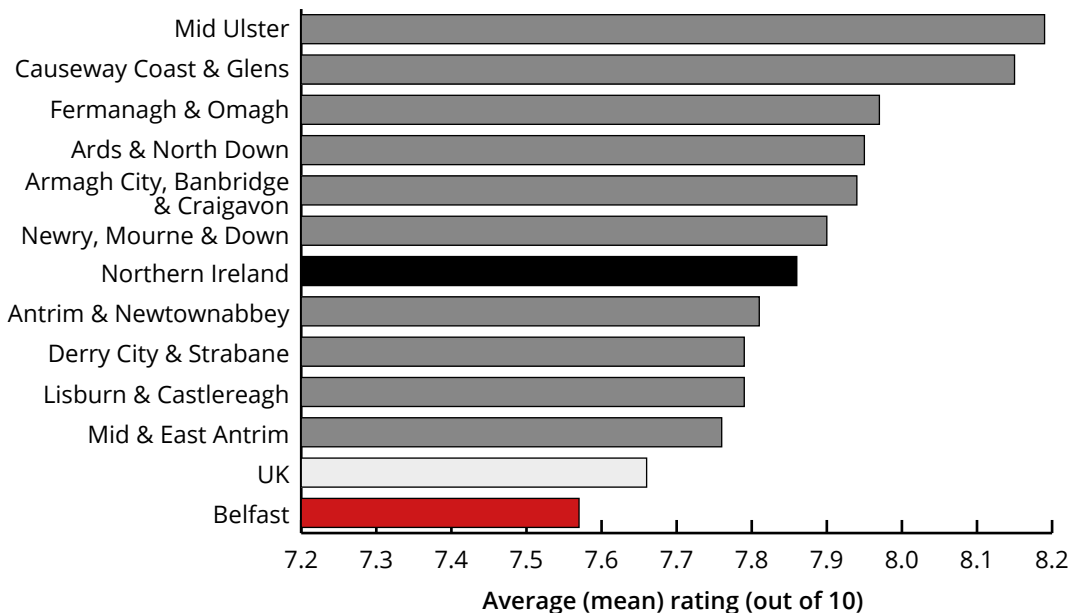
- In Belfast LGD by 3.50 percentage points, from 25.93% to 29.43 (a percentage increase of 13.50%)
- In Northern Ireland by 3.34 percentage points, from 32.91% to 36.25% (a percentage increase of 10.15%)

Comparison with other LGDs⁷

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the lowest average (mean) rating for life satisfaction at 7.57
- Mid Ulster LGD had the highest average rating at 8.19
- Newry, Mourne & Down LGD had the median average rating at 7.90 (see Participation Figure 1)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 1:
Average (mean) rating of life satisfaction (out of a scale of 10) by LGD, Northern Ireland, and the UK, 2019/20



Source: ONS: Annual personal well-being estimates, April 2019 to March 2020 – Local authority update edition of this dataset, Life Satisfaction – Means tab

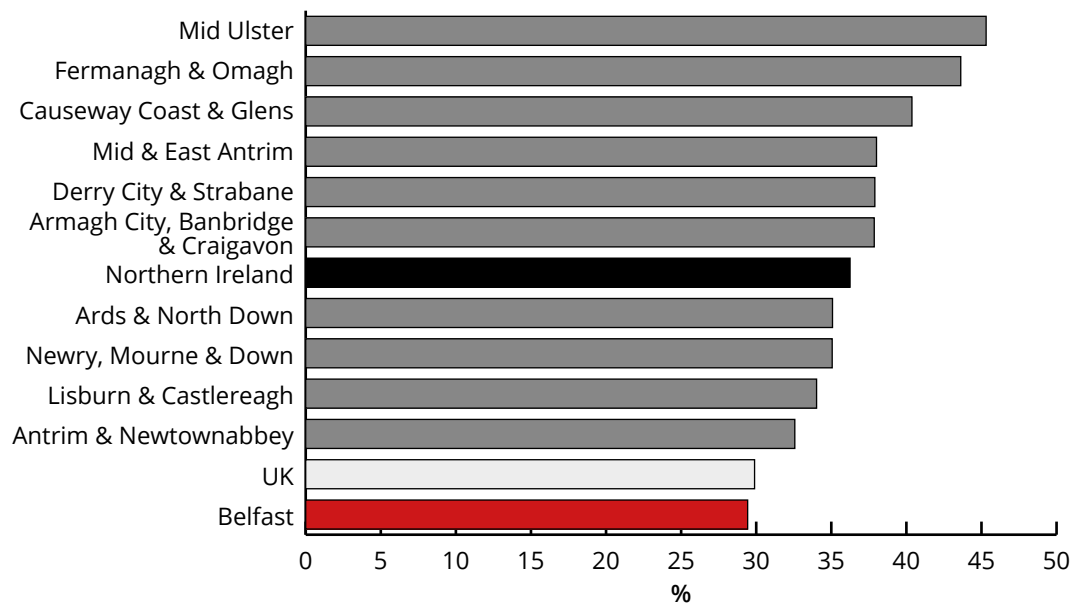
7. ONS advises caution when comparing ratings across local authorities due to several factors such as differing sample sizes

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the lowest percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' score for life satisfaction at 29.43%
- Mid Ulster LGD had the highest percentage at 45.31%
- Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon LGD had the median percentage at 37.86% (see Participation Figure 2)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 2:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' score (9 or 10 out of 10) for life satisfaction by LGD, Northern Ireland and the UK, 2019/20



Source: ONS: Annual personal well-being estimates, April 2019 to March 2020 – Local authority update edition of this dataset, Life Satisfaction – Thresholds tab

Comparison with the UK

In 2019/20, when compared with the UK:

- The average (mean) rating for life satisfaction was slightly lower by 0.09 points (out of a scale of 10) in Belfast LGD, 7.57 compared with 7.66 (see Participation Figure 1)
- The percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' rating of life satisfaction (9 or 10 out of 10) was slightly lower by 0.46 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 29.43% compared with 29.89% (see Participation Figure 2)

Scores for life satisfaction for Belfast LGD are shown in relation to Northern Ireland, other parts of the UK and the UK in Participation Table 1.

PARTICIPATION TABLE 1:

Average (mean) rating (out of a scale of 10) of life satisfaction and percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over by grouping of life satisfaction scores (from 'Low' to 'Very high') in Belfast LGD and the UK, including England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, 2019/20⁸

Geographical area	Average (mean) rating	Grouping of life satisfaction scores (%)			
		Low: 0-4	Medium: 5-6	High: 7-8	Very high: 9-10
Belfast LGD	7.57	6.15**	15.48*	48.94	29.43*
Northern Ireland	7.86	4.22*	11.99	47.53	36.25
England	7.66	4.68	13.92	51.71	29.69
Scotland	7.68	4.57	13.42	52.59	29.42
Wales	7.66	5.29	13.99	50.02	30.70
UK	7.66	4.69	13.83	51.59	29.89

Source: ONS: Annual personal well-being estimates, April 2019 to March 2020 – Local authority update edition of this dataset, Life Satisfaction – Means & Life Satisfaction – Thresholds tabs

8. All estimates are precise with the exception of those marked with *, which are 'reasonably precise', and **, which are considered 'acceptable'; precision is the degree to which repeated measurements are consistent

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, people aged 16 years and over in Belfast had a lower average rating of life satisfaction when compared with Northern Ireland, and the lowest average rating of life satisfaction when compared with other LGDs.

Between 2012/13 and 2019/20, the average rating of life satisfaction increased in Belfast and Northern Ireland, but the percentage increase was greater in Belfast and the gap between the two narrowed.

In 2019/20, in Belfast, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' score for life satisfaction was lower than that in Northern Ireland, and lowest among LGDs.

Between 2012/13 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with a 'very high' score for life satisfaction increased in Belfast and Northern Ireland, but the percentage increase was greater in Belfast and the gap between the two narrowed.

1.2 Job Satisfaction

IMPORTANCE

Job satisfaction is a subjective measure of the level of satisfaction people feel about their job. The level of job satisfaction is an important factor influencing the health, particularly the mental health, of people who work.⁹ Job satisfaction may have a protective effect on health, happiness, subjective wellbeing, and self-esteem;¹⁰ however, it has also been found that other factors in conjunction with job satisfaction may be important, particularly whether the work itself is meaningful.¹¹

DEFINITION

In Northern Ireland, a question on job satisfaction was included in the LFS for the first time during the period July 2019 to June 2020.¹² Participants who were employed and aged 18 years and over were asked to rate their job satisfaction, according to the following scale:

- 1 = very dissatisfied
- 2 = dissatisfied
- 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 4 = satisfied
- 5 = very satisfied

Job satisfaction was calculated as a percentage of the total number of employees who gave a score of 4 or 5, divided by the total number of employees.

Specific information for Belfast LGD 2019/20 was obtained directly from NISRA.¹³

-
9. Farragher EB et al. (2005) The relationship between job satisfaction and health: a meta-analysis. *Occup Environ Med* 62; 105-112. [v062p00105.pdf \(nih.gov\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/105112/) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
 10. The protective effect of job satisfaction in health, happiness, well-being and self-esteem - PubMed ([nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/)) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
 11. Meaningful work and mental health: job satisfaction as a moderator - PubMed ([nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/)) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
 12. NISRA 2021 Work Quality in Northern Ireland (Last accessed 6 October 2021)
 13. NISRA; obtained via User requested data. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/TbILFS997.XLSX> (Last accessed 6 October 2021)

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland was from NISRA Work Quality 2019, Measures of Work Quality in Northern Ireland from the Labour Force Survey, 2015-2019, Work Quality Tables.¹⁴

PROFILE FINDINGS

In July 2019-June 2020, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of employees aged 18 years and over who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their job was 76.1%.

KEY COMPARISONS

In July 2019-June 2020, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of employees aged 18 years and over who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their job was 2.5 percentage points lower in Belfast LGD, 76.1% compared with 78.6%.

Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

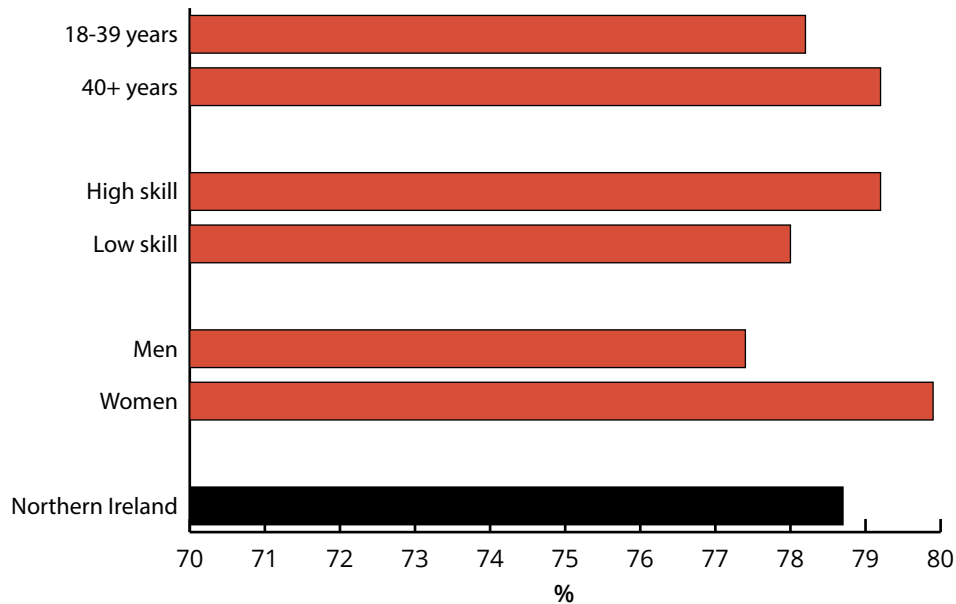
In 2019, in Northern Ireland, the percentage of employees aged 18 years and over satisfied with their job who:

- Were aged 40 years and over was higher by 1.0 percentage point when compared with employees aged 18-39 years, 79.2% compared with 78.2%
- Had 'high skills' was higher by 1.2 percentage points when compared with employees aged 18 years and over who had 'low skills', 79.2% compared with 78.0%
- Were women was higher by 2.5 percentage points when compared with men, 79.9% compared with 77.4% (see Participation Figure 3)

14. Work Quality 2019 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (nisra.gov.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 3:

Percentage (%) of employees in Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their job by age group, skill level, and sex, 2019



Source: NISRA: Work Quality Tables 2019, Tables 7-10

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Belfast, between 7 and 8 out of every 10 employees aged 18 years and over were satisfied with their job, compared with almost 8 out of every 10 in Northern Ireland.

Inequalities and potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups with lower percentages of employees aged 18 years and over who were satisfied with their job were:

- Men
- People with 'low skills'
- People aged 18-39 years

1.3 Satisfaction with Amount of Leisure Time, Northern Ireland

IMPORTANCE

Satisfaction with leisure time is a measure of the level of satisfaction people have about the amount of leisure time available to them. In the Taiwan Social Change Survey, it was shown that increasing leisure time can significantly improve people's subjective health, and better subjective health can significantly enhance life satisfaction.¹⁵

In the Harmonised European Time Use Survey 2015, of all the regions of the UK, employed people in Northern Ireland had the lowest mean total daily leisure time at 4.4 hours (4 hours 22 minutes) compared with the South East of England, which had the highest at 5.0 hours (5 hours and 2 minutes).¹⁶

This indicator is part of the National Well-being Measures dashboard.

DEFINITION

In the Understanding Society study, a longitudinal household panel study of life changes and stability in the UK,¹⁷ adults aged 16 years and over were asked to rate satisfaction with their amount of leisure time.

Responses options are based on a 7-point scale varying from 'Completely/very satisfied' to 'Completely/very dissatisfied'.

In the National Well-being Measures, responses for 'Mostly satisfied' and 'Completely satisfied' are combined and used as the measure of satisfaction with leisure time.

Information is from ONS, Measuring national well-being: domains and measures, October 2019 edition of this dataset, and September 2016 edition of this dataset.¹⁸

-
15. The impacts of increasing leisure time on subjective health and life satisfaction | International Journal of Happiness and Development (inderscienceonline.com) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
 16. Leisure time in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
 17. Understanding Society - The UK Household Longitudinal Study (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
 18. Measuring national well-being: domains and measures - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) (Last accessed 7 October 2022)

PROFILE FINDINGS

In January 2016-December 2017, in Northern Ireland, the combined percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were 'Mostly satisfied' or 'Completely satisfied' with their amount of leisure time was 46.3%.

Between January 2010-December 2011 and January 2016-December 2017, in Northern Ireland, the combined percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were 'Mostly satisfied' or 'Completely satisfied' with their amount of leisure time decreased by 1.1 percentage points, from 47.4% to 46.3%.¹⁹

KEY COMPARISONS

In January 2016-December 2017, when compared with other parts of the UK, the combined percentage of people aged 16 years and over in Northern Ireland who were 'Mostly satisfied' or 'Completely satisfied' with their amount of leisure time was higher by:

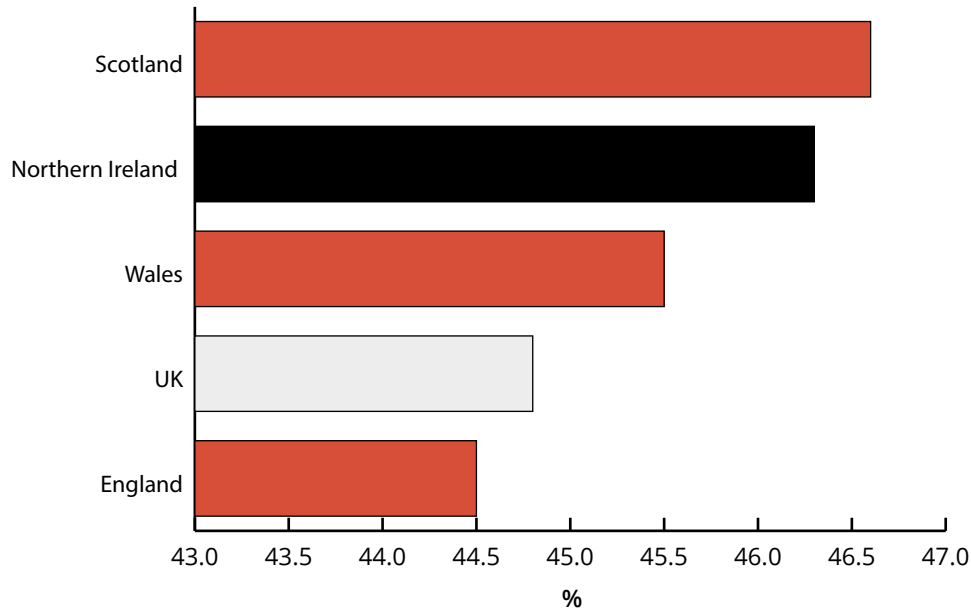
- 1.8 percentage points than that in England, 46.3% compared with 44.5%
- 0.8 percentage points than that in Wales, 46.3% compared with 45.5%
- 1.5 percentage points than that in the UK, 46.3% compared with 44.8% (see Participation Figure 4)

In contrast, the combined percentage of people aged 16 years and over in Northern Ireland who were 'Mostly satisfied' or 'Completely satisfied' with their amount of leisure time was slightly lower by 0.3 percentage points than that in Scotland, 46.3% compared with 46.6% (see Participation Figure 4)

19. Measuring national well-being: domains and measures - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) (Last accessed 14 September 2022)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 4:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over satisfied with their amount of leisure time in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England, and the UK, January 2016-December 2017



Source: ONS: Measuring national well-being: domains and measures, October 2019 edition of this dataset, 'What we do' section, Table 4.3

HIGHLIGHTS

In January 2016-December 2017, in Northern Ireland, between 4 and 5 out of every 10 people were mostly or completely satisfied with their amount of leisure time, similar to that in England, Wales, Scotland, and the UK.

SECTION 2:

Feelings of Loneliness

2.1 Frequency of Feelings of Loneliness

IMPORTANCE

Although there are several definitions of loneliness in the published literature, it can be defined as 'perceived isolation', that is, a subjective feeling of being separated from other people irrespective of the amount of social contact. Social isolation, by contrast, is an objective measure of physical separation from other people, such as being/living alone or a lack of social connections. Both pose risks to physical and mental health, but the two factors can have different effects. Loneliness is a major risk factor for depression, which in turn can accelerate functional decline and increase the risk of mortality; there is also some evidence that loneliness affects immune function, increasing susceptibility to infection, and is associated with disrupted sleep.²⁰

The ONS developed national measures of loneliness following suggestions made by the Jo Cox Commission in 2017. A direct measure of loneliness has been included in the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey.²¹

20. Singer C (2018) Health Effects of Social Isolation and Loneliness. *Journal of Aging Life Care* 28: 4-8. ALCA Journal Spg18_FINAL.pdf (aginglifecare.org) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

21. Three additional measures on signs of loneliness are also collected and compiled into a single loneliness score with trends available from 2016/17. These data are available from the Department of Health Health Survey for Northern Ireland 2019/20 (Last accessed 6 October 2022)

DEFINITION

In the Continuous Household Survey, people are asked “How often do you feel lonely?”.

The response options are:

1. “Often/always”
2. “Some of the time”
3. “Occasionally”
4. “Hardly ever”
5. “Never”

The responses are grouped as follows:

- “Often/always”, “Some of the time”, and “Occasionally” into a single category termed “More often lonely”
- “Hardly ever” and “Never” into a single category termed “Hardly ever lonely”

Information is from NISRA, Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, and Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2018/19, Annex Tables Loneliness 2017-18.²²

PROFILE FINDINGS

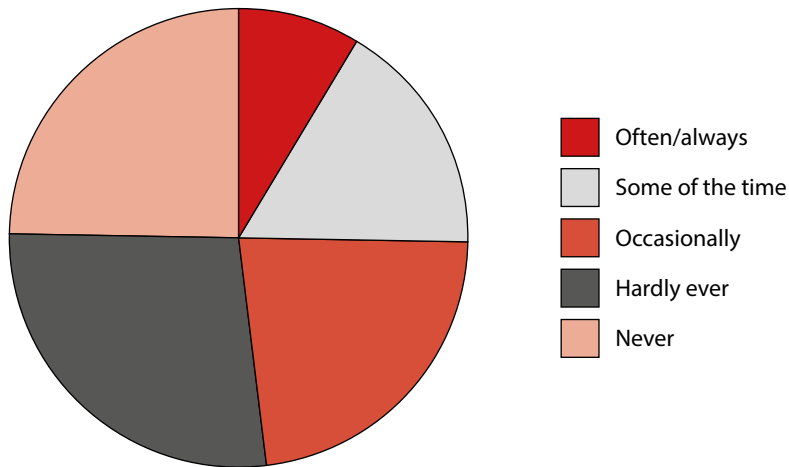
In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of respondents who said they felt lonely:

- “Often/always” was 8.7%
- “Some of the time” was 16.6%
- “Occasionally” was 22.8%
- “Hardly ever” was 27.3%
- “Never” was 24.6% (see Participation Figure 5)²³

-
22. Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (nisra.gov.uk) and Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2018/19 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (nisra.gov.uk) (Last accessed 6 September 2022)
 23. Sample sizes are small when data are split into 5 categories, and the derived statistics may be less reliable.

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 5:

Percentage (%) of people in Belfast LGD aged 16 years and over by frequency of loneliness, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Table 7a

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people who felt:

- “More often lonely” was 48.0%²⁴
- “Hardly ever lonely” was 52.0%

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people who felt “More often lonely” increased by 2.8 percentage points, from 45.2% to 48.0%.²⁵

24. The “More often lonely” datapoint has been rounded by NISRA

25. NISRA Table 7a Annex Tables for Loneliness in Northern Ireland 2017/18 and 2018/19 (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” was 11.3 percentage points higher in Belfast LGD, 48.0% compared with 36.7% (see Participation Figure 6).

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” increased:

- In Belfast LGD by 2.8 percentage points, from 45.2% to 48.0% (a percentage increase of 6.19%)
- In Northern Ireland by 0.8 percentage points, from 35.9% to 36.7% (a percentage increase of 2.23%)

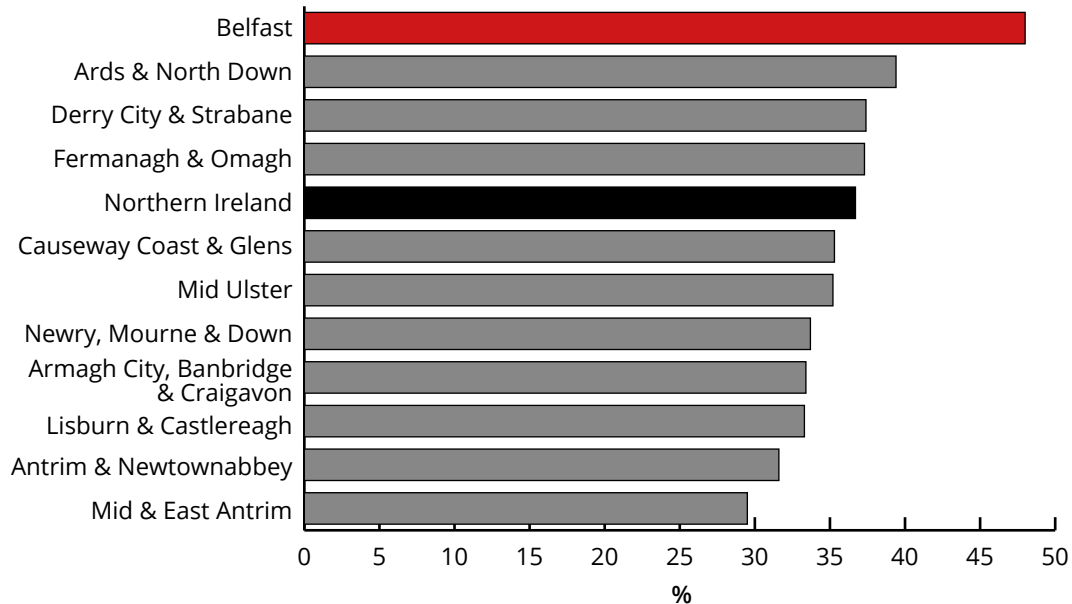
Comparison with other LGDs

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the highest percentage of respondents who felt “More often lonely” at 48.0%
- Mid & East Antrim LGD had the lowest percentage at 29.5%
- Mid Ulster LGD had the median percentage at 35.2% (see Participation Figure 6)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 6:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Table 7a

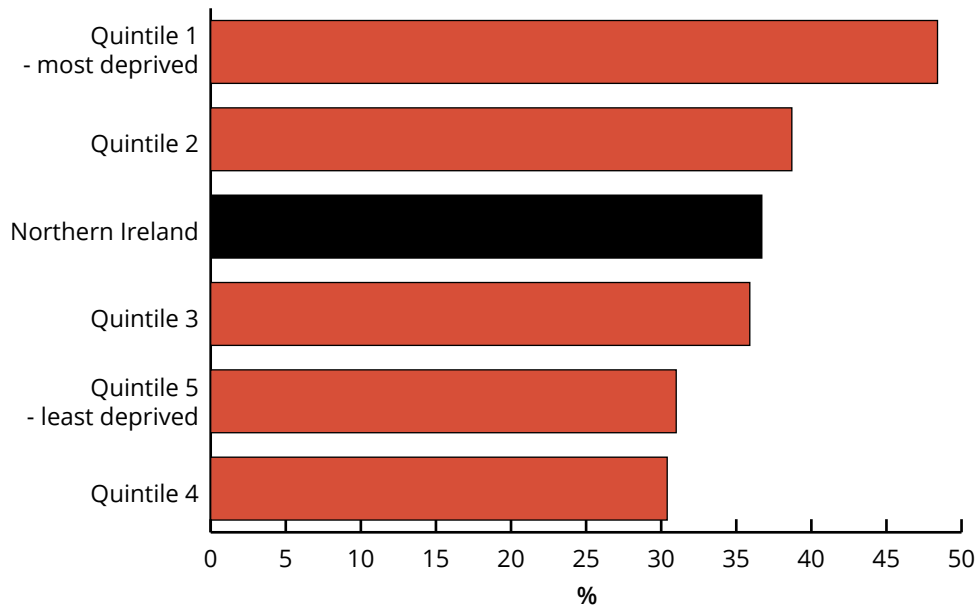
Differences by deprivation in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” across the quintiles of deprivation:

- It was highest in the most-deprived areas (Quintile 1) at 48.4%
- It was lowest in the second least-deprived areas (Quintile 4) at 30.4%
- The median percentage was in Quintile 3 at 35.9% (see Participation Figure 7)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 7:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by deprivation (Quintiles 1-5), 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Table 7a

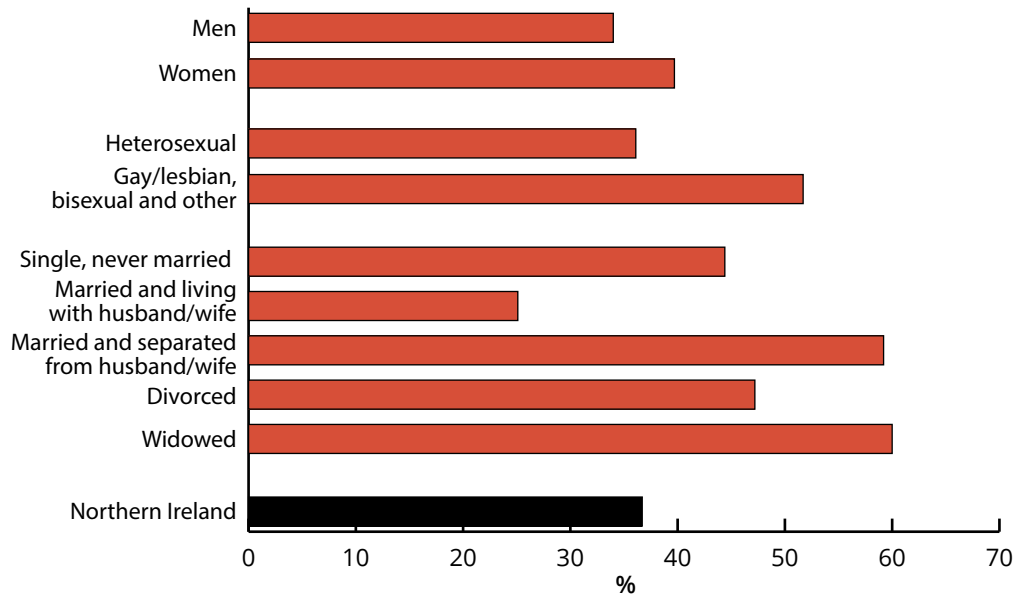
Differences by sex, sexual orientation, and marital status in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely”:

- **By sex** – it was higher in women at 39.7% when compared with men at 34.0%.
- **By sexual orientation** – it was higher in people who were gay/lesbian, bisexual and other at 51.7% when compared with people who were heterosexual at 36.1%
- **By marital status** – it was highest in people who were widowed at 60.0%, lowest in people who were married and living with a husband/ wife at 25.1%, with a median of 47.2% in people who were divorced (see Participation Figure 8)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 8:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by sex, sexual orientation, and marital status in Northern Ireland, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Tables 2a & 3a

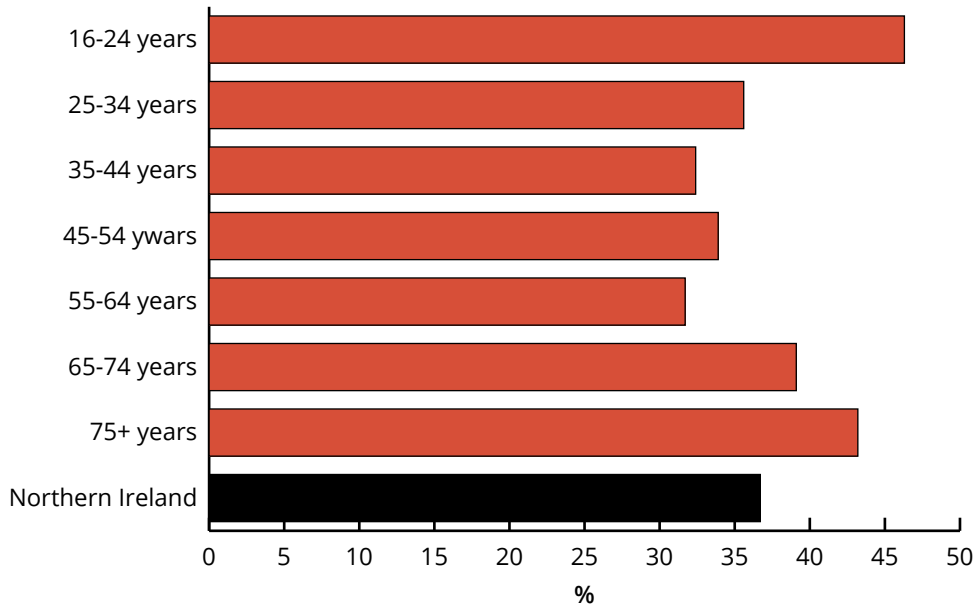
Differences by age group in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” across age groups:

- It was highest in people aged 16-24 years at 46.3%
- It was lowest in people aged 55-64 years at 31.7%
- The median percentage was in people aged 25-34 years at 35.6% (see Participation Figure 9)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 9:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by age group, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Table 2a

Differences by self-reported health status in Northern Ireland

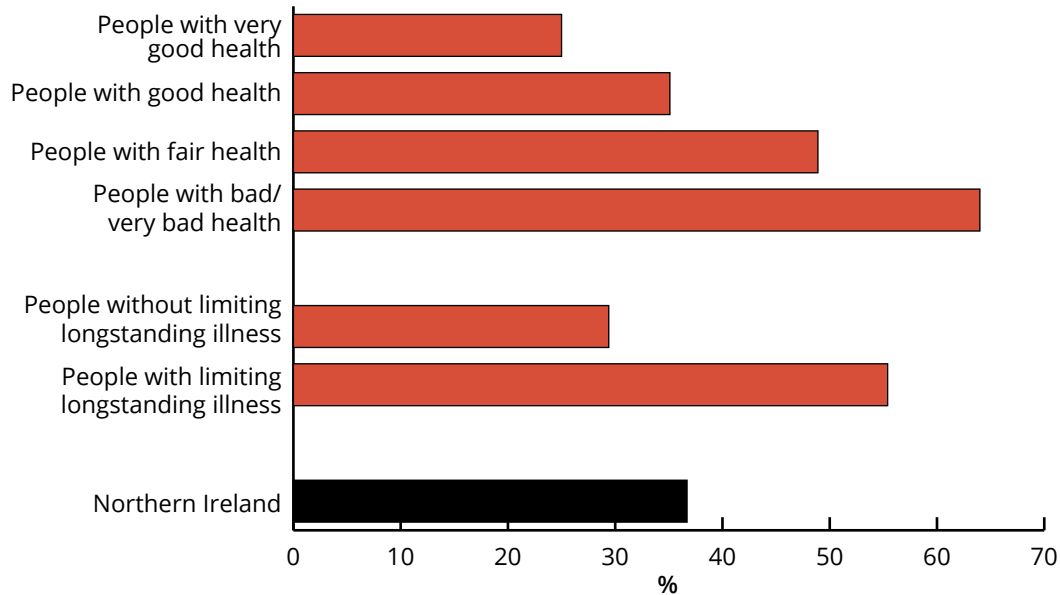
In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” across categories of self-reported health status:

- It was highest in people who reported their health as either “Very bad” or “Bad” at 64.0%
- It was lowest in people who reported their health as “Very good” at 25.0% (see Participation Figure 10)

In addition, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” was higher in people with limiting longstanding illness, at 55.4%, when compared with people without a limiting longstanding illness, at 29.4% (see Participation Figure 10).

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 10:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by self-reported health status, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Table 5a

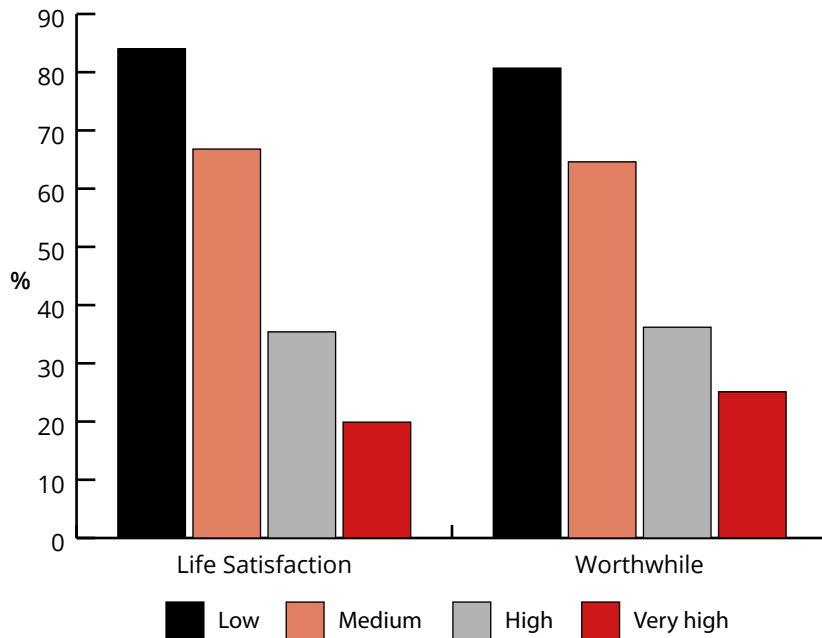
Differences by wellbeing in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” across aspects of wellbeing:

- By life satisfaction (see page 000) – it was highest in people with ‘low’ life satisfaction at 84.0%, and lowest in people with ‘very high’ life satisfaction at 19.9% (see Life Satisfaction, page 000)
- By feeling that life is worthwhile – it was highest in people with ‘low’ feelings that life is worthwhile at 80.7% and lowest in people with ‘very high’ feelings that life is worthwhile at 25.1% (see Participation Figure 11; see also People, (page 146)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 11:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by aspects of wellbeing, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Table 9a

In addition, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” was highest in people with ‘high’ levels of anxiety at 54.0%, and lowest in people with ‘very low’ levels of anxiety at 23.4% (see People, page 153).

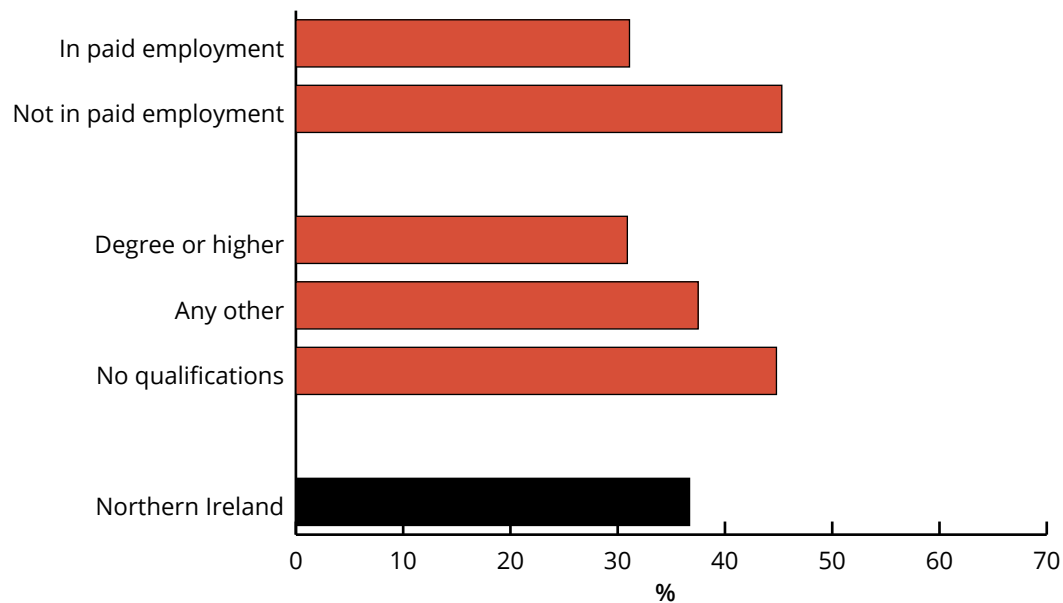
Differences by employment status, and level of educational qualification in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely”:

- By employment status – it was higher in people not in paid employment at 45.3% when compared with people in paid employment at 31.1% (see Prosperity, pages 57 and 63)
- By level of educational qualification – it was highest in people with no qualifications at 44.8%, lowest in people with a degree or higher at 30.9%, and the median was 37.5% in people with any other (see Participation Figure 12; see also Prosperity, page 136)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 12:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by employment status and level of educational qualification, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Table 6a

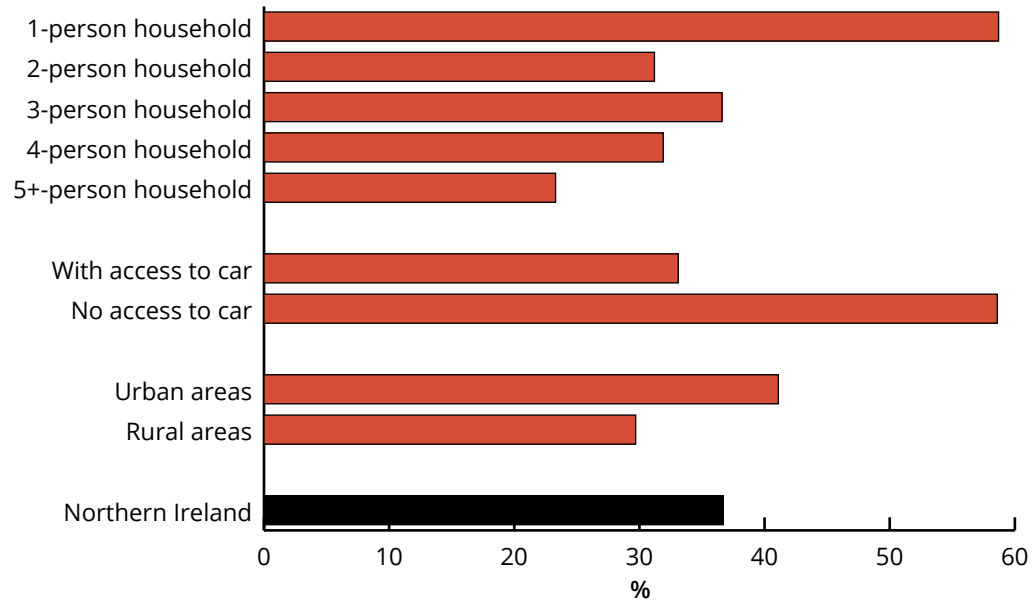
Differences by household and area characteristics in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely”:

- By household characteristics – it was highest for people in a 1-person household at 58.7%, lowest in people in a 5+-person household at 23.3%, and the median was 31.9% in people in a 4-person household (see Place, page 112)
- By household characteristics – it was higher in people with no access to a car at 58.6% when compared with people with access to a car at 33.1% (see Place, page 23)
- By area characteristics – it was higher in people in urban areas at 41.1% when compared with people in rural areas at 29.7% (see Participation Figure 13)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 13:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” by household and area characteristics, 2019/20



Source: NISRA: Loneliness in Northern Ireland: 2019/20, Estimates of Loneliness in NI 2019/20 Tables, Tables 7a & 8a

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Belfast, almost 5 out of every 10 people felt “More often lonely” compared with almost 4 out of every 10 people in Northern Ireland, and from 3 to 4 out of every 10 people in other LGDs.

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentages of people aged 16 years and over who felt “More often lonely” increased in Belfast and in Northern Ireland, although the percentage increase was greater in Belfast and the gap between the two widened.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland population groups with higher percentages of people who felt “More often lonely” were:

- People in the most-deprived areas (Quintile 1) and in the second most-deprived areas (Quintile 2)
- Women
- People self-identifying as gay/lesbian, bisexual, or other
- People who were single (never married), married but separated from husband/wife, divorced, or widowed
- People aged 16-24 years, and people aged 65 years and over
- People who reported their health was ‘fair’ or ‘bad/very bad’
- People with a limiting longstanding illness
- People with low or medium life satisfaction
- People with low or medium feelings that life is worthwhile
- People with medium or high levels of anxiety
- People with ‘Any other’ or ‘No’ qualifications
- People not in paid employment
- People in 1-person households
- People with no access to a car
- People in urban areas

SECTION 3:

Caring Responsibility

3.1 People Aged 16 Years and Over with Caring Responsibility

IMPORTANCE

In the UK, most of the care for people who need care is provided by family and friends. Based on survey findings in 2019, Carers UK estimated there could be about 8.8 million adult carers in the UK, up from 6.3 million in 2011.²⁶

Caregiving is associated with mental and emotional health problems, and a minority of carers are at increased risk of poor health outcomes. People most at risk of psychological distress are those who have a particularly close relationship with the person they care for, including:

- People caring for a spouse or partner
- Parents caring for a sick or disabled child
- People caring for an older parent, or other close kin

Women who look after someone in the same household, or provide at least 20 hours of care a week, are disproportionately more likely to report symptoms of psychological distress than men in comparable circumstances.²⁷

26. CUK_State_of_Caring_2019_Report.pdf (carersuk.org) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

27. Health inequalities and informal care: prospective, population-based study (york.ac.uk) (Last accessed 3 October 2022)

DEFINITION

In the Health Survey Northern Ireland, a person with caring responsibility is defined as a person who looks after another person who is sick, disabled or elderly (other than in a professional capacity) for an hour or more each week.

In 2018/19, there were two questions in the Health Survey Northern Ireland about caring responsibility:

1. Is there anyone (either living with you or not living with you) who is sick, disabled or elderly whom you look after or give special help to, other than in a professional capacity [for example, a sick or disabled (or elderly) relative/husband/wife/child/friend/parent etc.]?
2. Thinking about all of the things you do for this person/these people because they have long term physical or mental ill-health or disability, or problems relating to old age, about how many hours a week do you spend looking after or helping them altogether?²⁸

Information is from the Department of Health, Health survey Northern Ireland, Tables from health survey Northern Ireland, Health Survey NI Trend Tables.²⁹

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2018/19, in Belfast HSCT, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility was 12%.

Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, in Belfast HSCT, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility remained the same at 12%.

28. Questions on Caring Responsibilities were not asked in the Health survey Northern Ireland 2019/20
29. Tables from health survey Northern Ireland | Department of Health (health-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 12 September 2022)

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2018/19, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility was 2 percentage points lower in Belfast HSCT, 12% compared with 14% (see Participation Figure 14).

Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility:

- In Belfast HSCT remained the same at 12%
- In Northern Ireland it increased by 2 percentage points, from 12% to 14%, (a percentage increase of 16.67%; see Participation Figure 14)

Comparison with other HSCTs

In 2018/19, when compared with other HSCTs:

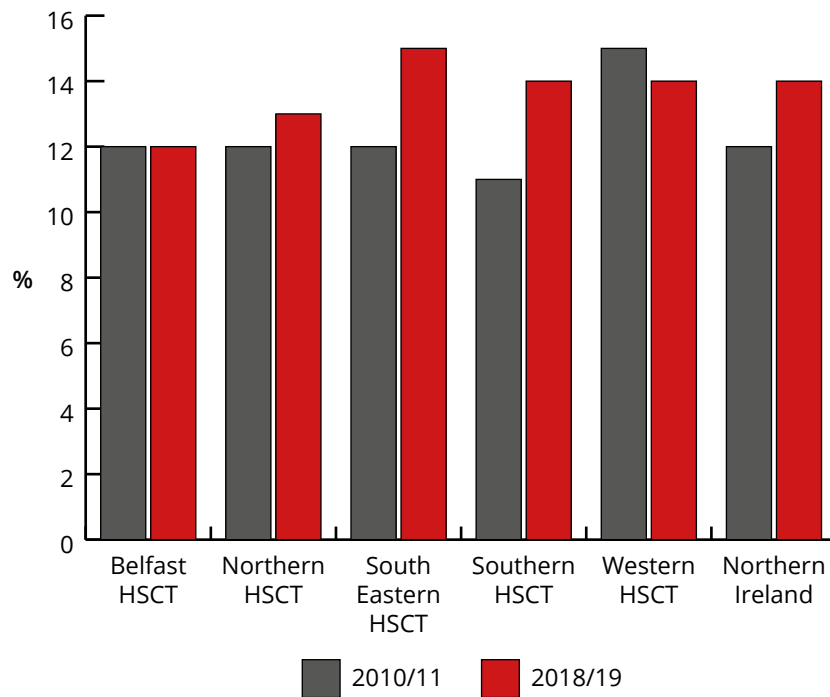
- Belfast HSCT had the lowest percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility at 12%
- South Eastern HSCT had the highest at 15%
- Southern HSCT and Western HSCT had the median percentage at 14% (see Participation Figure 14).

Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, when compared other HSCTs, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility:

- Remained the same in Belfast HSCT
- Decreased by 1 percentage point in Western HSCT
- Increased in the other three HSCTs by 1-3 percentage points (see Participation Figure 14)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 14

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by HSCT and Northern Ireland, 2010/11 and 2018/19



Source: Department of Health: Tables from health survey Northern Ireland, Health Survey NI Trend Tables, Caring Responsibility tab

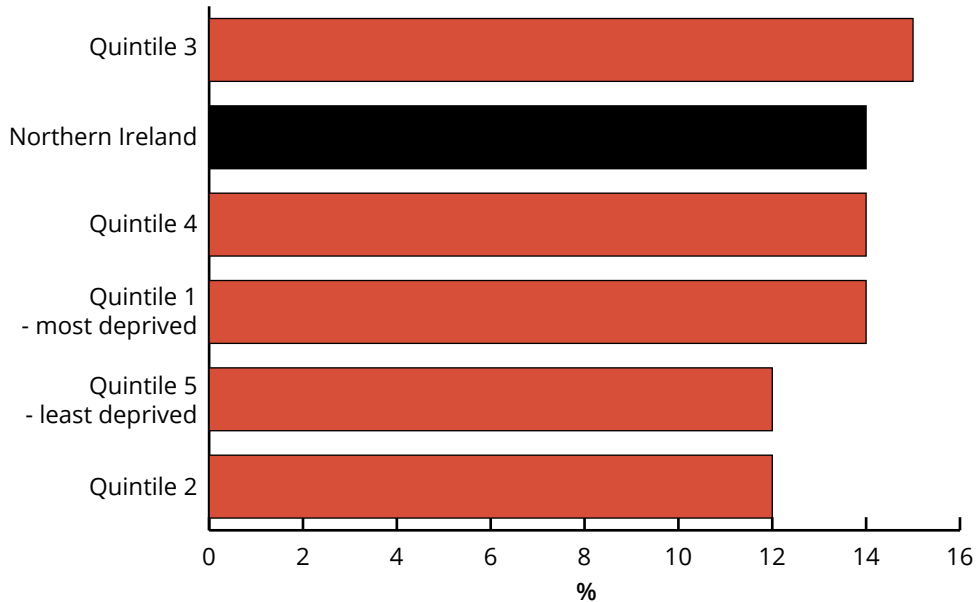
Differences by deprivation in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by deprivation:

- People in the middle quintile of deprivation (Quintile 3) had the highest percentage at 15%
- People in the second most-deprived areas (Quintile 2) and people in the least-deprived areas (Quintile 5) had the lowest percentage at 12% (see Participation Figure 15)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 15:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by deprivation, 2019/20



Source: Department of Health: Tables from health survey Northern Ireland, Health Survey NI Trend Tables, Caring Responsibility tab

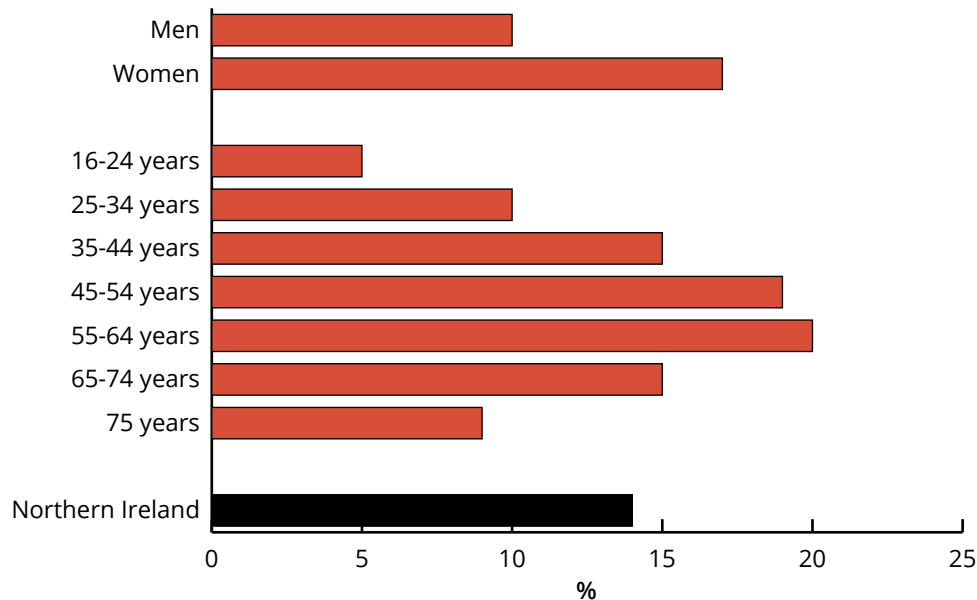
Differences by sex and age group in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by sex and age group. There was a higher percentage of:

- Women when compared with men with caring responsibility, 17% compared with 10%
- People aged 35-74 years when compared with people aged 16-34 years, and people aged 75 years and over with caring responsibility (see Participation Figure 16)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 16:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by sex and age group, 2019/20



Source: Department of Health: Tables from health survey Northern Ireland, Health Survey NI Trend Tables, Caring Responsibility tab

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there was variation in the percentage of people with caring responsibility by sex and age group combined:

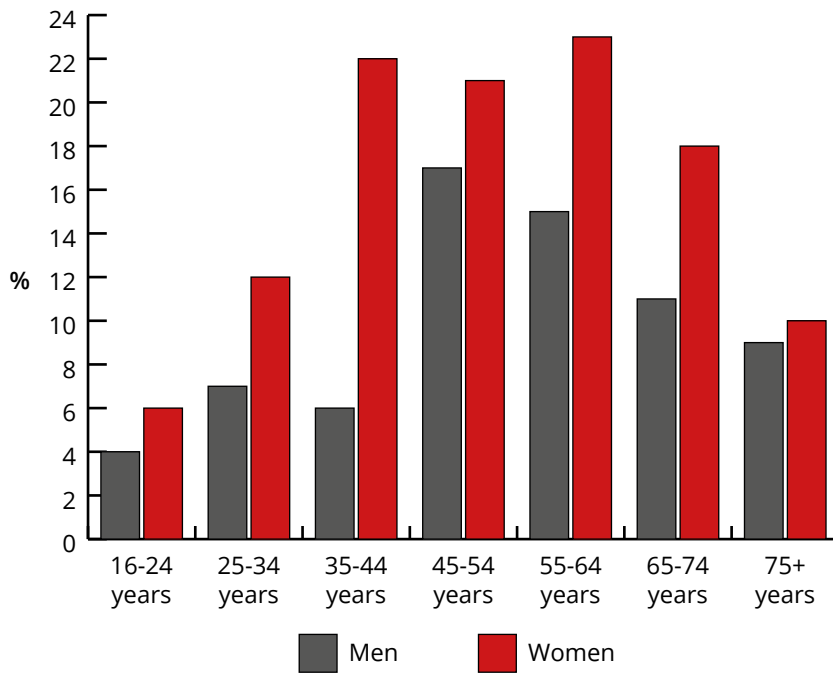
- Women aged 55-64 years had the highest percentage of people with caring responsibility at 23%
- Men aged 16-24 years had the lowest percentage at 4%
- The median percentage was 11.5% (see Participation Figure 17)

The percentages of women with caring responsibility in the four age groups spanning 35-74 years were higher than the percentages for men in any age group.

The biggest difference between the percentage of men and the percentage of women aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility was 16 percentage points between men and women aged 35-44 years, 6% compared with 22%. The smallest difference was 1 percentage point between men and women aged 75 years and over, 9% compared with 10%.

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 17:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility by sex and age group, 2019/20



Source: Department of Health: Tables from health survey Northern Ireland, Health Survey NI Trend Tables, Caring Responsibility tab

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2018/19, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility was lower in Belfast HSCT when compared with Northern Ireland and all other HSCTs.

Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over with caring responsibility remained the same in Belfast HSCT, but increased in Northern Ireland, and the gap between the two widened with better outcomes for Belfast HSCT.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2018/19, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups with higher percentages of people with caring responsibility were:

- People in the middle quintile for deprivation (Quintile 3)
- Men aged 45-64 years
- Women aged 35-74 years
- People aged 35-74 years

In 2018/19, in Northern Ireland:

- Almost 2 out of every 10 women had caring responsibilities compared with 1 out of every 10 men
- Over 2 out of every 10 women aged 35-64 years had caring responsibilities, compared with between 1 and 2 out of every 10 women aged 65-74 years, and 1 out of every 10 women aged 25-34 years and 75 years and over

3.2 Children and Young People Aged 0-19 Years with Caring Responsibility

IMPORTANCE

Caregiving is associated with mental and emotional health problems, and a minority of carers are at increased risk of poor health outcomes. People most at risk of psychological distress are those who have a particularly close relationship with the person they care for.³⁰

In the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (a prospective observational study covering 2,165 participants with full dataset), it was found that young people with any caring responsibilities at the age of 14/15 years had poorer mental health four years later when compared with young people who had no caring role. There was a dose-response relationship³¹ between caring and mental health with the strongest effects in young people providing care daily.³² The risks are particularly high for young people aged between 12 and 25 years, which is considered the critical period for psychological vulnerability for social and emotional development. Any adverse conditions during this formative life period have implications for a young carer's future health and economic wellbeing.³³

In the UK, most of the care for people who need care is provided by family and friends.³⁴ In the 2010 Northern Ireland Young Life and Times survey of 16-year-olds, 19% said they had ever been a carer and 10% said they were a carer now. When asked about for whom³⁵ they provided care:

- 35% said their grandmother
- 30% said their mother
- 22% said their brother
- 17% said their father
- 17% said their grandfather

30. Health inequalities and informal care: prospective, population-based study (york.ac.uk) (Last accessed 3 October 2022)

31. A relationship in which a change in the amount, intensity, or duration of exposure is associated with a change in the risk of a specified outcome, in this case, the higher the intensity of caring responsibility, the higher the impact on the young person's mental health

32. Associations between young informal caring and mental health: a prospective observational study using augmented inverse probability weighting - ScienceDirect (Last accessed 4 October 2022)

33. Young Carer's and their mental health - The Lancet Regional Health - Western Pacific (Last accessed 4 October 2022)

34. CUK_State_of_Caring_2019_Report.pdf (carersuk.org) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

35. Some respondents mentioned more than one person for whom they cared

- 11% said their sister
- 18% said 'someone else'³⁶

In the 2007 Northern Ireland Young Life and Times survey, respondents who identified their family as 'not well off financially' were significantly more likely to have caring responsibilities at home than respondents who identified their family as 'well off financially': 21% compared with 4%.³⁷

DEFINITION

With respect to the provision of 'unpaid care', the term 'care' covers any unpaid help or support to family members, friends, neighbours, or others because of long-term physical or mental ill-health or disability, or problems related to old age.

Information by LGD 2014 and Northern Ireland is from NINIS, Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0240NI.

Information by assembly area is from NINIS, Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0163NI.

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2011, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility was 2.93%, a total of 2,450 children and young people, representing 20.28% of Northern Ireland's children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility.

In 2011, Belfast LGD's proportion of Northern Ireland's children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility was higher than Belfast LGD's proportion of the Northern Ireland population of children and young people aged 0-19 years by 2.91 percentage points, 20.28% compared with 17.37%.

36. Paula Devine and Katrina Lloyd. Young carers too. ARK Research Update Number 76, June 2011. [update76.pdf \(ark.ac.uk\)](#) (Last accessed 4 October 2022)

37. Paula Devine and Katrina Lloyd. Young carers. ARK Research Update Number 56, June 2008. [update56.pdf \(ark.ac.uk\)](#) (Last accessed 4 October 2022)

Differences by intensity of caring responsibility

In 2011, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility who provided unpaid care for:

- 1-19 hours/week was 2.15% (1,797 children and young people)
- 20-49 hours/week was 0.45% (374 children and young people)
- 50 or more hours/week was 0.33% (279 children and young people)

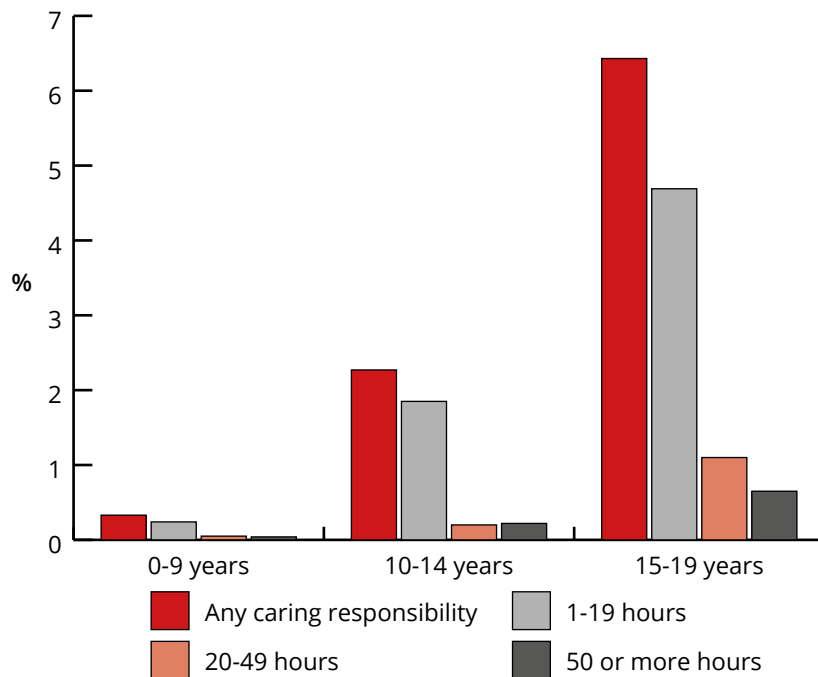
Differences by sex

In 2011, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility who were:

- Boys and young men was 1.30% (n=1,090)
- Girls and young women was 1.63% (n=1,360)

In 2011, in Belfast LGD, within the population of boys and young men aged 0-19 years, the highest percentage with caring responsibilities at 4.69% was for young men aged 15-19 years providing unpaid care for 1-19 hours/week (see Participation Figure 18).

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 18:
Percentage (%) of boys and young men in Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011

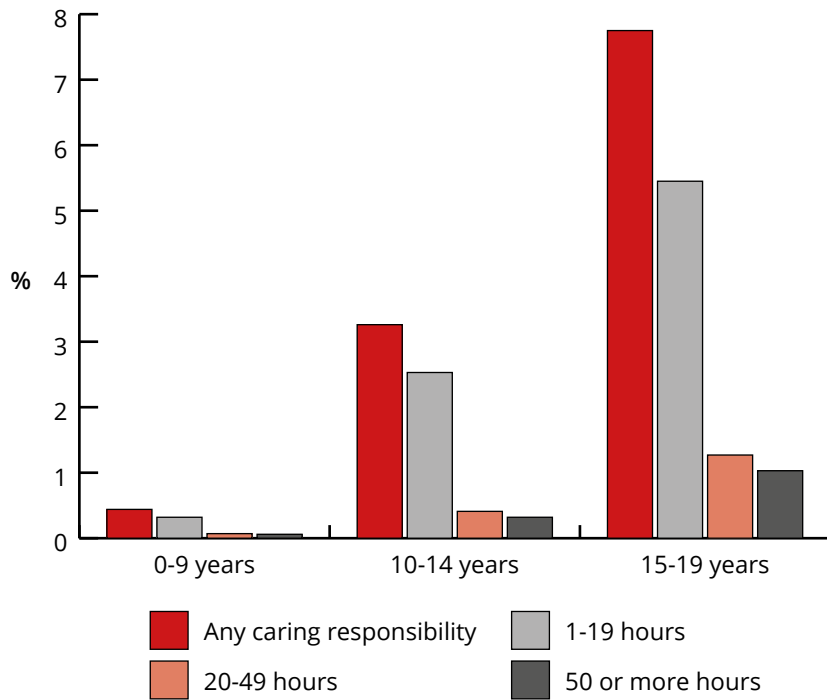


Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0240NI, LGD2014 tab

In 2011, in Belfast LGD, within the population of girls and young women aged 0-19 years, the highest percentage with caring responsibilities at 5.45% was for young women aged 15-19 years providing unpaid care for 1-19 hours/week (see Participation Figure 19).

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 19:

Percentage (%) of girls and young women in Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011



Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0240NI, LGD2014 tab

Differences by age band

In 2011, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility who were aged:

- 0-9 years was 0.18% (153 children)
- 10-14 years was 0.66% (554 children and young people)
- 15-19 years was 2.09% (1,743 young people)

Differences by assembly area

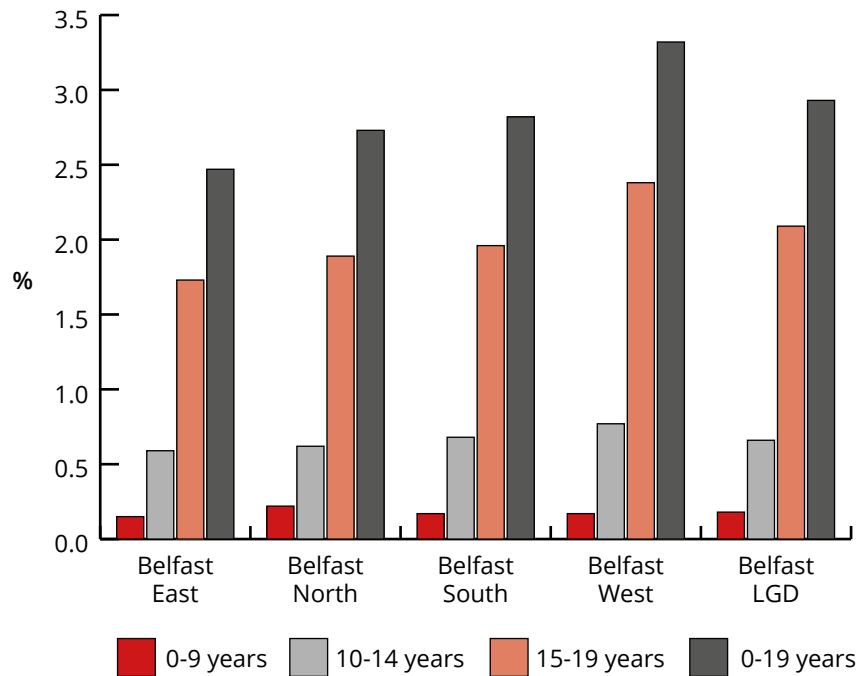
In 2011, there was variation in the percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility across Belfast's assembly areas according to age band, sex, and intensity of caring responsibility. (For reference, the numbers of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility in each assembly area are shown in Participation Table 2, page 000.)

Variation by age band

- Belfast West had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with any caring responsibility at 3.32%, whereas Belfast East had the lowest percentage at 2.47%
- Belfast North had the highest percentage of children aged 0-9 years providing unpaid care at 0.22%, whereas Belfast East had the lowest percentage at 0.15%
- Belfast West had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 10-14 years providing unpaid care at 0.77%, whereas Belfast East had the lowest percentage at 0.59%
- Belfast West had the highest percentage of young people aged 15-19 years providing unpaid care at 2.38%, whereas Belfast East had the lowest percentage at 1.73% (see Participation Figure 20 and Participation Table 2)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 20:

Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast's assembly areas and Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band, 2011



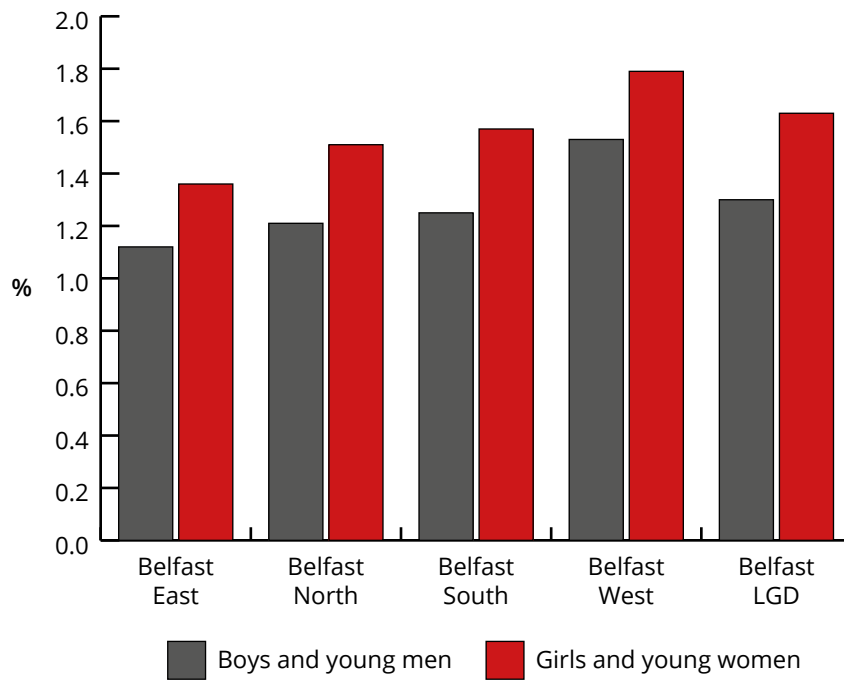
Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0163NI, AA tab

Variation by sex

- Belfast West had the highest percentage of boys and young men aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care at 1.53% (n=429), whereas Belfast East had the lowest percentage at 1.12%
- Belfast West had the highest percentage of girls and young women aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care at 1.79% (n=504), whereas Belfast East had the lowest percentage at 1.36% (see Participation Figure 21 and Participation Table 2)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 21:

Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast's assembly areas and Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by sex, 2011



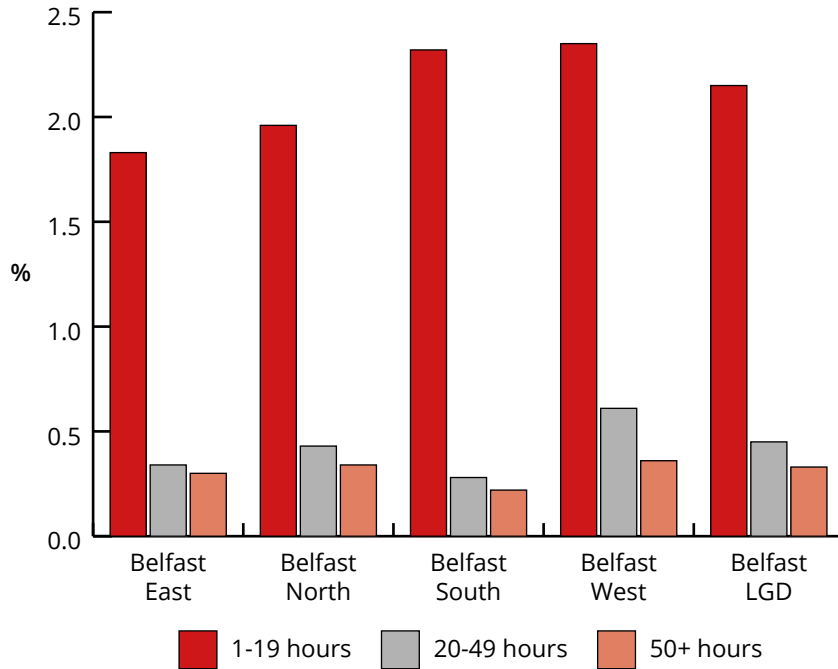
Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0163NI, AA tab

Variation by intensity of caring responsibility

- Belfast West had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care for 1-19 hours/week at 2.35%, whereas Belfast East had the lowest percentage at 1.83%
- Belfast West had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care for 20-49 hours/week at 0.61%, whereas Belfast South had the lowest percentage at 0.28%
- Belfast West had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care for 50 or more hours/week at 0.36%, whereas Belfast South had the lowest percentage at 0.22% (see Participation Figure 22 and Participation Table 2)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 22:

Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast's assembly areas and Belfast LGD aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011



Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0163NI, AA tab

PARTICIPATION TABLE 2:

Numbers of children and young people aged 0-19 years in Belfast’s assembly areas with caring responsibility by age band, sex, and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011

Aspect of caring responsibility	Belfast East	Belfast North	Belfast South	Belfast West
Children & young people 0-19 years with caring responsibility	531	726	705	933
0-9 years	33	58	43	49
10-14 years	126	165	171	216
15-19 years	372	503	491	668
Boys & young men	240	323	312	429
Girls & young women	291	403	393	504
1-19 hours/week	393	522	579	661
20-49 hours/week	74	114	71	171
50 or more hours/week	64	90	55	101
Total population aged 0-19 years	21,475	26,608	25,006	28,078

Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0163NI, AA tab

KEY COMPARISONS

In 2011, in Northern Ireland, there were 12,080 children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility.

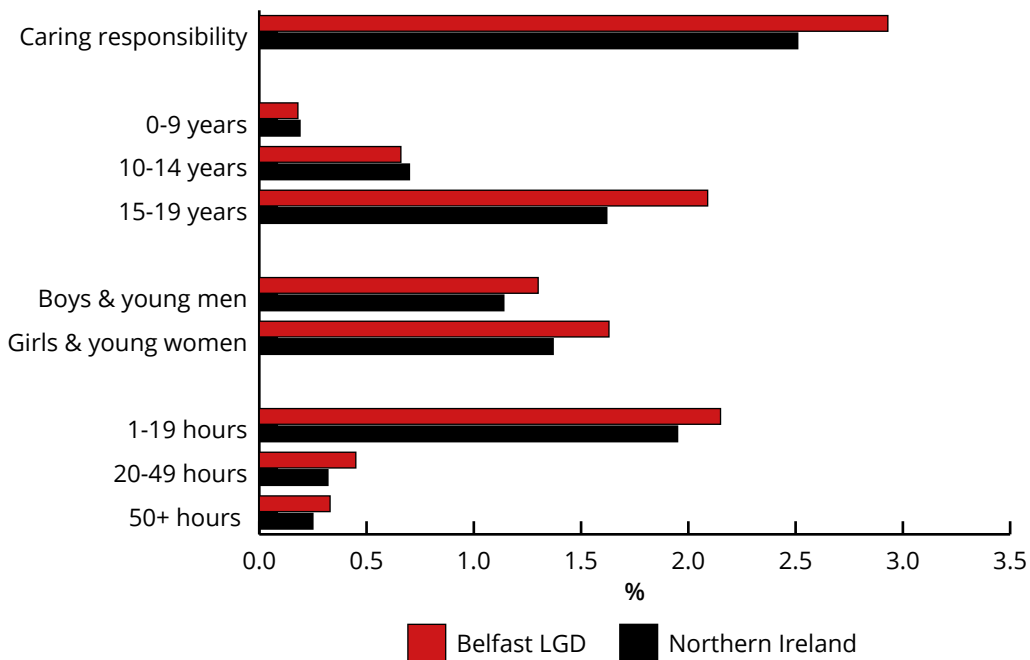
Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2011, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of:

- Children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility was higher by 0.42 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 2.93% compared with 2.51%
- Children aged 0-9 years with caring responsibility was lower by 0.01 percentage point in Belfast LGD, 0.18% compared with 0.19%
- Children and young people aged 10-14 years with caring responsibility was lower by 0.04 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 0.66% compared with 0.70%

- Young people aged 15-19 years with caring responsibility was higher by 0.47 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 2.09% compared with 1.62%
- Boys and young men aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility was higher by 0.16 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 1.30% compared with 1.14%
- Girls and young women aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility was higher by 0.26 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 1.63% compared with 1.37%
- Children and young people aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care 1-19 hours/week was higher in Belfast LGD by 0.20 percentage points, 2.15% compared with 1.95%
- Children and young people aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care 20-49 hours/week was higher in Belfast LGD by 0.13 percentage points, 0.45% compared with 0.32%
- Children and young people aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care 50 or more hours/week was higher in Belfast LGD by 0.08 percentage points, 0.33% compared with 0.25% (see Participation Figure 23)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 23:
Percentage (%) of children and young people in Belfast LGD and Northern Ireland aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by age band, sex, and intensity of caring responsibility (hours/week), 2011



Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0240NI, LGD2014 and NI tabs

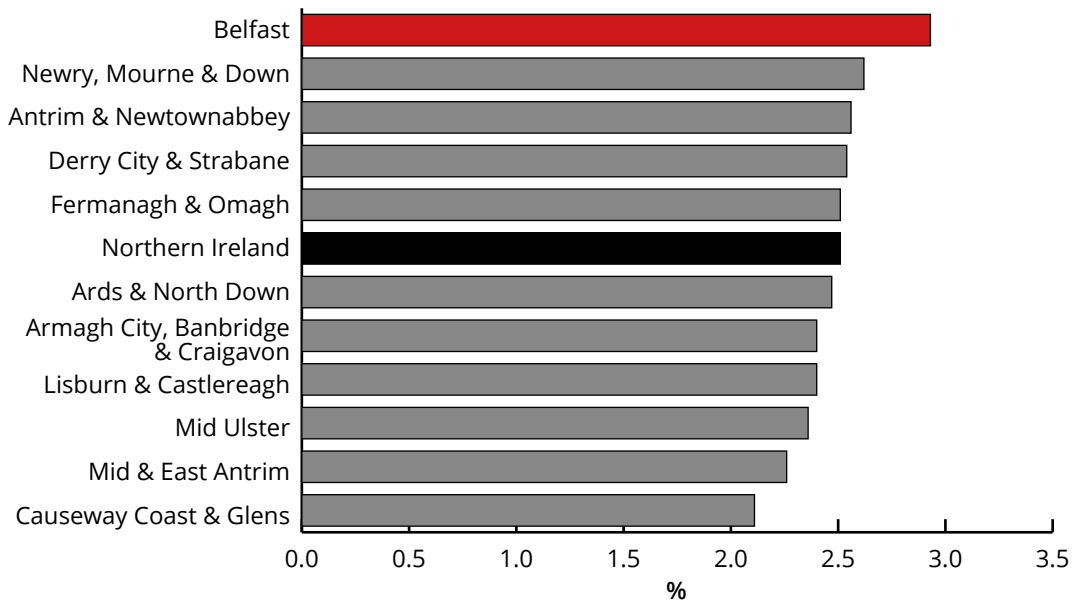
Comparison with other LGDs

In 2011, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility at 2.93%
- Causeway Coast & Glens LGD had the lowest percentage at 2.11%
- Ards & North Down LGD had the median percentage at 2.47% (see Participation Figure 24)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 24:

Percentage (%) of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2011



Source: Raw data extracted from NINIS: Provision of Unpaid Care by Age and Sex, Excel spreadsheet CT0240NI, LGD2014 and NI tabs

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2011:

- 1 out of every 5 of Northern Ireland's children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility were in Belfast
- In Belfast LGD, 3 out of every 100 children and young people aged 0-19 years had caring responsibility compared with between 2 and 3 out of every 100 children and young people aged 0-19 years in Northern Ireland
- Among LGDs, Belfast had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility

In 2011, Belfast's proportion of Northern Ireland's children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility was higher than Belfast's proportion of the Northern Ireland population of children and young people aged 0-19 years.

In 2011, in Belfast LGD, there was a higher percentage of children and young people with caring responsibility who were:

- Girls and young women when compared with boys and young men
- Aged 15-19 years when compared with children and young people aged 0-14 years
- Providing 1-19 hours of unpaid care/week when compared with children and young people providing 20 or more hours of unpaid care/week

Inequalities with the potential for inequity

In 2011, when compared with other assembly areas and Belfast LGD, Belfast West had the highest percentage of:

- Children and young people aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility
- Children and young people aged 10-14 years with caring responsibility
- Children and young people aged 15-19 years with caring responsibility
- Boys and young men aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility
- Girls and young women aged 0-19 years with caring responsibility
- Children and young people aged 0-19 years providing 1-19 hours unpaid care/week

- Children and young people aged 0-19 years providing 20-49 hours unpaid care/week
- Children and young people aged 0-19 years providing 50 or more hours unpaid care/week

In 2011, when compared with other assembly areas and Belfast LGD, Belfast North had the highest percentage of children and young people aged 0-9 years with caring responsibility. When compared with Belfast LGD, Belfast North also had higher percentages of children and young people aged 0-19 years providing unpaid care for 50 or more hours/week.

In 2011, when compared with Northern Ireland:

- Belfast West and Belfast North had higher percentages for eight of the nine aspects of caring responsibility presented
- Belfast South had higher percentages for five of the nine aspects
- Together with Belfast West and Belfast North, Belfast East had higher percentages of children and young people providing unpaid care for 20-49 hours/week and 50 or more hours/week
- The aspect for which all Belfast's assembly areas had a higher percentage was the percentage of young people aged 15-19 years providing unpaid care (see Participation Table 3)

PARTICIPATION TABLE 3:

Aspects of caring responsibility for children and young people aged 0-19 years in Belfast's assembly areas with higher percentages (see shaded cells) when compared with Northern Ireland, 2011

Aspects of caring responsibility	Belfast East	Belfast North	Belfast South	Belfast West
Any caring responsibility				
0-9 years age band				
10-14 years age band				
15-19 years age band				
Boys and young men				
Girls and young women				
1-19 hours/week				
20-49 hours/week				
50 or more hours/week				



3.3 Experience of Being a Carer in Northern Ireland

In the UK, most of the care for people who need care is provided by family and friends. Based on survey findings in 2019, Carers UK estimated there could be about 8.8 million adult carers in the UK, up from 6.3 million in 2011.³⁸

Caregiving is associated with mental and emotional health problems, and a minority of carers are at increased risk of poor health outcomes. People most at risk of psychological distress are those who have a particularly close relationship with the person they care for, including:

- **People caring for a spouse or partner**
- **Parents caring for a sick or disabled child**
- **People caring for an older parent, or other close kin**

Women who look after someone in the same household, or provide at least 20 hours of care a week, are disproportionately more likely to report symptoms of psychological distress than men in comparable circumstances.³⁹

In the Carers UK 2012 survey of 3,400 carers⁴⁰:

- **83% of respondents said that being a carer had had a negative impact on their physical health**
- **87% said it had had a negative impact on their mental health**
- **39% said they had put off medical treatment due to caring responsibilities**
- **37% of carers aged 18-64 years ceased working because of their caring responsibilities**

When asked to identify contributing factors to the negative impacts on physical and/or mental health:

- **64% of respondents mentioned a lack of practical support**
- **50% mentioned a lack of financial support**
- **40% mentioned the stress of waiting for practical and financial support⁴¹**

38. CUK_State_of_Caring_2019_Report.pdf (carersuk.org) (Last accessed 12 September 2022)

39. Health inequalities and informal care: prospective, population-based study (york.ac.uk) (Last accessed 3 October 2022)

40. 206 participants were from Northern Ireland.

41. In *Sickness and in Health* - Carers UK (Last accessed 12 September 2022)

DEFINITION

Information is from the State of Caring in Northern Ireland Survey 2019, in which there were 694 respondents who were actively providing care at the time of the survey. Of respondents to the survey:

- 83% self-identified as female and 16% self-identified as male
- Less than 1% were aged under 24 years, 5% were aged 25–34 years, 16% were aged 35–44 years, 36% were aged 45–54 years, 28% were aged 55–64 years, 11% were aged 65–74 years, and 4% were aged 75 years and over
- 26% considered themselves to have a disability⁴²

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019, in Northern Ireland, it was estimated that there were 272,000 carers.

In the 2019 Carers NI survey:

- 17% of respondents described their physical health as 'Bad' and 9% described it as 'Very bad'
- 20% described their mental health as 'Bad' and 5% described it as 'Very bad'
- 82% had not been able to do as much physical exercise as they would like to do
- 74% of respondents reported having ever felt lonely or isolated as a result of their caring role
- 28% had given up work due to caring responsibilities, and 20% had reduced their working hours
- 39% were struggling to make ends meet
- 62% focused on the care needs of the person they cared for and not on their own needs (see Participation Table 4)

In addition, carers rated their level of anxiety as 2.6 points higher than that of the general population, 5.3 (out of a score of 10) compared with 2.7 (see Level of Anxiety, page 153 in the People Chapter).

42. State of Caring in Northern Ireland 2019 - Carers UK (Last accessed 4 October 2022)

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with the UK

In 2019, when compared with the Carers UK survey, specific findings from the Carers NI survey analysis showed the percentage of respondents in Northern Ireland was higher for:

- Carers who described their physical health as 'Very bad'
- Carers who had not been able to do as much physical exercise as they would like to do
- Carers who had reduced their working hours (see Participation Table 4)

PARTICIPATION TABLE 4:

Percentage (%) of respondents from Northern Ireland and the UK overall to specific questions in the Carers UK survey, 2019

Survey question	Respondents to survey (%)	
	Carers NI	Carers UK
Physical health described as 'bad'	17%	18%
Physical health described as 'very bad'	9%	4%
Mental health described as 'bad'	20%	21%
Mental health described as 'very bad'	5%	10%
Not been able to do as much physical exercise as they would like to	82%	81%
Ever felt lonely or isolated as a result of caring responsibilities	74%	81%
Given up work as a result of caring responsibilities	28%	38%
Reduced working hours	20%	18%
Struggling to make ends meet	39%	-
Focused on the care needs of the person they care for and not on their own needs	62%	-

Source: State of Caring in Northern Ireland Survey 2019, and Carers UK Survey 2019

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019, it was estimated that 2 in every 10 people in Northern Ireland were providing care for a family member or friend.

- Between 2 and 3 out of every 10 carers rated their physical health as bad or very bad, and their mental health as bad or very bad
- Over 8 out of every 10 carers had not been able to do as much physical exercise as they would like to
- Between 7 and 8 out of every 10 carers had felt lonely or isolated as a result of their caring role
- Almost 3 out of every 10 carers had given up work as a result of their caring role, and 2 out of every 10 had reduced their working hours
- Almost 4 in every 10 carers were struggling to make ends meet
- Over 6 out of every 10 carers focused on the needs of the person they cared for and not on their own needs

Inequalities with the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019, in Northern Ireland, people providing care for a family member or friend had an anxiety score that was double that of the general population (see People, page 153).

3.4 Claimants of Carer's Allowance

IMPORTANCE

Carer's Allowance is a non-contributory benefit for people aged 16 years and over who:

- Look after a severely disabled person⁴³ for at least 35 hours a week
- Are not gainfully employed (i.e., not earning more than £123 per week after certain deductions)
- Are not subject to immigration control
- Are not in full-time education

At November 2019, in Northern Ireland, the average weekly Carer's Allowance was £66.54.

DEFINITION

Claimants of Carer's Allowance are the number of clients on the administrative system at the reference date. Carer's Allowance recipients are the number of clients on the administrative system at the reference date who currently receive a benefit payment. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 cases.

Some claimants are entitled to receive Carer's Allowance, because they satisfy the conditions listed above, but do not actually receive a payment. This is because they receive another benefit (e.g., Incapacity Benefit for people of working age, or State Pension for people of State Pension age) which equals or exceeds their weekly rate of Carer's Allowance. Where the overlapping benefit paid is less than the weekly rate of Carer's Allowance, only the amount of Carer's Allowance which exceeds the amount of the overlapping benefit is paid. Carers who are on low income and entitled to Carer's Allowance (whether in payment or not) may receive extra money with their Income Support/Jobseeker's Allowance/Pension Credit/Housing Benefit.

43. The severely disabled person must be getting either the highest or middle rate of Disability Living Allowance care component, or the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment, or Attendance Allowance, or a Constant Attendance Allowance at the maximum rate under the War Pensions or Industrial Injuries Scheme

Information is from Department for Communities, Benefits Statistics Summary Publication (National Statistics) – November 2019, Carer’s Allowance – November 2019, and Benefits Statistics Summary Publication (National Statistics) – November 2018, Carer’s Allowance – November 2018.⁴⁴

PROFILE FINDINGS

At November 2019, in Belfast LGD, there were 15,530 claimants of Carer’s Allowance representing:

- 5.7% of the eligible population in Belfast
- 20.79% of Carer’s Allowance claimants in Northern Ireland

Between November 2018 and November 2019, in Belfast LGD:

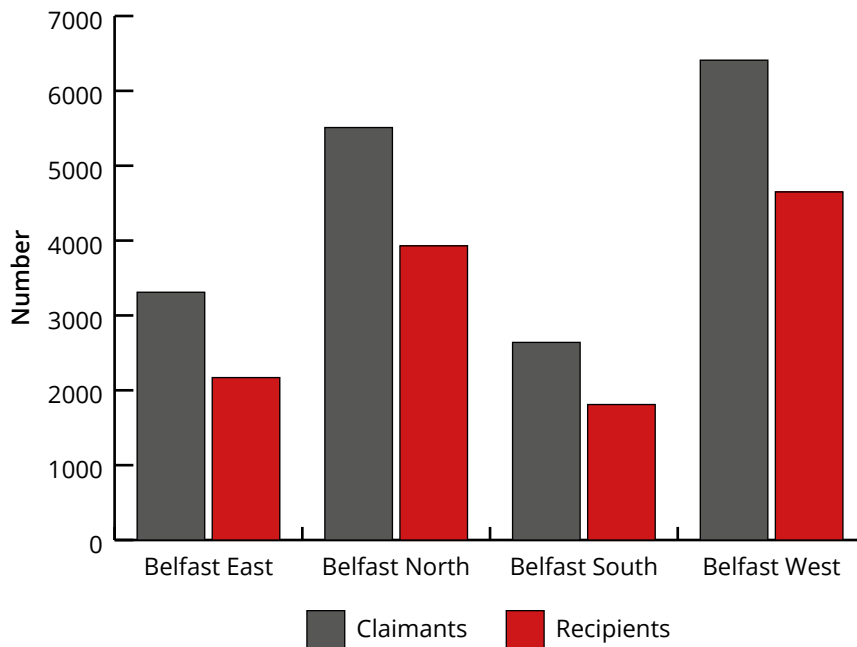
- The number of claimants for Carer’s Allowance decreased by 50 people, from 15,580 to 15,530
- The percentage of Belfast’s eligible population claiming Carer’s Allowance remained the same at 5.7%
- The percentage share of Northern Ireland’s claimants of Carer’s Allowance decreased by 0.14 percentage points, from 20.93% to 20.79%

Differences by assembly area

At November 2019, there was variation in the number of claimants for and recipients of Carer’s Allowance across Belfast’s assembly areas:

- Belfast West had both the highest number of claimants and the highest number of recipients, followed by Belfast North
- Belfast South had both the lowest number of claimants and the lowest number of recipients, followed by Belfast East (see Participation Figure 25)

44. Benefits Statistics Summary Publication (National Statistics) - November 2019 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) and Benefits Statistics Summary Publication (National Statistics) - November 2018 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 8 September 2022)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 25:**Number of claimants for and recipients of Carer's Allowance by Belfast assembly area, November 2019**

Source: Department for Communities: Benefits Statistics Summary Publication (National Statistics) – November 2019, Carer's Allowance – November 2019, Table 7

KEY COMPARISONS**Comparison with Northern Ireland**

At November 2019, in Northern Ireland, there were 74,690 claimants of Carer's Allowance.

Between November 2018 and November 2019, the number of claimants of Carer's Allowance:

- In Belfast LGD decreased by 50 people, from 15,580 to 15,530 (a percentage decrease of 0.32%)
- In Northern Ireland increased by 480 people, from 74,210 to 74,690 (a percentage increase of 0.65%)

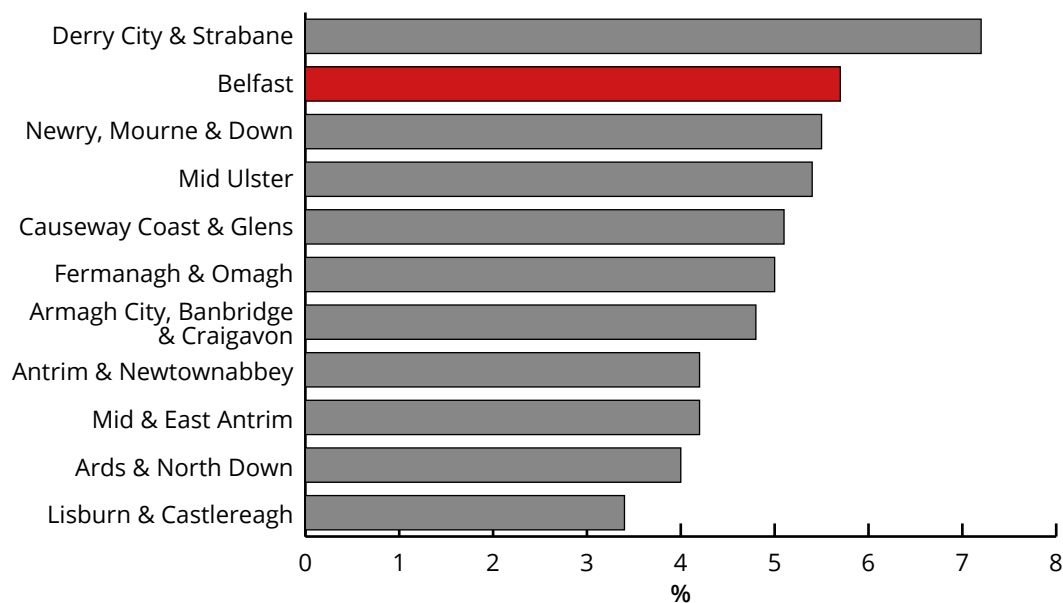
Comparison with other LGDs

At November 2019, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the second highest percentage of its eligible population as claimants of Carer’s Allowance at 5.7%
- Derry City & Strabane LGD had the highest percentage at 7.2%
- Lisburn & Castlereagh LGD had the lowest percentage at 3.4%
- Fermanagh & Omagh LGD had the median percentage at 5.0% (Participation Figure 26)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 26:

Percentage (%) of the eligible population claiming Carer’s Allowance by LGD, November 2019



Source: Department for Communities: Benefits Statistics Summary Publication (National Statistics) - November 2019, Carer’s Allowance - November 2019, Table 8

HIGHLIGHTS

At November 2019, Belfast LGD had just over 2 out of every 10 claimants of Carer's Allowance in Northern Ireland.

Between November 2018 and November 2019, the number of people claiming Carer's Allowance decreased slightly in Belfast whereas it increased slightly in Northern Ireland, and the gap between the two widened slightly.

At November 2019, when compared with other LGDs, Belfast had the second highest percentage of its eligible population as claimants of Carer's Allowance.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity

At November 2019, Belfast West, followed by Belfast North, had the highest number of claimants and the highest number of recipients of Carer's Allowance.

3.5 - Carers' Assessment Offered

- Carers' Assessments Accepted/Completed
- Carers' Reassessments Offered and Accepted/Completed

INTRODUCTION

Carers may need support to allow them to continue their caring role and to ensure their health and wellbeing does not deteriorate as a result. The Carers and Direct Payments Act (Northern Ireland) 2002 places a statutory duty on HSCTs to inform carers of their right to an assessment and to be considered for services to meet their own needs.⁴⁵ In the Carers' Assessment, each carer together with their personal circumstances are assessed to identify any needs they may have related to their caring responsibility. It is important that the needs of individual carers are understood and that service providers respond with flexibility, offering carers choice about how their needs will be met.

To ensure a standardised approach across Northern Ireland, the "Carers Support and Needs Assessment" component of the Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool (NISAT) is used to assess the needs of adult carers; children with caring responsibilities, or in some circumstances adults caring for children with disabilities, are assessed under the Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland (UNOCINI) assessment framework.⁴⁶

DEFINITION

A carer is someone who provides or intends to provide a substantial⁴⁷ amount of care on a regular basis. The term 'carer' includes a person who may or may not be a relative and who may or may not be living with the person for whom they are caring. A carer provides help and support to someone, such as a family member, friend, or neighbour, who may not be able to manage at home without this help because of frailty, illness or disability. A carer can be an adult caring for another adult, parents caring for ill or disabled children or young people of 16 or 17 years of age who care for someone. It does not include someone who is providing care by virtue of a

45. Carers have a right to an assessment of their needs even when the person cared for has refused an assessment for community care services, or the provision of services, provided the person cared for would be eligible for community-based services

46. Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland (health-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 10 October 2022)

47. The term 'substantial' is not defined in the Carers and Direct Payments Act (Northern Ireland) 2002 but is left to professional judgement. It should not be based simply on the number of hours spent caring, but also take into consideration the impact of the caring role on the carer's own health and wellbeing, key factors relating to the sustainability of the role, and the extent of risk to the sustainability of the role

contract of employment, a volunteer working on behalf of a voluntary organisation, a foster carer or anyone who is providing personal assistance for payment either in cash or kind.

Information is from the Department of Health, Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland October to December 2019, Quarterly Carers' Statistics Tables October to December 2019.⁴⁸

PROFILE FINDINGS

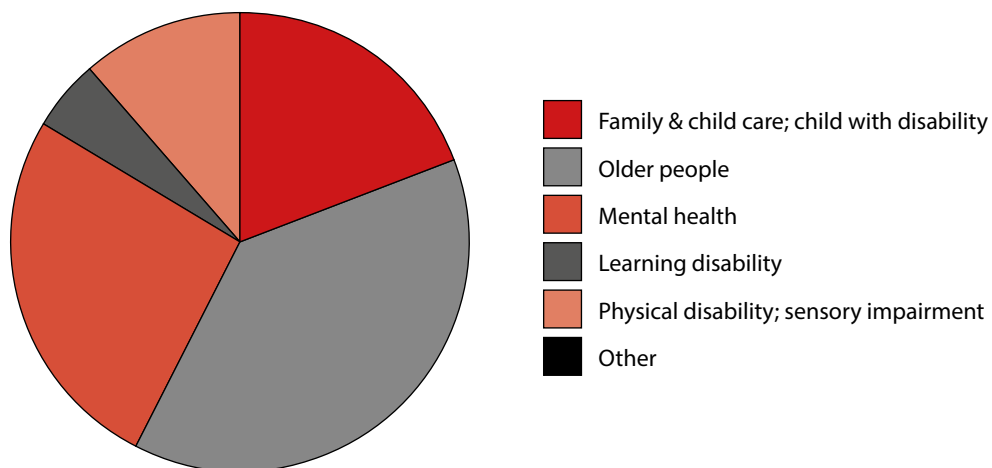
Carers' assessments offered

In October-December 2019, in Belfast HSCT, 845 carers' assessments were offered, representing 20.11% of Northern Ireland's total offered for that quarter (Quarter 3).

In October-December 2019, in Belfast HSCT, the highest percentage of carers' assessments were offered to people caring for older people at 38.34%, followed by people caring for a person with mental health problems (see Participation Figure 27).

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 27:

Percentage (%) of carers' assessments offered to people caring for different client groups in Belfast HSCT, October-December 2019



Source: Department of Health, Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland October to December 2019, Quarterly Carers' Statistics Tables October to December 2019, Table 2

48. Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland October to December 2019 | Department of Health (health-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 10 October 2022)

Carers' assessments accepted/completed

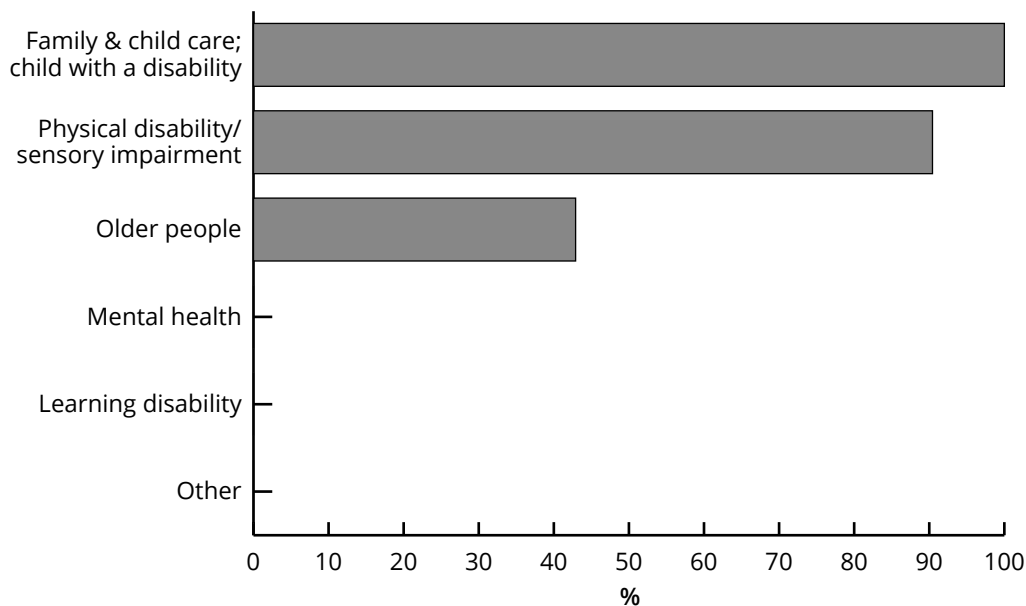
In October-December 2019, in Belfast HSCT, 587 carers' assessments were accepted/completed, representing:

- 69.47% of carers' assessments offered in Belfast HSCT
- 28.30% of Northern Ireland's total accepted/completed for that quarter

In October-December 2019, in Belfast HSCT, of the carers' assessments offered, the highest percentages accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibilities were for people with family and child care responsibilities or a child with disability at 100%, followed by people caring for a person with a physical disability or sensory impairment at 90.43% (see Participation Figure 28).

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 28:

Percentage (%) of carers' assessments accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility for different client groups in Belfast HSCT, October-December 2019⁴⁹



Source: Department of Health, Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland October to December 2019, Quarterly Carers' Statistics Tables October to December 2019, Table 3

49. For mental health and learning disability client groups, numbers were suppressed to prevent disclosure; for the 'other' client category, no carers' assessments were offered

Carers reassessments offered and accepted/completed

In October-December 2019, in Belfast HSCT:

- 162 carers' reassessments were offered, representing 13.08% of Northern Ireland's total reassessments offered for that quarter
- 159 carers' reassessments were accepted/completed, representing 17.19% of Northern Ireland's total reassessments accepted/completed for that quarter

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with other HSCTs

Carers' assessments offered

In October-December 2019, when compared with other HSCTs:

- Belfast HSCT had the second highest percentage of carers' assessments offered at 20.11%
- Northern HSCT had the highest percentage at 41.23%
- Western HSCT had the lowest percentage at 6.28%
- Southern HSCT had the median percentage at 17.31% (see Participation Figure 29)

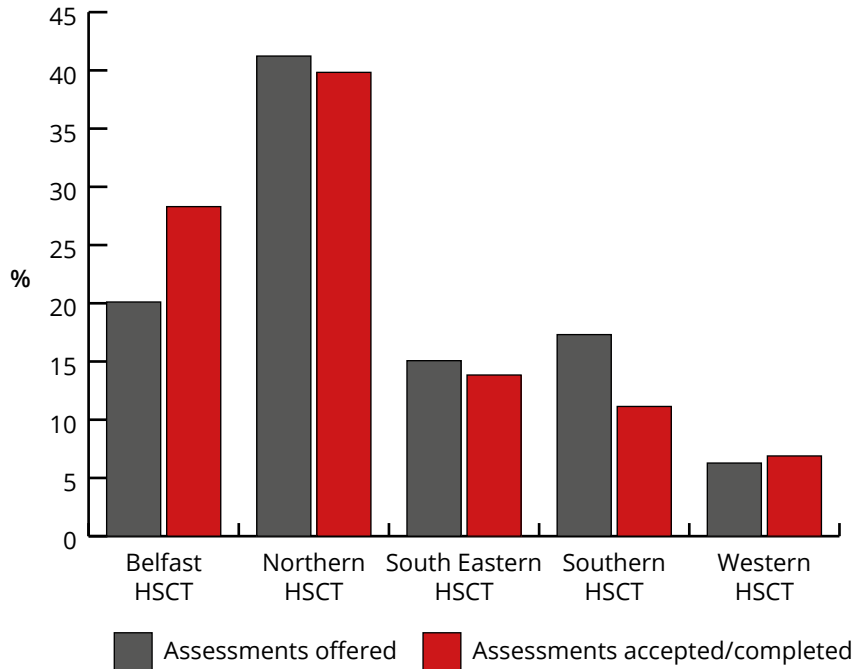
Carers' assessments accepted/completed

In October-December 2019, when compared with other HSCTs:

- Belfast HSCT had the second highest percentage of carers' assessments accepted/completed at 28.30%
- Northern HSCT had the highest percentage at 39.83%
- Western HSCT had the lowest percentage at 6.89%
- South Eastern HSCT had the median percentage at 13.84% (see Participation Figure 29)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 29:

Percentage (%) of Northern Ireland's carers' assessments offered to and accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility by HSCT, October-December 2019



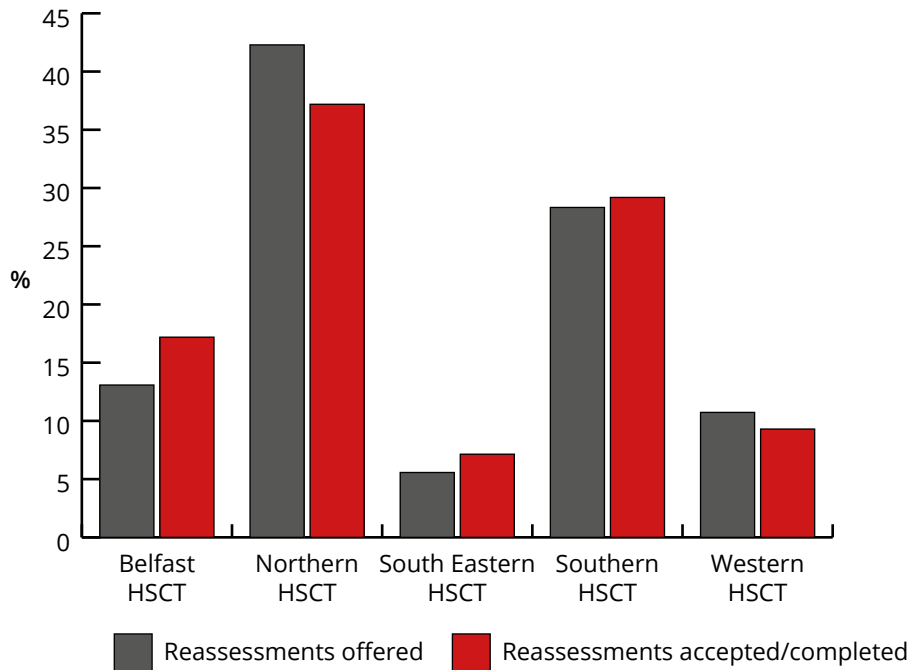
Source: Department of Health, Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland October to December 2019, Quarterly Carers' Statistics Tables October to December 2019, Tables 2 & 3

Reasons for declining a carer's assessment

In October-December 2019, in Northern Ireland, 2,127 carers' assessments were declined. The reasons carers gave for declining a carer's assessment were varied. The most common reason was that the carer felt that they did not need any support/ additional support, at 36.25%, and the second most common reason was that the carer did not see themselves as a carer, at 19.09%; however, the third most common reason was that the carer felt that the time, place or environment was unsuitable and they would like the opportunity to consider an assessment at a later date, at 17.07% (see Participation Figure 30).

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 31:

Percentage (%) of Northern Ireland's carers' reassessments offered to and accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility by HSCT, October-December 2019



Source: Department of Health, Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland October to December 2019, Quarterly Carers' Statistics Tables October to December 2019, Table 7

HIGHLIGHTS

In October-December 2019, of carers' assessments in Northern Ireland:

- 2 out of every 10 offered were in Belfast HSCT
- Almost 3 out of every 10 accepted/completed were in Belfast HSCT

In October-December 2019, of carers' reassessments in Northern Ireland:

- Over 1 out of every 10 offered were in Belfast HSCT
- Almost 2 out of every 10 accepted/completed were in Belfast HSCT

In October-December 2019, among HSCTs, Belfast HSCT had:

- The second highest percentages of carers' assessments offered to and accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility
- The median percentages of carers' reassessments offered to and accepted by/completed for people with caring responsibility

In October-December 2019, of the carers' assessments offered in Belfast HSCT:

- Almost 2 out of every 10 were for people with caring responsibility for family and child care or a child with a disability
- Almost 4 out of every 10 were for people with caring responsibility for an older person
- Between 2 and 3 out of every 10 were for people with caring responsibility for a person with mental health problems
- Less than 1 out of every 10 were for people with caring responsibility for a person with learning disability
- Over 1 out of every 10 was for people with caring responsibility for a person with a physical disability or sensory impairment

In October-December 2019, of the carers' assessments offered in Belfast HSCT, almost 7 out of every 10 were accepted/completed, however, there were differences in the percentages accepted/completed across client groups:

- 10 out of every 10 carers' assessments offered to people with caring responsibility for family child care or a child with a disability were accepted/completed
- 9 out of every 10 offered to people with caring responsibility for a person with a physical disability or sensory impairment were accepted/completed
- Over 4 out of every 10 offered to people with caring responsibility for an older person were accepted/completed

In October-December 2019, in Northern Ireland, of the carers' assessments declined:

- Between 3 and 4 out of every 10 were declined because the carers felt they did not need any support/additional support
- Almost 2 out of every 10 were declined because the carers did not see themselves as carers
- Almost 2 out of every 10 were declined because the carers felt the time, place or environment was unsuitable and they would like to consider the opportunity of an assessment at a later date
- Between 1 and 2 out of every 10 were declined and the carer did not give a reason, or no reason was recorded

In October-December 2019, of the carers' reassessments offered in Belfast HSCT, almost 10 out of every 10 were accepted/completed.

SECTION 4

Volunteering

4.1 Volunteering in the Last 12 Months

IMPORTANCE

There are many beneficial effects of volunteering. Participation in voluntary services has been found to be significantly predictive of:

- Better mental and physical health, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and happiness
- Lower depressive symptoms, psychological distress, and mortality and functional inability⁵⁰

The health benefits of volunteering do not appear to be due to self-selection bias.⁵¹ In a systematic review of the effects of volunteering and health, volunteering was found to improve self-rated social interaction, healthy behaviours, and coping ability.⁵²

In 2019/20, from the Continuous Household Survey in Northern Ireland, the most common type of organisation for which people volunteered was:

- A 'church/faith based' organisation for 39%
- A 'sports' organisation for 29%
- 'Local community, neighbourhood, or citizen's groups' for 17%
- Youth/children's activities outside school for 15%
- Children's education/schools for 15%

50. Volunteering and health benefits in general adults: cumulative effects and forms | BMC Public Health | Full Text (biomedcentral.com) (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

51. Self-selection occurs in surveys when participants are allowed to decide for themselves whether they respond. Willingness to respond is dependent on participants' level of interest in the topic; bias is introduced when the people who do respond are not representative of the target population for the survey

52. (99+) Volunteering and Health: What Impact Does It Really Have? | Clare Bamba - Academia.edu (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

In Northern Ireland, the lead department for volunteering is the Department for Communities, responsible for the development of voluntary and community sector strategies and policies, as well as funding, and working in partnership with, the voluntary and community sector.

DEFINITION

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.'⁵³

In the Continuous Household Survey of people aged 16 years and over, a question relating to volunteering was first included in 2017/18. Respondents were asked:

"Thinking about the definition just given, in the past year, have you carried out any voluntary work or activity. This may include unpaid work in, for example, community development, arts, culture, sport, faith based, education, neighbourliness, youth, environmental, health, direct care and animal welfare?"

Information for LGDs and Northern Ireland is from Department for Communities, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020.⁵⁴

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland is from Department for Communities, Experience of volunteering by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20.⁵⁵

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months was 24%.

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months increased by 2 percentage points from 22% to 24%.

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53. Culture, arts and sport modules on the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20 (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 13 September 2022)
 54. Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 10 October 2022)
 55. Experience of volunteering by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months was lower by 4 percentage points in Belfast LGD, 24% compared with 28% (see Participation Figure 32).

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months increased:

- In Belfast LGD by 2 percentage points, from 22% to 24% (a percentage increase of 9.09%)
- In Northern Ireland by 1 percentage point, from 27% to 28% (a percentage increase of 3.70%)

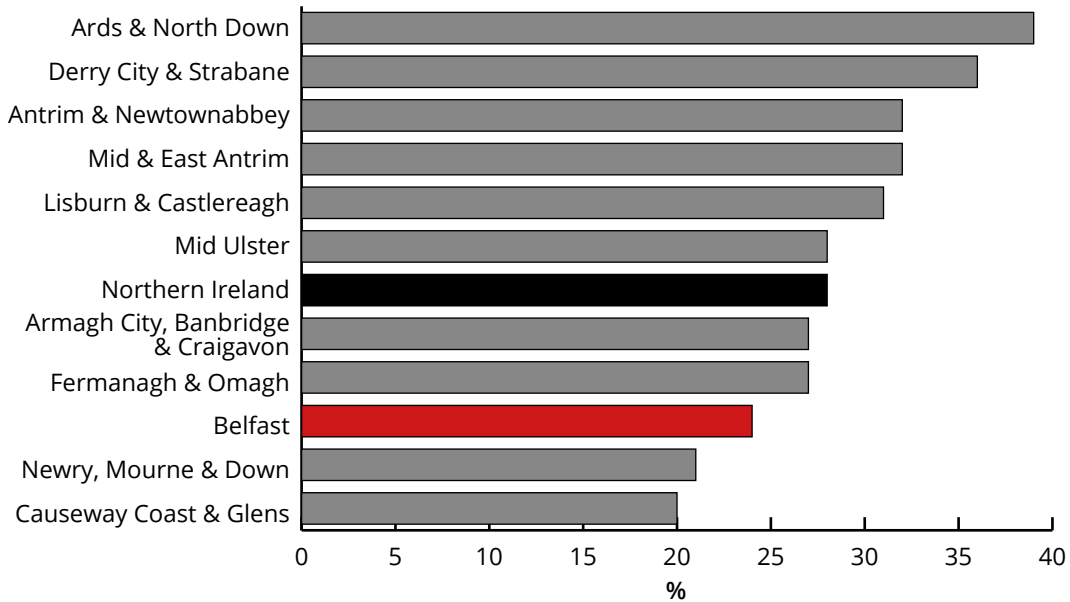
Comparison with other LGDs

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the third lowest percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months at 24%
- Ards & North Down LGD had the highest percentage at 39%
- Causeway Coast & Glens LGD had the lowest percentage at 20%
- Mid Ulster LGD had the median percentage at 28% (see Participation Figure 32)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 32:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20⁵⁶



Source: Department for Communities: Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Table 12

Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, In Northern Ireland, of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months, there were similar percentages of:

- Men and women at 28%
- People with and people without dependants at 28% (see Participation Figure 33)

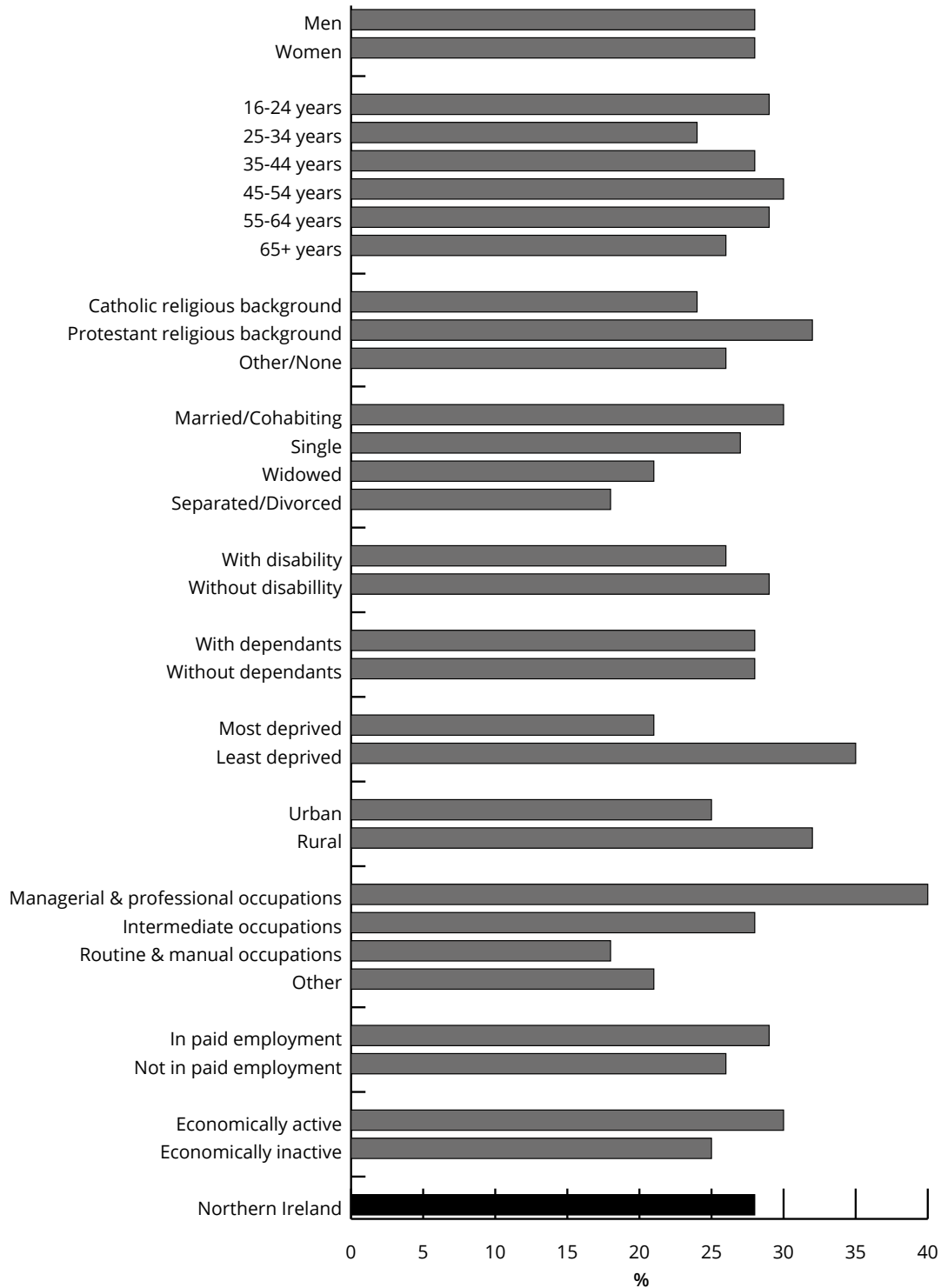
56. Data for Antrim & Newtownabbey, Ards & North Down, Causeway Coast & Glens, Derry City & Strabane, Fermanagh & Omagh, Lisburn & Castlereagh, Mid & East Antrim, Mid Ulster, and Newry, Mourne & Down LGDs are based on small samples and, therefore, will be less precise and should be used with caution

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, however, there were differences among some population groups in the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months. There was a higher percentage of:

- People aged 45-54 years than people aged 25-34 years by 6 percentage points, 30% compared with 24%
- People from a Protestant religious background than people from a Catholic religious background and people from 'Other/None' religious background by at least 6 percentage points, 32% compared with 24% and 26%, respectively
- People who were married/cohabiting than people who were single, widowed or separated/divorced by at least 3 percentage points, 30% compared with 27%, 21% and 18%, respectively
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 3 percentage points, 29% compared with 26%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 14 percentage points, 35% compared with 21%
- People in rural areas than people in urban areas by 7 percentage points, 32% compared with 25%
- People in managerial and professional occupations than people in routine and manual occupations by 22 percentage points, 40% compared with 18%
- People in paid employment than people who were not in paid employment, 29% compared with 26%
- People who were economically active than people who were economically inactive by 5 percentage points, 30% compared with 25% (see Participation Figure 33)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 33:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, urban/rural environment, occupational group, paid/unpaid employment, and economic activity/inactivity, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities, Experience of volunteering by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Table 1

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, the benefits of volunteering mentioned most were:

- It 'makes me feel better about myself' for 67%, although this benefit was mentioned by a higher percentage of people from the most-deprived areas (77%), people with a disability (73%), people of the Catholic religion (71%), and men (69%)
- It 'helps me make a positive contribution to society' for 65%, although this benefit was mentioned by a higher percentage of people from the least-deprived areas (71%), women (70%), and people with a disability (70%)
- 'I had fun' for 63%, although this benefit was mentioned by a higher percentage of people from the least-deprived areas (67%), and people of Protestant religion (64%)
- 'I made new friends' for 60%, although this benefit was mentioned by a higher percentage of people with a disability (67%), women (65%), and people from the most-deprived areas (65%)

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD between 2 and 3 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over had volunteered in the last 12 months compared with almost 3 out of 10 people in Northern Ireland.

In 2019/20, Belfast had one of the lowest percentages of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months among LGDs.

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months increased in Belfast LGD and in Northern Ireland, but the percentage increase was greater in Belfast LGD and the gap narrowed between the two.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups with lower percentages of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months were:

- People aged 25-34 years and people aged 65 years and over
- People of a Catholic religious background, and people of 'Other/None' religious background

- Single people, people who were widowed, and people who were separated/divorced
- People with a disability
- People in the most-deprived areas
- People in urban areas
- People in routine & manual occupations, and people in other occupations
- People not in paid employment
- People who were economically inactive

Differences in the percentages of various population groups volunteering in the last 12 months could indicate the amount of time or resources people have available to them due to their prevailing life circumstances, which may reduce their capacity and not necessarily their willingness to volunteer. Thus, the main benefits identified by people who had volunteered – that they felt better about themselves, it helped them to make a positive contribution to society, it was fun, and it helped them to make new friends – may not be as readily available to people who do not have the capacity to volunteer for whatever reason.

Historical Data by HSCT⁵⁷

In 2017, in Belfast HSCT, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months was 23%.

Between 2013 and 2017, in Belfast HSCT, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the previous 12 months decreased by 6 percentage points, from 29% to 23%.

57. Information for HSCTs is from NINIS, Volunteering (administrative geographies) Excel spreadsheet

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2017, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months was lower by 4 percentage points in Belfast HSCT, 23% compared with 27%.

Between 2013 and 2017, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months decreased:

- In Belfast HSCT by 6 percentage points, from 29% to 23% (a percentage decrease of 20.69%)
- In Northern Ireland by 2 percentage points, from 29% to 27% (a percentage decrease of 6.90%; see Participation Figure 34)

Comparison with other HSCTs

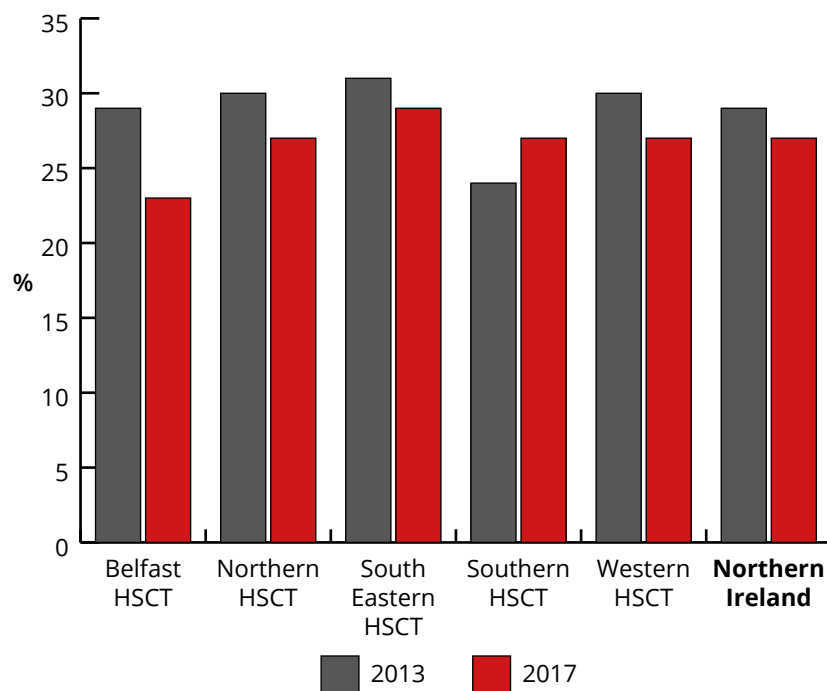
In 2017, when compared with other HSCTs:

- Belfast HSCT had the lowest percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months at 23%
- South Eastern HSCT had the highest percentage at 29%
- The three other HSCTs had the median percentage at 27% (see Participation Figure 27)

Between 2013 and 2017, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months increased in Southern HSCT (by 3 percentage points), whereas it decreased in all other HSCTs, including Belfast HSCT (see Participation Figure 34).

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 34:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months by HSCT and Northern Ireland, 2013 and 2017



Source: NINIS: Volunteering (administrative geographies) Excel spreadsheet

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2017, in Belfast HSCT, over 2 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over had volunteered in the last 12 months compared with almost 3 out of 10 people in Northern Ireland.

Among HSCTs, Belfast had the lowest percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months.

Between 2013 and 2017, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had volunteered in the last 12 months decreased in Belfast HSCT and in Northern Ireland, but the percentage decrease was greater in Belfast HSCT and a gap was created between the two.

SECTION 5:

Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

- 5.1 - Sport Participation in the Last 12 Months or 4 Weeks**
- Sport Participation Normally on At Least One Day a Week**

IMPORTANCE

In the Netherlands Longitudinal Lifecourse Study (NELLS) of people aged 15-45 years, men and women who had a higher frequency of participation in sport reported better subjective health, and that participation was found to be beneficial irrespective of people's educational background or work-family load, and irrespective of whether people were in wealth or in poverty.⁵⁸

The psychological and social benefits of participation in sport for children and young people are improved self-esteem, social interaction, and fewer depressive symptoms. Sport may be associated with improved psychosocial health beyond improvements attributable to participation in physical activity: team sport seems to be associated with improved health outcomes when compared with individual activities due to the social nature of participation.⁵⁹

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, the main benefits of participation in sport were identified by participants in the Continuous Household Survey as:

- **Keeping fit (75%)**
- **Improved physical health (73%)**

58. Full article: Does sport-participation improve health? A panel analysis on the role of educational attainment, economic deprivation and work-family load (tandfonline.com) (Last accessed 12 September 2022)

59. A systematic review of the psychological and social benefits of participation in sport for children and adolescents: informing development of a conceptual model of health through sport | International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity | Full Text (biomedcentral.com) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

- Improved mental health (64%)
- Having fun (56%)
- It “made me feel better about myself” (44%)
- Losing weight (39%)

The Department for Communities has responsibility for the development of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland. Information on participation in sport is important for improving participation, performance, and facilities for sport and physical recreation; it is important in the development, monitoring, and evaluation of sport-related policy, strategies, and targets.

DEFINITION

In the Continuous Household Survey, adults aged 16 years and over are shown a list of almost 40 specific sports and activities⁶⁰ and asked a range of sport-related questions including:

- “I would like you to tell me if you have taken part in or played any of the following sports or physical activities during the last 12 months”
- “At the moment, how many days per week do you normally take part in sport?”⁶¹

Information for LGDs and Northern Ireland is from Department for Communities, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020.⁶²

-
60. Rugby union or league; football indoors or outdoors (including 5-a-side); Gaelic football; camogie or hurling; cricket; hockey; ice hockey; netball; tennis; badminton; squash; basketball; table tennis; track and field athletics; jogging; cycling for recreation; walking for recreation; climbing; bowls, indoor or outdoor (lawn); tenpin bowling; swimming or diving; angling/fishing; yachting or dinghy sailing; canoeing, rowing; windsurfing/boardsailing; keep-fit, aerobics, yoga, dance exercise; martial arts (including self-defence); weight training/lifting/body building; gymnastics; snooker, pool, billiards; ice skating (if roller excluded); darts; golf, pitch and putt, putting (excluding crazy/miniature golf); skiing; horse riding (excluding polo); motor sports; shooting; boxing; other
61. Culture, arts and sport modules on the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20 (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 12 September 2022)
62. Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 10 October 2022)

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland is from the Department of Communities, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20.⁶³

PROFILE FINDINGS

For 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who participated in sport:

- In the last 12 months or 4 weeks was 54%
- Normally on at least one day per week was 52% (see Participation Figure 35)

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who participated in sport:

- In the last 12 months or 4 weeks increased by 1 percentage point, from 53% to 54%
- Normally on at least one day per week increased by 5 percentage points from 47% to 52%

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who participated in sport:

- In the last 12 months or 4 weeks was 2 percentage points lower in Belfast LGD, 54% compared with 56%
- Normally on at least one day per week was the same in Belfast LGD and Northern Ireland at 52% (see Participation Figure 35)

63. Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 14 September 2022)

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who participated in sport in the last 12 months or 4 weeks increased:

- In Belfast LGD by 1 percentage point, from 53% to 54% (a percentage increase of 1.89%)
- In Northern Ireland by 2 percentage points, from 54% to 56% (a percentage increase of 3.70%)

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who participated in sport normally on at least one day per week increased:

- In Belfast LGD by 5 percentage points, from 47% to 52% (a percentage increase of 10.64%)
- In Northern Ireland by 3 percentage points, from 49% to 52% (a percentage increase of 6.12%)

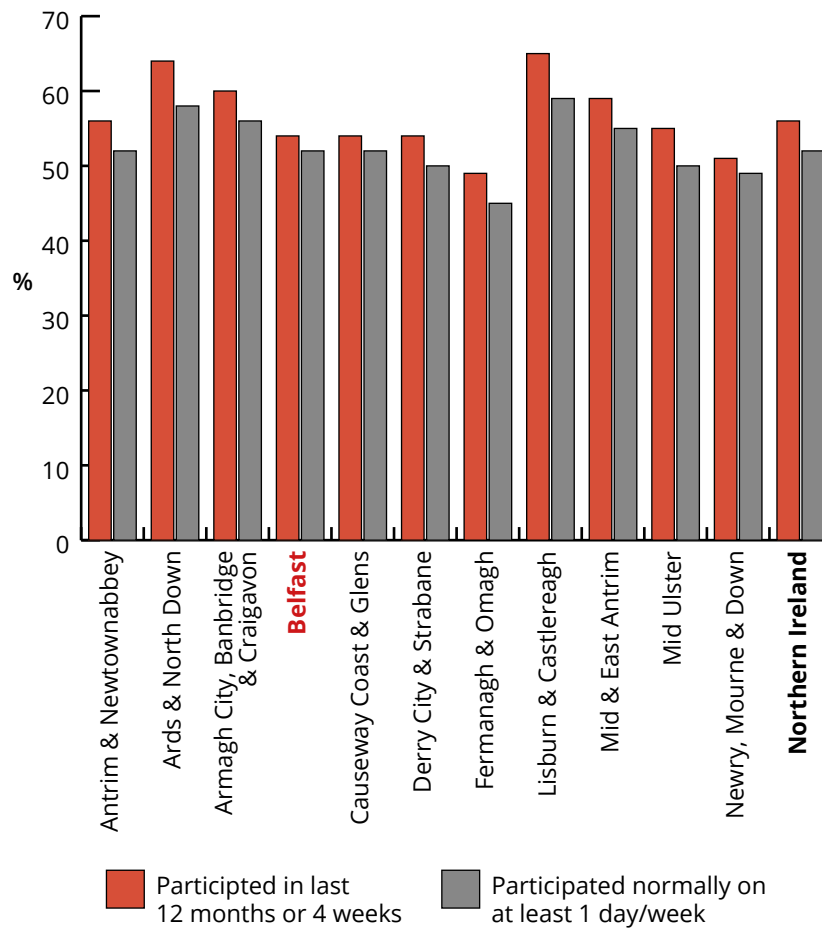
Comparison with other LGDs

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the third equal lowest percentage of people aged 16 years and over who had participated in sport in the last 12 months or 4 weeks at 54%, together with two other LGDs, Lisburn & Castlereagh LGD had the highest percentage at 65%, Fermanagh & Omagh LGD had the lowest percentage at 49%, and Mid Ulster LGD had the median percentage at 55%
- Belfast LGD had the fifth equal highest and median percentage of people aged 16 years and over who participated in sport normally on at least one day per week at 52%, Lisburn & Castlereagh LGD had the highest percentage at 59%, Fermanagh & Omagh LGD had the lowest percentage at 45% (Participation Figure 35)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 35:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over participating in sport by frequency and LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20⁶⁴



Source: Department for Communities: Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020, Tables 3 & 4

Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

Sport participation in the last 12 months

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in sport participation in the last 12 months. There was a higher percentage of:

- Men than women by 10 percentage points, 61% compared with 51%
- People aged 16-24 years than people aged 25 years and over by 4-49 percentage points, 76% compared with 27-72%

64. Data for both frequencies of sport participation in Antrim & Newtownabbey LGD are based on small samples and, therefore, will be less precise and should be used with caution; data for sport participation in the last 12 months or 4 weeks in Fermanagh and Omagh LGD are based on a small sample and, therefore, will be less precise and should be used with caution

- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic or Protestant religious background by 13-15 percentage points, 68% compared with 53% and 55%, respectively
- People who were married/cohabiting than people who were widowed or separated/divorced by 18-36 percentage points, 60% compared with 24% and 42%, respectively
- People who were single than people who were widowed or separated/divorced by 19-37 percentage points, 61% compared with 24% and 42%, respectively
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 26 percentage points, 64% compared with 38%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 10 percentage points, 62% compared with 52%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 23 percentage points, 67% compared with 44%
- People in rural areas than people in urban areas by 3 percentage points, 58% compared with 55% (see Participation Figure 36)

Sport participation in the last four weeks

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in sport participation in the last four weeks. There was a higher percentage of:

- Men than women by 14 percentage points, 53% compared with 39%
- People aged 16-24 years than people aged 25 years and over by 11-48 percentage points, 69% compared with 21-58%
- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic or Protestant religious background by 5-7 percentage points, 51% compared with 44% and 46%, respectively
- People who were single than people who were married/cohabiting, widowed or separated/divorced by 6-32 percentage points, 53% compared with 21-47%
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 24 percentage point, 52% compared with 28%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 3 percentage points, 48% compared with 45%

- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 23 percentage points, 56% compared with 33%
- People in a rural environment than people in an urban environment by 3 percentage points, 48% compared with 45% (see Participation Figure 36)

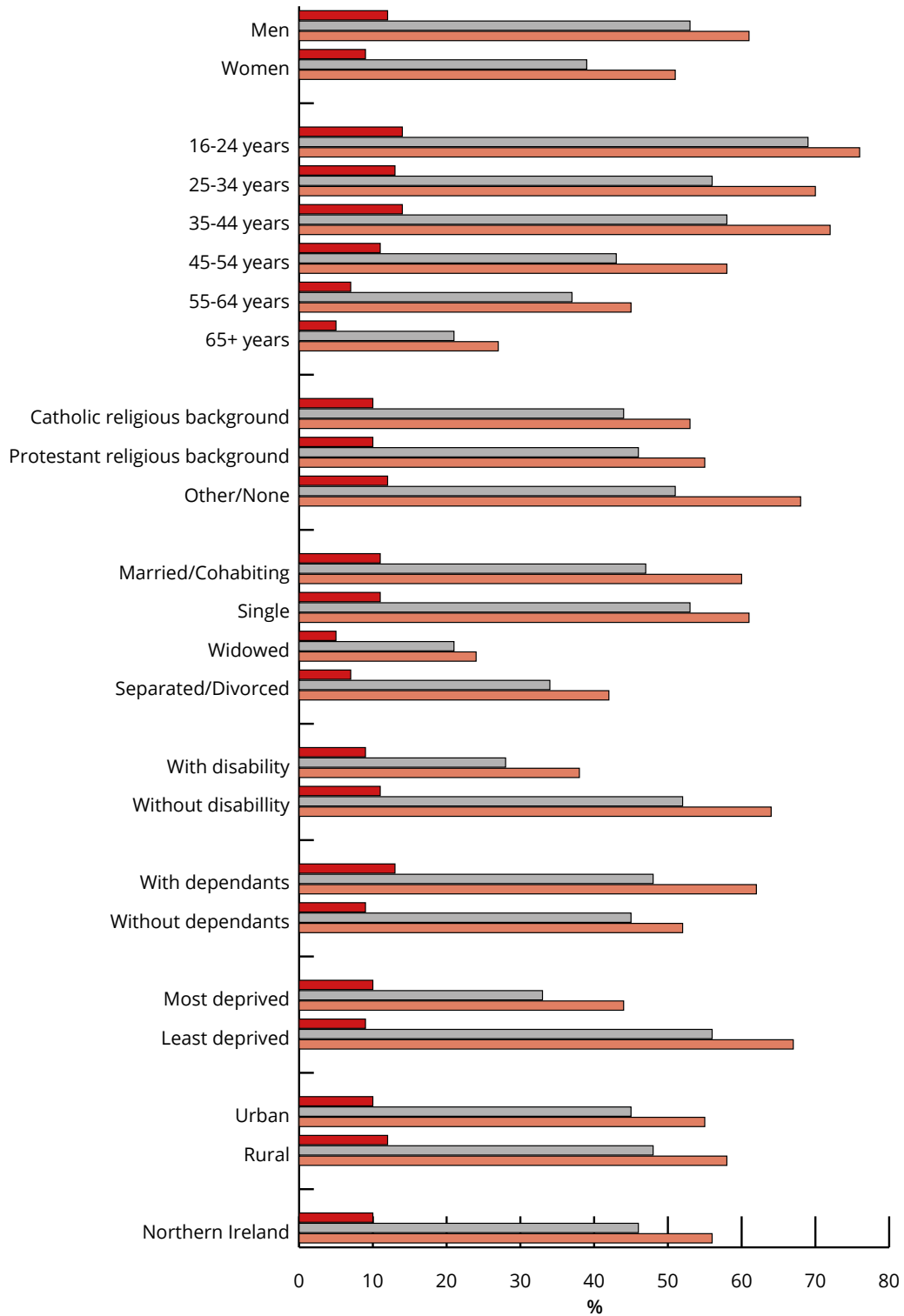
Sport participation normally on at least one day per week

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in sport participation normally on at least one day per week. There was a higher percentage of:

- Men than women by 3 percentage points, 12% compared with 9%
- People aged 16-44 years than people aged 44 years and over by 2-9 percentage points, 13-14% compared with 5-11%
- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic or Protestant religious background by 2 percentage points, 12% compared with 10% and 10%, respectively
- People who were married/cohabiting or single than people who were widowed or separated/divorced by 4-6 percentage points, 11% and 11% compared with 5% and 7%, respectively
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 2 percentage points, 11% compared with 9%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 4 percentage points, 13% compared with 9%
- People in the most-deprived areas than people in the least-deprived areas by 1 percentage point, 10% compared with 9%
- People in rural areas than people in urban areas by 2 percentage points, 12% compared with 10% (see Participation Figure 36)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 36:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years who participated in sport in the last 12 months, in the last four weeks, and normally on at least one day per week by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20, Tables 1, 5 & 10

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Belfast:

- **Between 5 and 6 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over had participated in sport in the last 12 months or 4 weeks, similar to Northern Ireland**
- **Over 5 out of every 10 participated in sport normally on at least one day per week, the same as Northern Ireland**

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over had participated in sport:

- **In the last 12 months or 4 weeks increased in Belfast and in Northern Ireland, but the percentage increase was greater in Northern Ireland and the gap between the two widened slightly**
- **Normally on at least one day/week increased in Belfast and Northern Ireland, but the percentage increase was greater in Belfast and the gap between the two closed**

In 2019/20, Belfast had one of the lower percentages of people aged 16 years and over participating in sport in the last 12 months or 4 weeks, but the median percentage of people participating normally on at least one day/week among LGDs.

Inequalities and potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, the population groups with lower percentages of for varying frequencies of sport participation than those for Northern Ireland are shown in Participation Table 5.

PARTICIPATION TABLE 5:

Population groups in Northern Ireland with lower percentages (see shaded cells) of sport participation by frequency when compared with Northern Ireland, 2019/20

Population group	Sport participation		
	Within previous year	Within previous 4 weeks	Normally on 1 day/week
Women	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
45-54 years	White	Shaded	White
55-64 years	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
65+ years	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
Catholic religious background	Shaded	Shaded	White
Protestant religious background	Shaded	White	White
Widowed	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
Separated/Divorced	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
With a disability	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
Without dependants	Shaded	Shaded	Shaded
Most deprived	Shaded	Shaded	White
Least deprived	White	White	Shaded
Urban environment	Shaded	Shaded	White

Some population groups have lower percentages than those for Northern Ireland for all three frequencies of sport participation:

- Women
- People aged 55 years and over
- People who are widowed
- People who are separated/divorced
- People with a disability
- People without dependants

Differences in the percentage of people participating in sport could indicate the amount of time or resources different people have available to them due to their prevailing life circumstances, including health and/or mobility status, and/or their level of access, which may reduce their capacity and not necessarily their willingness to engage.

5.2 Membership of a Sports Club or Organisation

IMPORTANCE

In a systematic review of the health effects of active membership of a sports club, membership enables or is a platform for social relationships over and above the positive effects of any physical activity associated with membership. This additional psychosocial benefit of sports club membership contrasts with the lack of an equivalent in self-organised sports. Moreover, the effects of membership may go beyond the individual and have a societal impact. The most important health-relevant effects of active sports club membership were found to be:

- In young people, it contributes to their integration into society, with the potential to prevent young people from participating in other more harmful behaviours
- In young people, especially girls, it strengthens self-confidence
- It improves wellbeing and mental health (e.g., vitality) to a greater extent than in self-organised sports
- It engenders life satisfaction
- It provides social support, and fun, both of which can increase the amount of regular exercise undertaken⁶⁵

The Department for Communities has responsibility for the development of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland. Information on participation in sport is important for improving participation, performance, and facilities for sport and physical recreation; it is important in the development, monitoring, and evaluation of sport-related policy, strategies, and targets.

65. Effects of membership in the sports club on health : Sport Austria (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

DEFINITION

In the Continuous Household Survey, participants are shown a list of almost 40 specific sports and activities and asked a range of sport-related questions including:

“Are you currently a member of any sports clubs or organisations?”⁶⁶

Information for LGDs is from the Department for Communities, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2017.⁶⁷

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland is from the Department of Communities, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20.⁶⁸

PROFILE FINDINGS

For 2013/14-2015/16, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation was 21%.

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2013/14-2015/16, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation was 2 percentage points lower in Belfast LGD, 21% compared with 23% (see Participation Figure 37).

Comparison with other LGDs

In 2013/14-2015/16, when compared with other LGDs:

- **Belfast LGD had the third equal lowest percentages of people aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation at 21%**

66. Culture, arts and sport modules on the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20 (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 12 September 2022)

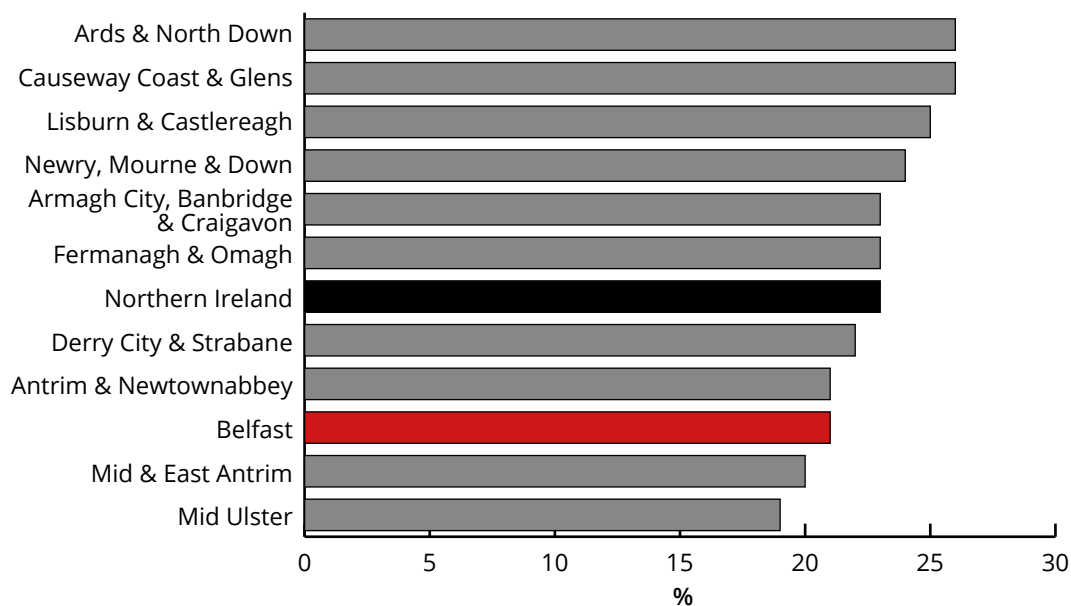
67. Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2017 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

68. Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 14 September 2022)

- Ards & North Down LGD and Causeway Coast & Glens LGD had the highest percentage at 26%
- Mid Ulster LGD had the lowest percentage at 19% (see Participation Figure 37)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 37:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2013/14-2015/16



Source: Department for Communities, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2017, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts, Table 6

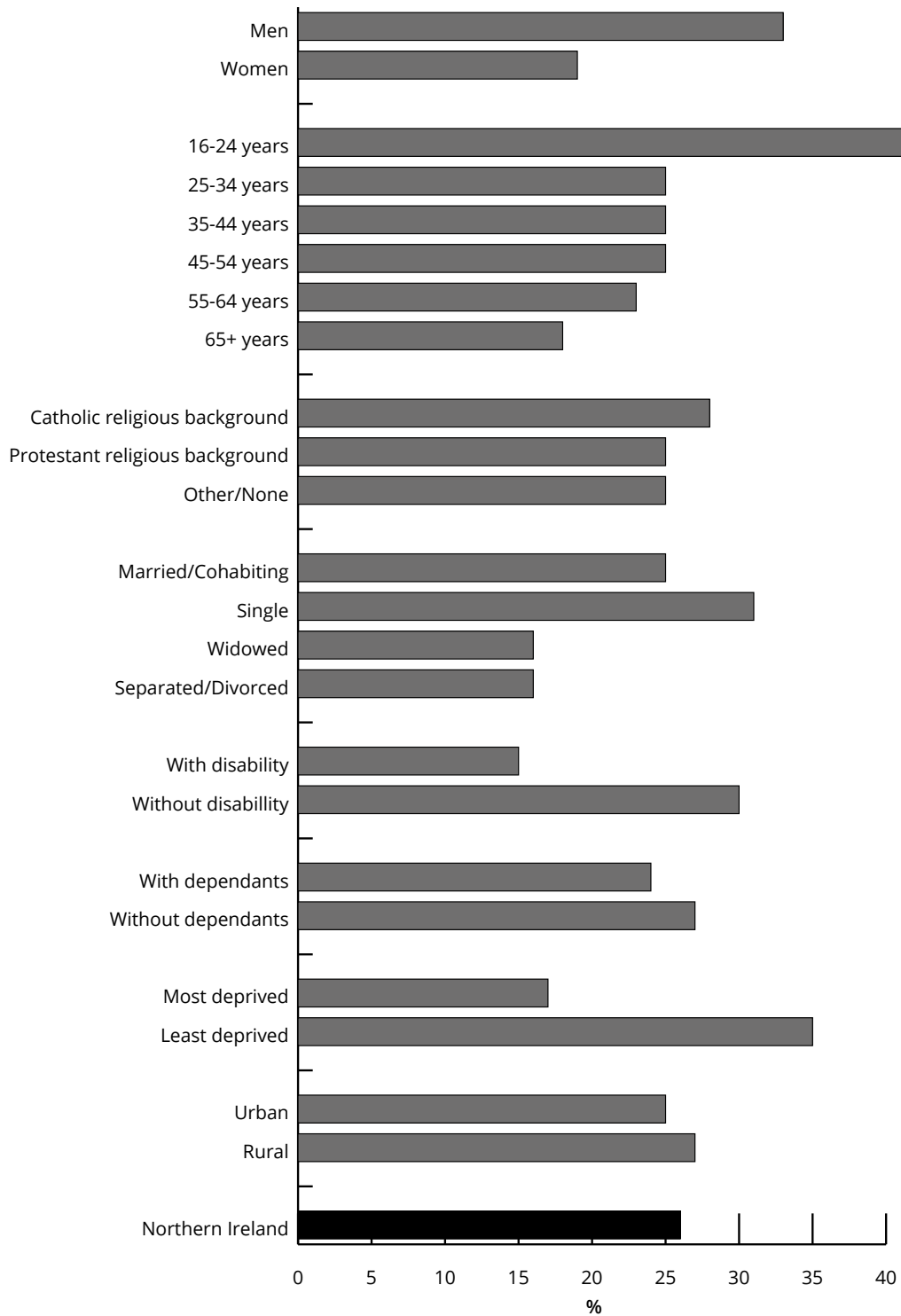
Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in the membership of a sports club or organisation. There were higher percentages of:

- Men than women by 14 percentage points, 33% compared with 19%
- People aged 16-24 years than people aged 25 years and over by 18-25 percentage points, 43% compared with 18-25%
- People from a Catholic religious background than people from a Protestant religious background or 'Other/None' religious background by 3 percentage points, 28% compared with 25% and 25%, respectively
- People who were single than people who were married/cohabiting, widowed or divorced/separated by 6-15 percentage points, 31% compared with 25%, 16% and 16%, respectively
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 15 percentage points, 30% compared with 15%
- People without dependants than people with dependants by 3 percentage points, 27% compared with 24%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 18 percentage points, 35% compared with 17%
- People in a rural environment than people in an urban environment by 2 percentage points, 27% compared with 25% (see Participation Figure 38)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 38:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20, Table 11

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2013/14-2015/16, in Belfast, over 2 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation, similar to Northern Ireland.

In 2013/14-2015/16, however, among LGDs, Belfast had one of the lower percentages of people aged 16 years and over who were a member of a sports club or organisation.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, the population groups with lower percentages than those for Northern Ireland for membership of a sports club or organisation were:

- Women
- People aged 25 years and over
- People of a Protestant religious background and people of 'Other/None' religious background
- People who were married/cohabiting, widowed or separated/divorced
- People with a disability
- People with dependants
- People in the most-deprived areas
- People in an urban environment

Differences in the percentage of people with membership of a sports club or organisation could indicate the amount of time or resources different people have available to them due to their prevailing life circumstances, including health and/or mobility status, and/or their level of access, which may reduce their capacity and not necessarily their willingness to hold membership.

5.3 - Walking for Recreation within the Previous Year, Northern Ireland

- Walking for Recreation within the Last Four Weeks, Northern Ireland

IMPORTANCE

The health benefits of walking briskly for at least 30 minutes a day on most days of the week include:

- Increased heart and lung fitness
- Reduced risk of heart disease and stroke
- Improved management of conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, joint and muscular pain or stiffness, and diabetes
- Stronger bones and improved balance
- Increased muscle strength and endurance
- Reduced body fat⁶⁹

Walking can also help to counteract the effects of weight-promoting genes, reduce cravings for and the intake of sugary snacks, reduce the risk of developing breast cancer, reduce arthritis-related pain, and reduce the number of days' sickness.⁷⁰ Brisk walking also increases mental alertness, energy, and positive mood.⁷¹

The Department for Communities has responsibility for the development of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland.

69. Walking for good health - Better Health Channel (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

70. 5 surprising benefits of walking - Harvard Health (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

71. How to look after your mental health using exercise | Mental Health Foundation (Last accessed 13 September 2022)

DEFINITION

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland who walked for recreation within the previous year is from the Department for Communities, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20.⁷²

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland who walked for recreation within the last four weeks is from the Department for Communities/NISRA, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, Findings from the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20.⁷³

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, the percentage of adults aged 16 years and over who had walked for recreation within the:

- Previous year was 55%
- Last four weeks was 49%

KEY COMPARISONS

Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

Walking for recreation within the previous year

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in the percentages of people aged 16 years and over walking for recreation within the previous year. There were higher percentage of:

- Women than men by 9 percentage points, 59% compared with 50%
- People aged 35-54 years than people aged 16-34 years and people aged 55 years and over by at least 3-13 percentage points, 60-61% compared with 47-57%
- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic or Protestant religious background by 2-6 percentage points, 58% compared with 52% and 56%, respectively

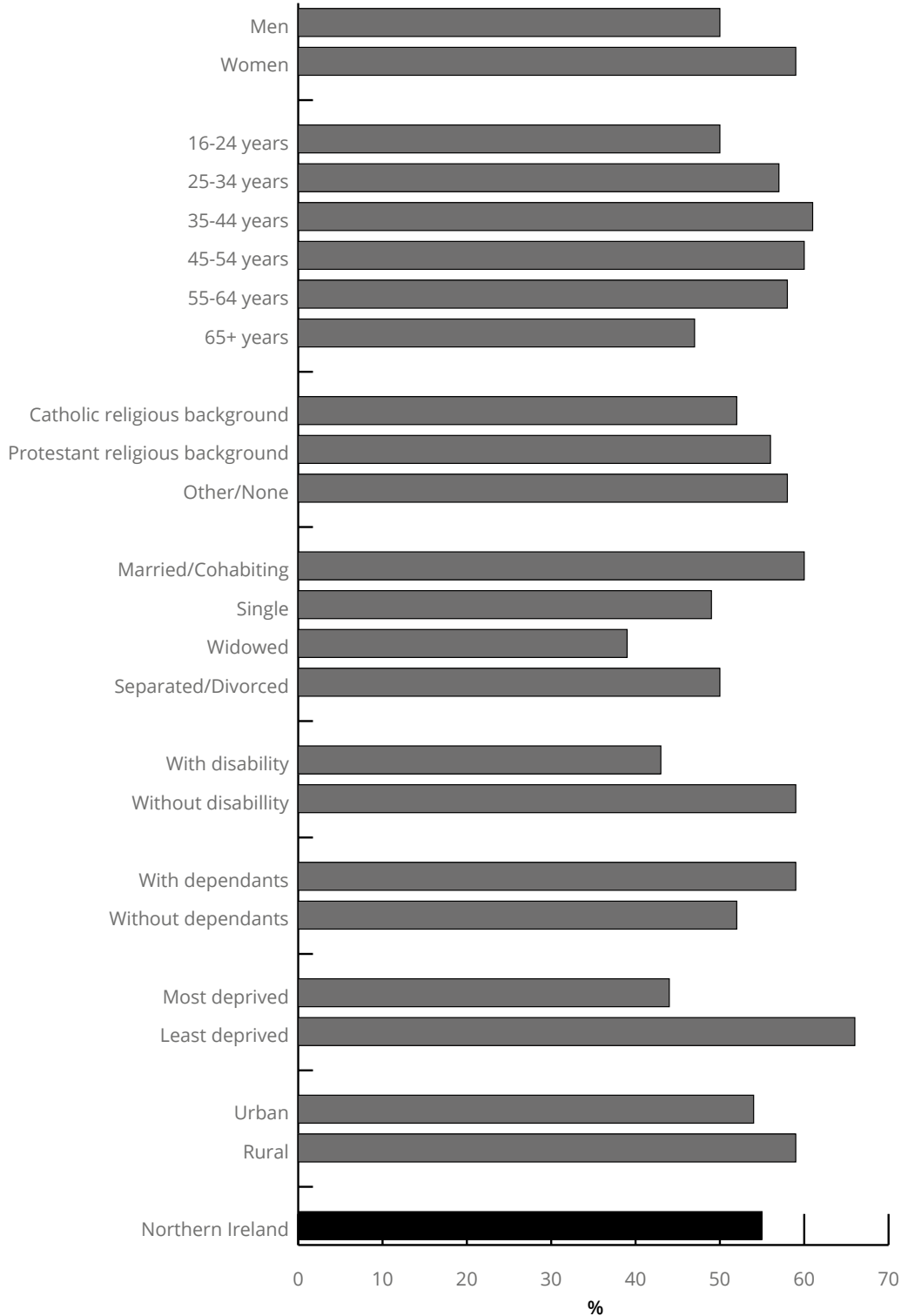
72. Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

73. Experience of sport by adults (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

- People who were married/cohabiting than people who were single, widowed or separated/divorced by 10-21 percentage points, 60% compared with 39-50%
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 16 percentage points, 59% compared with 43%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 7 percentage points, 59% compared with 52%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 22 percentage points, 66% compared with 44%
- People in a rural area than people in an urban area by 2 percentage points, 56% compared with 54% (see Participation Figure 39)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 39:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who walked for recreation within the previous year by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities: Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20, Table 9

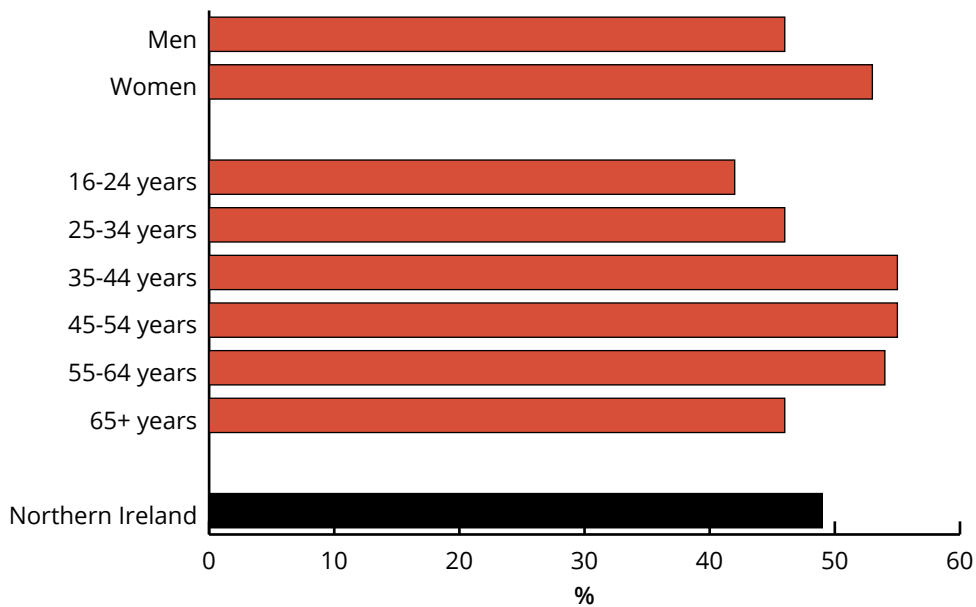
Walking for recreation within the last four weeks

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in the percentages of people aged 16 years and over walking for recreation in the last four weeks. There were higher percentages of:

- Women than men by 7 percentage points, 53% compared with 46%
- People aged 35-64 years than people aged 16-34 years and people aged 65 years and over by at least 8-12 percentage points, 54-55% compared with 42-46% (see Participation Figure 40)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 40:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who walked for recreation in the last four weeks by sex and age group, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities/NISRA, Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland, Findings from the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20, Walking for recreation, page 10

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, although not included in the overall sport participation data, walking for recreation was the most popular physical activity:

- Between 5 and 6 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over had walked for recreation within the previous year
- Almost 5 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over had walked for recreation within the last four weeks

Inequalities and potential for inequity. in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups with lower percentages of people who walked for recreation within the previous year were:

- Men
- People aged 16-24 years
- People aged 65 years and over
- People of a Catholic religious background
- People who were single, widowed, or separated/divorced
- People with a disability
- People without dependants
- People in the most-deprived areas
- People in an urban environment

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups with lower percentages of people who walked for recreation within the last four weeks were:

- Men
- People aged 16-34 years
- People aged 65 years and over

Differences in the percentage of people walking for recreation could indicate the amount of time or suitable environments (including green/blue spaces) to which people have access and/or their health status/level of mobility, some or all of which may reduce their capacity and not necessarily their willingness to walk for recreation.

SECTION 6:

Engagement in Culture, Arts and Leisure

- 6.1 - Engagement with the Arts in the Last 12 Months**
- Participation in Arts Activities in the Last 12 Months**
- Attendance at Arts Events in the Last 12 Months**

IMPORTANCE

In the English Longitudinal Study on Ageing (ELSA; 6,710 adults aged 50 years and over), it was observed that, when compared with people who never engaged in receptive arts activities, people who engaged:

- Once or twice a year had a lower risk of dying at any point during 14 years' follow-up, by 14 percentage points
- Every few months or more in a year had a lower risk of dying at any point during 14 years' follow-up, by 31 percentage points⁷⁴

In adults, participatory arts activities can help to alleviate anxiety, depression, and stress both in and out of work, and in children these activities improve cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional development, and enhance school readiness.⁷⁵

Information on people's experience of the Arts is important for the development, monitoring, and evaluation of policy in relation to the Arts in Northern Ireland.

74. The art of life and death: 14 year follow-up analyses of associations between arts engagement and mortality in the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing | The BMJ (Last accessed 12 September 2022)
75. Creative_Health_The_Short_Report.pdf (culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk) (Last accessed 12 September 2022)

DEFINITION

In the Continuous Household Survey, participants were asked about engagement in the arts⁷⁶ in Northern Ireland including:

- “In the last 12 months have you taken part in any of the following activities?” – Participation⁷⁷
- “In the last 12 months have you attended any of the following events?” – Attendance⁷⁸
- Engagement is the overall percentage of people aged 16 years and over who either participated in arts activities (see footnote 69) and/or who attended arts events in the 12 months prior to the survey (see footnote 70).

Information for LGDs and Northern Ireland is from Department for Communities, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020.⁷⁹

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland is from Experience of culture and arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of the arts by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20.⁸⁰

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76. Culture, arts and sport modules on the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20 (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 7 October 2022)
 77. Ballet, Other dance (not for fitness), Sang to an audience or rehearsed for a performance (not karaoke), Played a musical instrument to an audience or rehearsed for a performance, Played a musical instrument for own pleasure, Written music, Rehearsed or performed in play/drama, Rehearsed or performed in opera/operetta, Painting, drawing, printmaking, or sculpture, Photography as an artistic activity (not family or holiday snaps), Made films or videos as an artistic activity (not family or holiday), 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 or plays, Written any poetry
 78. Film at cinema or other venue, Exhibition or collection of art, photography, or sculpture, Craft exhibition (not a crafts market), Event connected with books or writing (such as poetry reading or storytelling), Circus, Carnival, An arts festival, A community festival, Play or drama, Other theatre performance (such as musical or pantomime), Opera/operetta, Classical music performance, Rock or pop music performance, Jazz performance, Folk, or traditional or world music performance, Other live music event, Ballet, An Irish dance performance, Other dance event, A museum
 79. Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 10 October 2022)
 80. Experience of culture and the arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 14 September 2022)

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who:

- Engaged with the arts in the last 12 months was 81%
- Participated in arts activities in the last 12 months was 33%
- Attended an arts event in the last 12 months was 79% (see Participation Figure 41)

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who:

- Engaged with the arts in the last 12 months decreased by 3 percentage points, from 84% to 81%
- Participated in arts activities in the last 12 months increased by 1 percentage point from 32% to 33%
- Attended an arts event in the last 12 months decreased by 3 percentage points from 82% to 79%

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who:

- Engaged with the arts in the last 12 months was 3 percentage points lower in Belfast LGD, 81% compared with 84%
- Participated in arts activities in the last 12 months was the same at 33%
- Attended an arts event in the last 12 months was 1 percentage point lower in Belfast LGD, 79% compared with 80% (see Participation Figure 41)

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who engaged with the arts in the last 12 months:

- In Belfast LGD decreased by 3 percentage points, from 84% to 81% (a percentage decrease of 3.57%)
- In Northern Ireland increased by 2 percentage points from 82% to 84% (a percentage increase of 2.44%)

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who participated in arts activities in the last 12 months:

- In Belfast LGD increased by 1 percentage point, from 32% to 33% (a percentage increase of 3.13%)
- In Northern Ireland decreased by 1 percentage point from 34% to 33% (a percentage decrease of 2.94%)

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who attended an arts event in the last 12 months:

- In Belfast LGD decreased by 3 percentage points, from 82% to 79% (a percentage decrease of 3.66%)
- In Northern Ireland increased by 1 percentage point from 79% to 80% (a percentage increase of 1.27%)

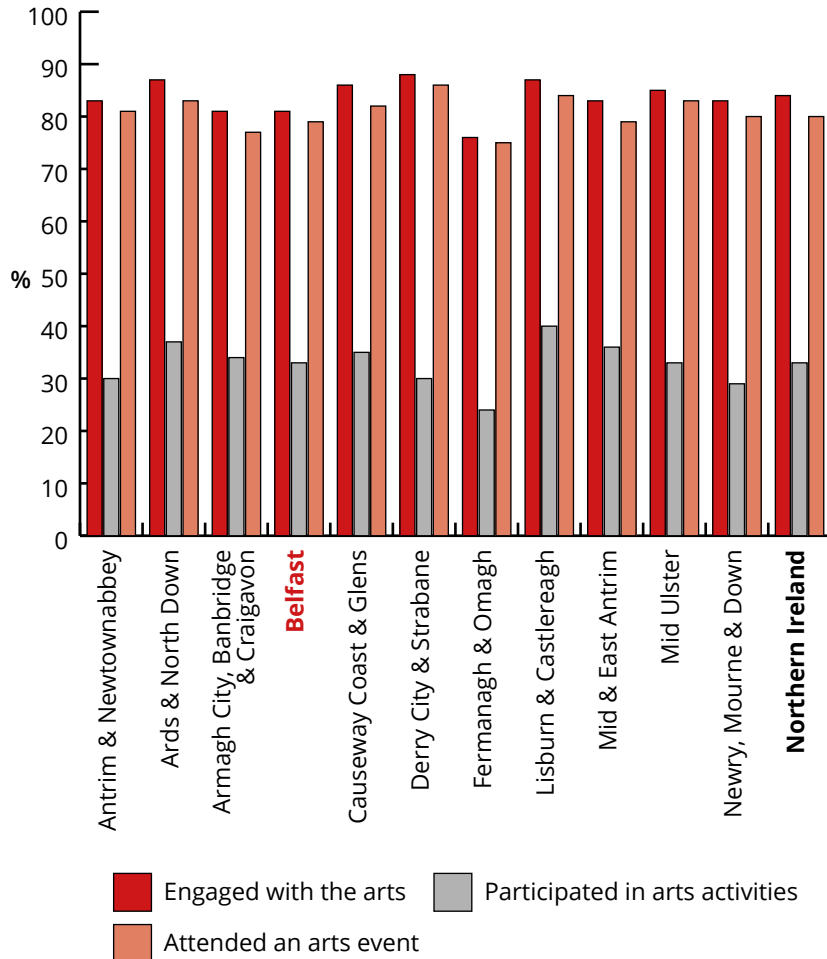
Comparison with other LGDs

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who:

- Engaged with the arts in the last 12 months was second equal lowest in Belfast LGD, together with Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon LGD, at 81%, highest in Derry City & Strabane LGD at 88%, lowest in Fermanagh & Omagh LGD at 76%, with the median percentage in three LGDs at 83%
- Participated in arts activities in the last 12 months was the median in Belfast LGD, together with Mid Ulster LGD, at 33%, highest in Lisburn & Castlereagh LGD at 40%, and lowest in Fermanagh & Omagh LGD at 24%
- Attended an arts event in the last 12 months was third equal lowest in Belfast LGD, together with Mid & East Antrim LGD, at 79%, highest in Derry City & Strabane LGD at 86%, lowest in Fermanagh & Omagh LGD at 75%, with the median percentage in Antrim & Newtownabbey LGD at 81% (see Participation Figure 41)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 41:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over engaging with the arts, participating in arts activities, and attending an arts event in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities: Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020, Tables 5-7

Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

Engagement with the arts

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in engaging with the arts in the last 12 months. There was a higher percentage of:

- Women than men by 5 percentage points, 86% compared with 81%
- People aged 16-44 years than people aged 45 years and over by 7-27 percentage points, 90-95% compared with 83%, 78%, and 68%, respectively

- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic or Protestant religious background by 6-8 percentage points, 90% compared with 84% and 82%, respectively
- People who were married/cohabiting or single than people who were widowed or separated/divorced by 11-22 percentage points, 86% and 86% compared with 64% and 75%, respectively
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 15 percentage points, 88% compared with 73%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 7 percentage points, 88% compared with 81%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 10 percentage points, 88% compared with 78%
- People in rural areas than people in urban areas by 2 percentage points, 85% compared with 83% (see Participation Figure 42)

Participation in arts activities

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among nearly all population groups in participation in arts activities in the last 12 months. There was a higher percentage of:

- Women than men by 5 percentage points, 35% compared with 30%
- People aged 16-24 years than people aged 25 years and over by 5-11 percentage points, 40% compared with 29-35%
- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic or Protestant religious background by 13-18 percentage points, 46% compared with 28% and 33%, respectively
- People who were single than people who were married/cohabiting, widowed or separated/divorced by 3-4 percentage points, 35% compared with 31-32%
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 1 percentage point, 33% compared with 32%
- People without dependants than people with dependants by 5 percentage points, 35% compared with 30%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 13 percentage points, 39% compared with 26% (see Participation Figure 42)

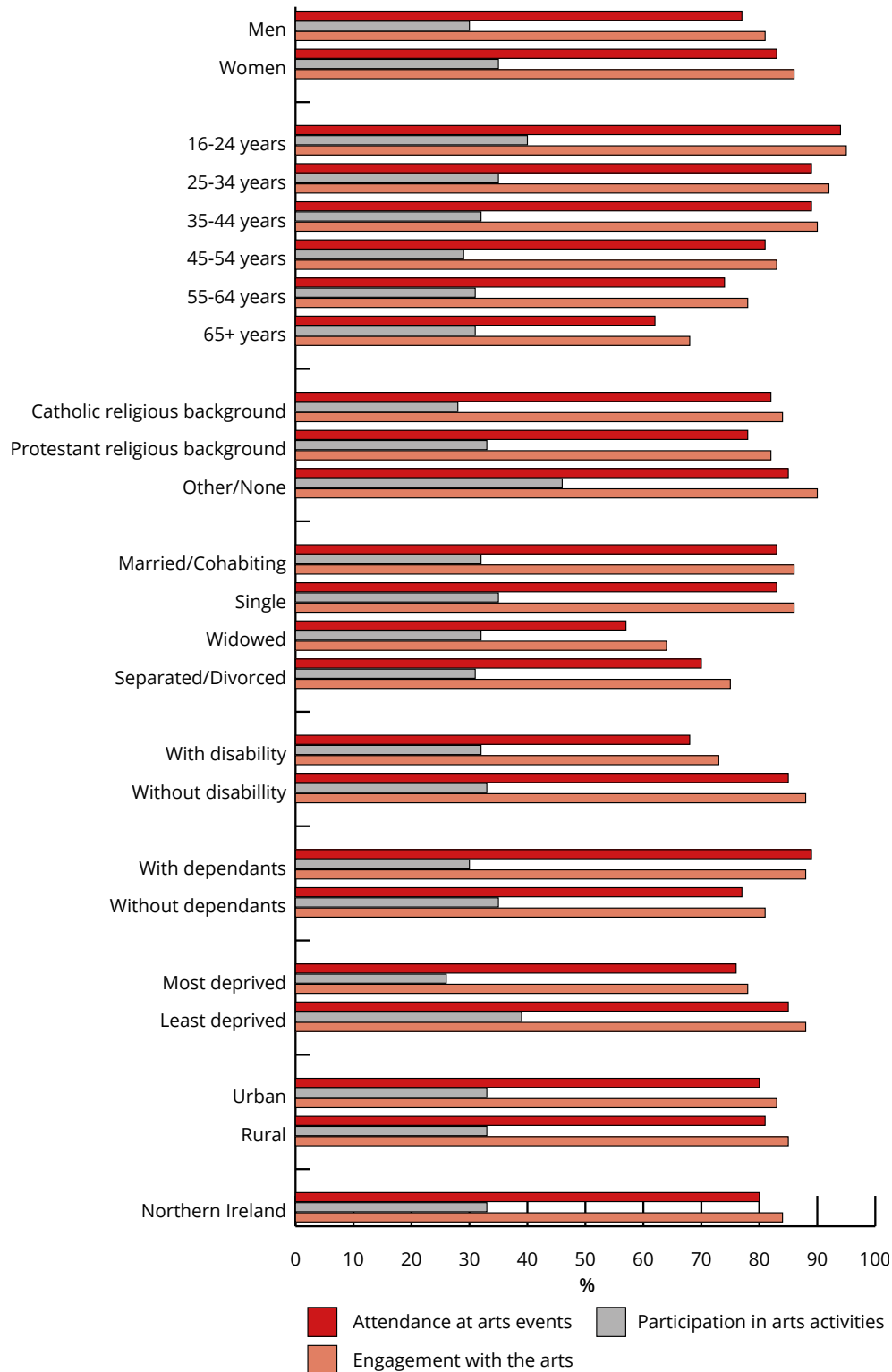
Attendance at an arts event

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups in attending an arts event in the last 12 months. There was a higher percentage of:

- Women than men by 6 percentage points, 83% compared with 77%
- People aged 16-24 years than people aged 25 years and over by 5-32 percentage points, 94% compared with 62-89%
- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic or Protestant religious background by 3-7 percentage points, 85% compared with 82% and 78%, respectively
- People who were married/cohabiting or single than people who were widowed or separated/divorced by 13-26 percentage points, 83% and 83% compared with 57% and 70%, respectively
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 17 percentage points, 85% compared with 68%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 9 percentage points, 86% compared with 77%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 9 percentage points, 85% compared with 76%
- People in rural areas than people in urban areas by 1 percentage point, 81% compared with 80% (see Participation Figure 42)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 42:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who had engaged with the arts, participated in arts activities, and attended an arts event in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities, Experience of culture and the arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of the arts by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20, Tables 1b, 4 & 7

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD:

- Just over 8 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over engaged with the arts in the last 12 months, compared with between 8 and 9 out of every 10 in Northern Ireland
- Over 3 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over participated in arts activities in the last 12 months, the same as for Northern Ireland
- Almost 8 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over attended an arts event in the last 12 months, compared with 8 out of every 10 in Northern Ireland

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who:

- Engaged with the arts in the last 12 months decreased in Belfast but increased in Northern Ireland, such that their positions reversed, and Belfast had poorer outcomes
- Participated in arts activities in the last 12 months increased in Belfast but decreased in Northern Ireland, such that the gap between the two closed
- Attended an arts event in the last 12 months decreased in Belfast but increased in Northern Ireland, such that their positions reversed, and Belfast had poorer outcomes

In 2019/20, Belfast had lower percentages of people aged 16 years and over who had engaged with the arts and attended an arts event in the last 12 months, and the median percentage of people who had participated in arts activities, among LGDs.

Inequalities and potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, the population groups with lower percentages than those for Northern Ireland for one or more aspects of engagement with the arts in the last 12 months are shown in Participation Table 6.

PARTICIPATION TABLE 6:

Population groups in Northern Ireland with lower percentages (see shaded cells) of engagement in the arts, participation in arts activities, or attendance at an arts event in the last 12 months when compared with Northern Ireland, 2013/14-2015/16

Population group	Engagement with the arts	Participation in arts activities	Attendance at an arts event
Men			
35-44 years			
45-54 years			
55-64 years			
65+ years			
Catholic religious background			
Protestant religious background			
Married/Cohabiting			
Widowed			
Separated/Divorced			
With a disability			
With dependants			
Without dependants			
Most deprived			
Urban environment			

Some population groups have lower percentages than those for Northern Ireland for all three aspects of engagement with the arts:

- Men
- People aged 55 years and over
- People who are widowed
- People who are separated/divorced
- People with a disability
- People in the most-deprived areas

Differences in the percentage of people engaging with the arts in the last 12 months could indicate the amount of time or resources different people have available to them due to their prevailing life circumstances, and/or their level of access, which may reduce their capacity and not necessarily their willingness to engage.

6.2 Use of the Public Library Service in the Last 12 Months

IMPORTANCE

In a study commissioned by the Arts Council in England, after controlling for other factors:

- Library use was positively associated with subjective wellbeing in terms of higher life satisfaction, higher levels of happiness, and a higher sense of purpose in life, although usage was also associated with higher levels of anxiety
- Library engagement had a positive association with general health – being a regular library user was associated with an increase of 1.4 percentage points in the likelihood of reporting good general health

When this health improvement was valued in terms of cost-savings to the NHS, based on a reduction in GP visits and aggregated across the library-using population in England, the estimated average cost-saving was £27.5 million per year. Taken together, these findings suggest that libraries generally have an important role in library users' quality of life and wellbeing, as well as having secondary benefits for the NHS.⁸¹

A particular combination of factors mean that public libraries can also act as a good location for a wide range of health and wellbeing activities to take place; public libraries can provide:

- Access to communities which clinical/medical providers might find hard to reach
- A local and national network of community-based sites, assisted online services and expert staff
- A neutral, non-stigmatised, non-clinical community space, in a setting that differentiates it from hospital services, where it is possible to deliver the prevention agenda particularly effectively⁸²

81. The health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries.pdf (artscouncil.org.uk)
(Last accessed 12 September 2022)

82. library_health_final_report_20_May_2010.pdf (artscouncil.org.uk)
(Last accessed 12 September 2022)

Based on an analysis of case-studies, the further contributions of libraries to the wider community include:

- **Serving as tools for achieving inclusive growth**
- **Where culture is being used as a route to opportunity, libraries are being used as routes to culture**
- **Providing access to lifelong learning for all without formal enrolment⁸³**

Information on the usage of public library services is important for the development, monitoring and evaluation of policy in relation to the public library service in Northern Ireland.

DEFINITION

In the Continuous Household Survey, participants were asked about the use of public library services in Northern Ireland including:

“During the last 12 months, have you used the public library service at least once, e.g., been to a public library or mobile library; attended a library event outside a library; used the Libraries NI website; downloaded free eBooks, eMagazines, or audiobooks using your library membership on an app on a smartphone or tablet?”^{84, 85}

Information for LGDs and Northern Ireland is from Department for Communities, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020.⁸⁶

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland is from Department for Communities, Experience of culture and the arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of the public library service by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20.⁸⁷

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83. Combined placeshaping report 17 July.pdf (artscouncil.org.uk) (Last accessed 12 September 2022)
84. Culture, arts and sport modules on the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20 (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)
85. From 2008/09 to 2011/12 the Continuous Household Survey asked about visits to public libraries, whereas from 2012/13 onwards the question on usage of the library service was extended to include not just visits to a public library but use of the public library service due to the increasing diversity of services being provided by libraries, including access to eBooks online.
86. Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s local government districts 2020 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 10 October 2022)
87. Experience of culture and the arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 14 September 2022)

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months was 22%.

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months decreased by 4 percentage points from 26% to 22%.

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months was 1 percentage point lower in Belfast LGD, 22% compared with 23% (see Participation Figure 43).

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months decreased:

- In Belfast LGD by 4 percentage points, from 26% to 22% (a percentage decrease of 15.38%)
- In Northern Ireland by 3 percentage points from 26% to 23% (a percentage decrease of 11.54%)

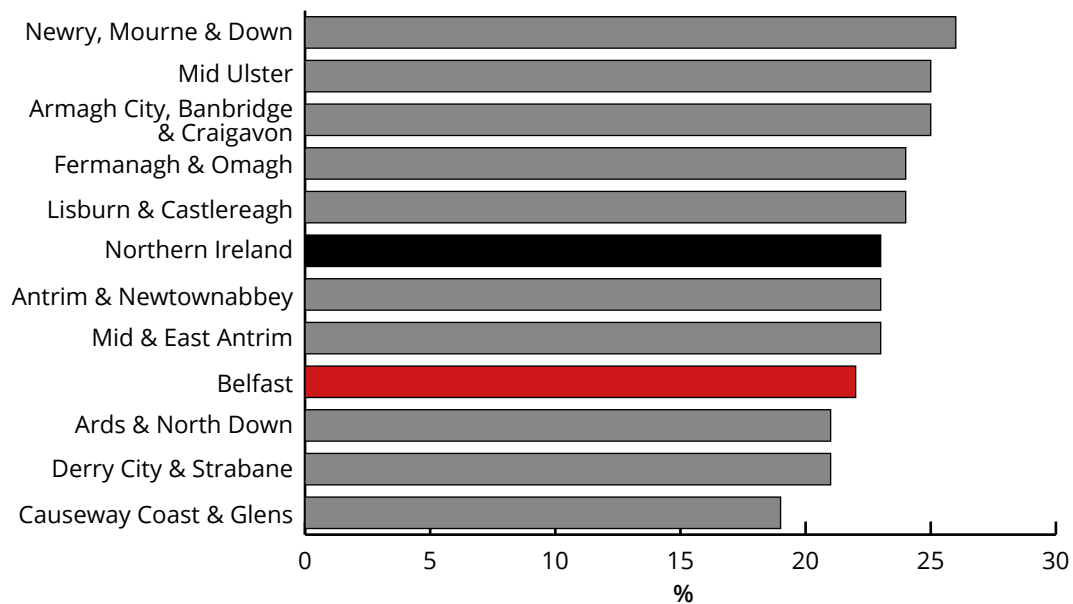
Comparison with other LGDs

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the third lowest percentage of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months at 22%
- Newry, Mourne & Down LGD had the highest percentage at 26%
- Causeway Coast & Glens LGD had the lowest percentage at 19%
- Antrim & Newtownabbey LGD and Mid and East Antrim LGD had the median percentage at 23% (see Participation Figure 43)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 43:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities: Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Table 8

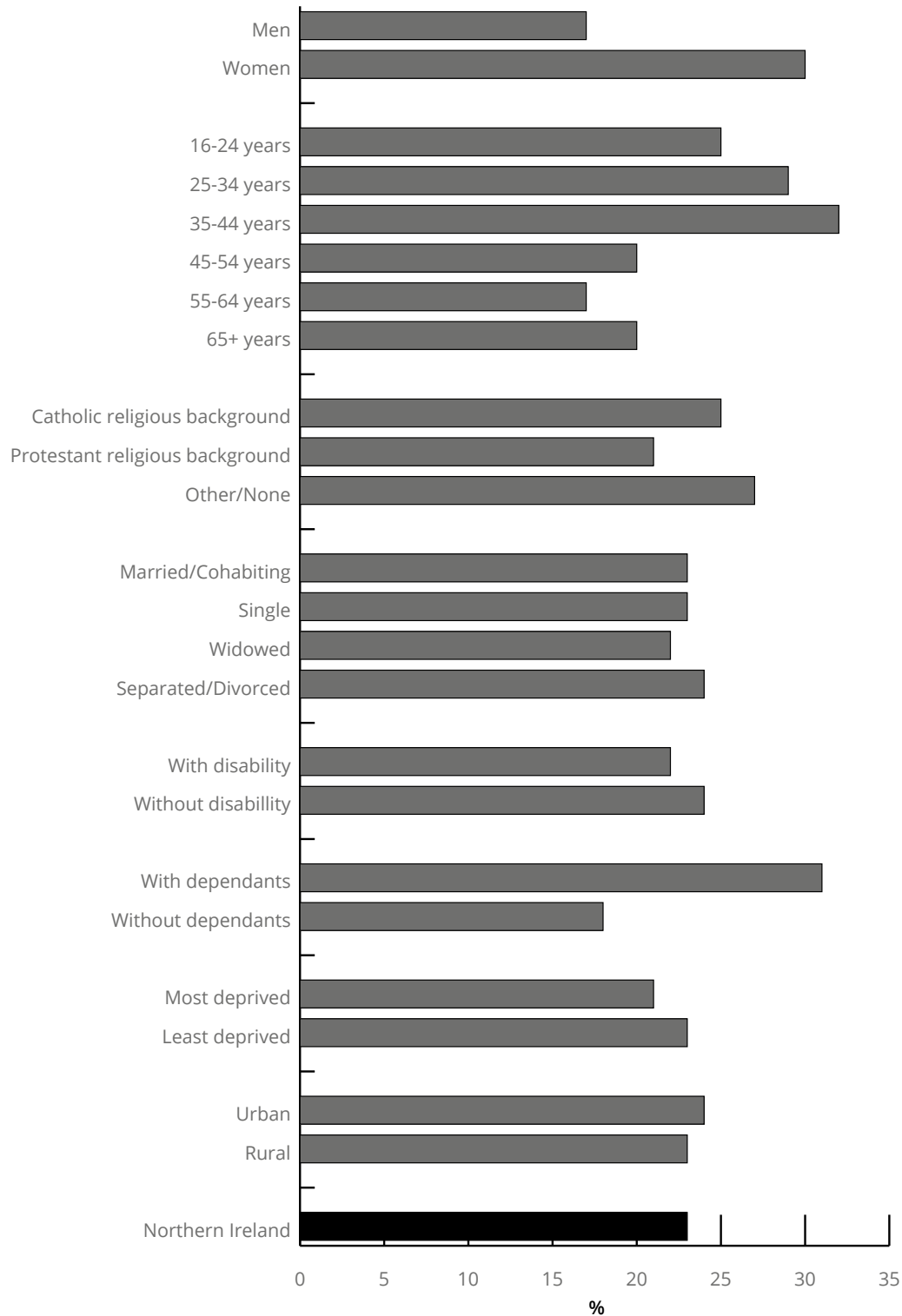
Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups who had used the public library service in the last 12 months. There was a higher percentage of:

- Women than men by 13 percentage points, 30% compared with 17%
- People aged 35-44 years than people aged 16-34 years and 45 years and over by 3-15 percentage points, 32% compared with 17-29%
- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of Catholic religious background or Protestant religious background by 2-6 percentage points, 27% compared with 25% and 21%, respectively
- People who are separated/divorced than people who are married/cohabiting, single or widowed by 1-2 percentage points, 24% compared with 22-23%
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 2 percentage points, 24% compared with 22%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 13 percentage points, 31% compared with 18%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 2 percentage points, 23% compared with 21%
- People in an urban environment than people in a rural environment by 1 percentage point, 24% compared with 23% (see Participation Figure 44)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 44:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities, Experience of culture and the arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of the public library service by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Table 1

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Belfast, over 2 out of every 10 people aged 16 years and over used the public library service in the last 12 months, similar to Northern Ireland.

Between 2017/28 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months decreased in Belfast and in Northern Ireland, but the percentage decrease was greater in Belfast and a gap was opened between the two, with poorer outcomes for both.

In 2019/20, among LGDs, Belfast had one of the lower percentages of people aged 16 years and over who used the public library service in the last 12 months.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, lower percentages of the following population groups had used the public library service in the last 12 months:

- Men
- People aged 45 years and over
- People of a Protestant religious background
- People who are widowed
- People with a disability
- People without dependants
- People in the most-deprived areas

Differences in the percentage of people using the public library service in the last 12 months could indicate the amount of time or resources different people have available to them due to their prevailing life circumstances, and/or their level of access, which may reduce their capacity and not necessarily their willingness to use the public library service.

6.3 Visited a Museum or Science Centre in the Last 12 Months

IMPORTANCE

In a review of research and best practice in museum interventions in health and social care, the benefits of visiting a museum included:

- Positive social experiences and reduced social isolation
- Learning opportunities and the chance to develop new skills
- Calming experiences, which decreased anxiety levels
- Positive emotions, such as hope, enjoyment and optimism
- Self-esteem and a sense of self and community
- Increased opportunities for finding meaning
- New experiences, which may be inspirational or meaningful⁸⁸

Information on visits to a museum or science centre is important for the development, monitoring, and evaluation of policy in relation to the Arts in Northern Ireland.

DEFINITION

In the Continuous Household Survey, questions about visits to museums and science centres in Northern Ireland include:

- “When did you last visit a museum in Northern Ireland?”
- “Which, if any, of the following science centres have you visited in the last 12 months?”⁸⁹

88. Chatterjee H and Noble G (2013) Museums, Health and Well-being. Routledge.

89. Culture, arts and sport modules on the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20 (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

Information for LGDs and Northern Ireland is from Department for Communities, Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020.⁹⁰

Information for population groups in Northern Ireland is from Experience of culture and the arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of museums and science centres by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20.⁹¹

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months was 47%.

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, in Belfast LGD, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months decreased by 9 percentage points from 56% to 47%.

KEY COMPARISONS

Comparison with Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months was higher by 10 percentage points, 47% compared with 37% (see Participation Figure 45).

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months decreased:

- **In Belfast LGD by 9 percentage points from 56% to 47%**
(a percentage decrease of 16.07%)
- **In Northern Ireland by 12 percentage points from 49% to 37%**
(a percentage decrease of 24.49%)

90. Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 10 October 2022)

91. Experience of culture and the arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20 | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk) (Last accessed 14 September 2022)

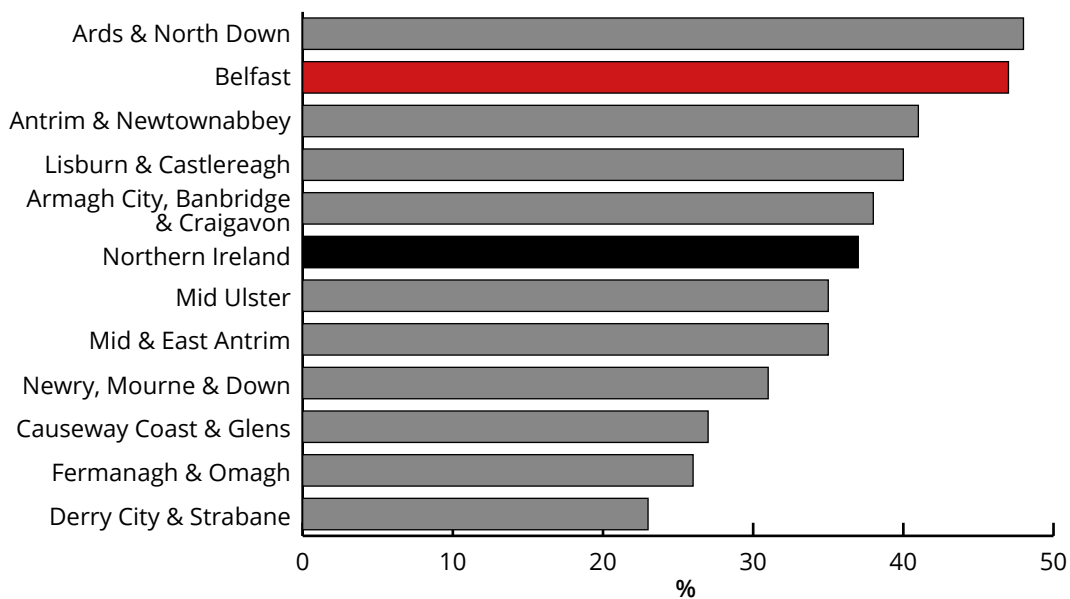
Comparison with other LGDs

In 2019/20, when compared with other LGDs:

- Belfast LGD had the second highest percentage of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months at 47%
- Ards & North Down LGD had the highest percentage at 48%
- Derry City & Strabane LGD had the lowest percentage at 23%
- Mid & East Antrim LGD and Mid Ulster LGD had the median percentage at 35% (see Participation Figure 45)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 45:

Percentage (%) of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months by LGD and Northern Ireland, 2019/20⁹²



Source: Department for Communities: Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Engagement in culture, arts and sport by adults in Northern Ireland's local government districts 2020, Table 9

92. Data for Antrim & Newtownabbey LGD are based on a small sample and, therefore, are less precise and should be used with caution

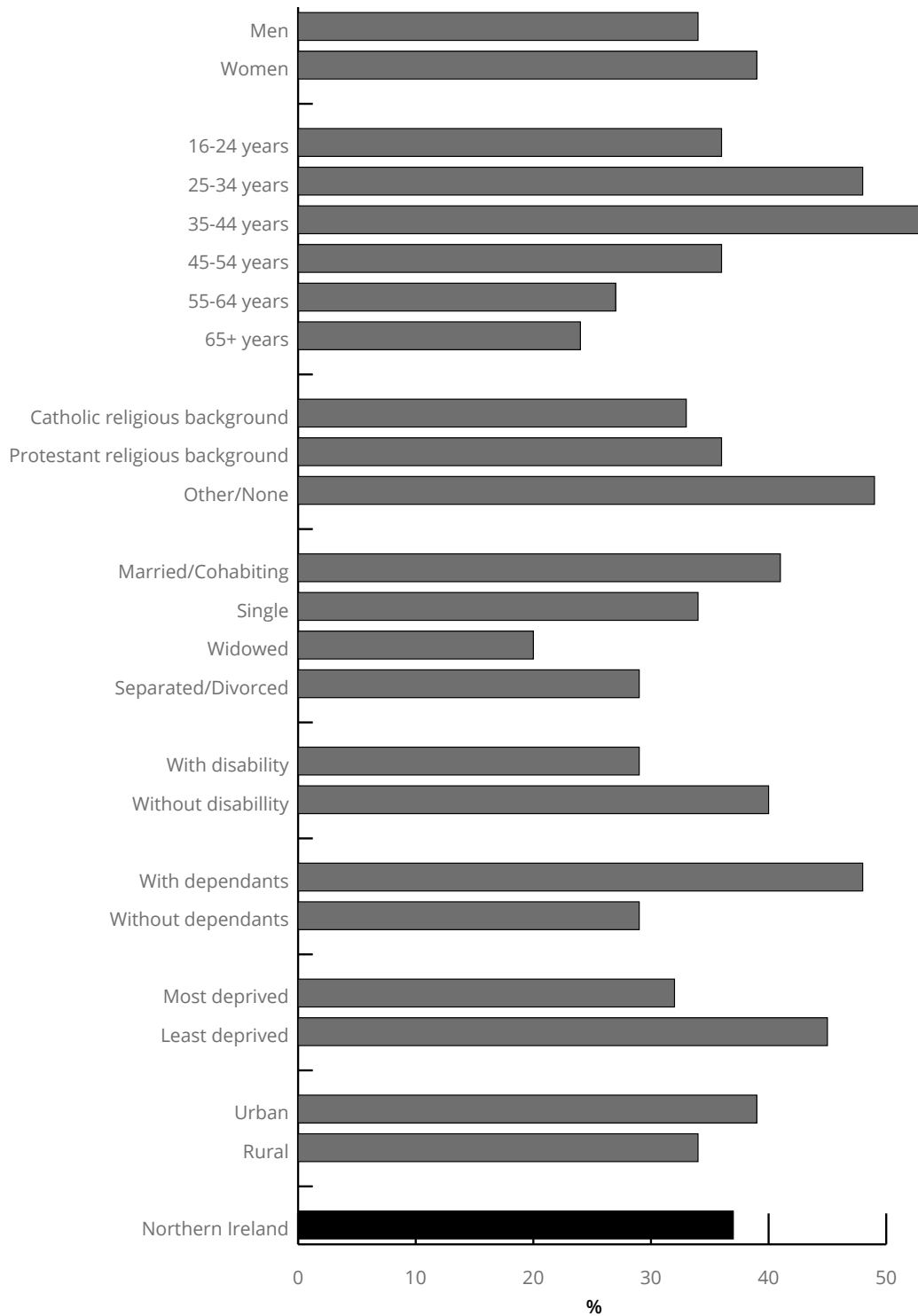
Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, in Northern Ireland, there were differences among population groups who had visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months. There was a higher percentage of:

- Women than men by 5 percentage points, 39% compared 34%
- People aged 35-44 years than people aged 16-34 years and people aged 45 years and over by 5-29 percentage points, 53% compared with 24-48%
- People of 'Other/None' religious background than people of a Catholic religious background or people of a Protestant religious background by 13-16 percentage points, 49% compared with 33% and 36%, respectively
- People who were married/cohabiting than people who were single, widowed, or separated/divorced by 7-21 percentage points, 41% compared with 20-34%
- People without a disability than people with a disability by 11 percentage points, 40% compared with 29%
- People with dependants than people without dependants by 19 percentage points, 48% compared with 29%
- People in the least-deprived areas than people in the most-deprived areas by 13 percentage points, 45% compared with 32%
- People in an urban environment than people in a rural environment by 5 percentage points, 39% compared with 34% (see Participation Figure 46)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 46:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 16 years and over who had visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months by sex, age group, religious background, marital status, disability, dependants, level of deprivation, and urban/rural environment, 2019/20



Source: Department for Communities, Experience of culture and arts by adults in Northern Ireland 2019/20, Experience of museums and science centres by adults in Northern Ireland, 2019/20, Table 2

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019/20, in Belfast, almost 5 out of 10 adults aged 16 years and over had visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months, compared with almost 4 out of every 10 in Northern Ireland.

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months decreased in Belfast and in Northern Ireland, but the percentage decrease was greater in Northern Ireland, and the gap between the two widened although outcomes were poorer for both Belfast and Northern Ireland.

In 2019/20, among LGDs, Belfast had one of the highest percentages of people aged 16 years and over who visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019/20, when compared with Northern Ireland, the following population groups had lower percentages of people who had visited a museum or science centre in the last 12 months:

- Men
- People aged 16-24 years and people aged 45 years and over
- People of a Catholic religious background and people of a Protestant religious background
- People who were single, widowed, or separated/divorced
- People with a disability
- People without dependants
- People in the most-deprived areas
- People in a rural environment

Differences in the percentages of people visiting a museum or science centre in the last 12 months could indicate the amount of time or resources different people have available to them due to their prevailing life circumstances, and/or their level of access, which may reduce their capacity and not necessarily their willingness to visit a museum or science centre.

SECTION 7:

Influence on Local and Northern Ireland Decision-making

7.1 - Influence on Local Decisions - Influence on Decisions Made about Northern Ireland

IMPORTANCE

In a systematic review of public participation and influence in local decision-making, lack of control over decisions and actions that shape people's lives and health was identified as an important determinant of poor health. Creating conditions for people to exert influence and control is crucial in addressing health inequity. In 2020, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development found that people wanted to have a greater say in shaping policy actions that affect their lives. In the Community Life Survey 2018–2019, in England, 52% of adults wanted more involvement in local decision-making, with only 25% feeling able to influence decisions affecting their local area. Benefits identified for individuals from public participation in local decision-making were improvements in wellbeing, self-confidence, self-esteem, physical, emotional, and mental health, as well as increased individual efficacy and empowerment. Potentially adverse effects for individuals were exhaustion, frustration, stress, and fatigue from taking part. Engagement can become dispiriting and disempowering, resulting in scepticism, limited expectations of participation and reluctance to engage further.⁹³

The Northern Ireland Life and Times survey collects views on a range of issues including whether people feel they have any influence on decisions.

93. Increasing public participation and influence in local decision-making to address social determinant (tandfonline.com) (Last accessed 6 October 2022)

DEFINITION

In the Community Relations Module of the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey, there are two questions about people's perceptions of their influence on decision-making:

1. "Do you feel that you have any influence when it comes to any of the local decisions made around here?"
2. "Do you feel that you have any influence when it comes to any of the decisions made about what happens in Northern Ireland?"⁹⁴

The response options are:

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- Don't know

The responses for 'Yes, definitely' and 'Yes, probably' have been combined for this suite of two indicators.

Information is from ARK, Northern Ireland Life and Times survey, Module: Community Relations, Year: 2019, INFLNI and INFLLOCAL.⁹⁵

PROFILE FINDINGS

In 2019, in Northern Ireland, the percentage of people aged 18 years and over who felt they definitely or probably had any influence:

- On local decisions was 25%
- On decisions about Northern Ireland was 20%

94. NI Life and Times Survey - 2019: Community relations (ark.ac.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

95. NI Life and Times Survey - 2019 : INFLNI (ark.ac.uk) and NI Life and Times Survey - 2019 : INFLLOCL (ark.ac.uk) (Last accessed 15 September 2022)

KEY COMPARISONS

Between 2013 and 2019, in Northern Ireland, the combined percentage of people aged 18 years and over who felt they definitely or probably had any influence:

- On local decisions decreased by 6 percentage points from 31% to 25%
- On decisions about Northern Ireland decreased by 3 percentage points from 23% to 20%

Differences among population groups in Northern Ireland

Influence over local decision-making

In 2019, there were differences among population groups for the combined percentages of people aged 18 years and over who felt they definitely or probably had any influence over local decisions. There were higher percentages of:

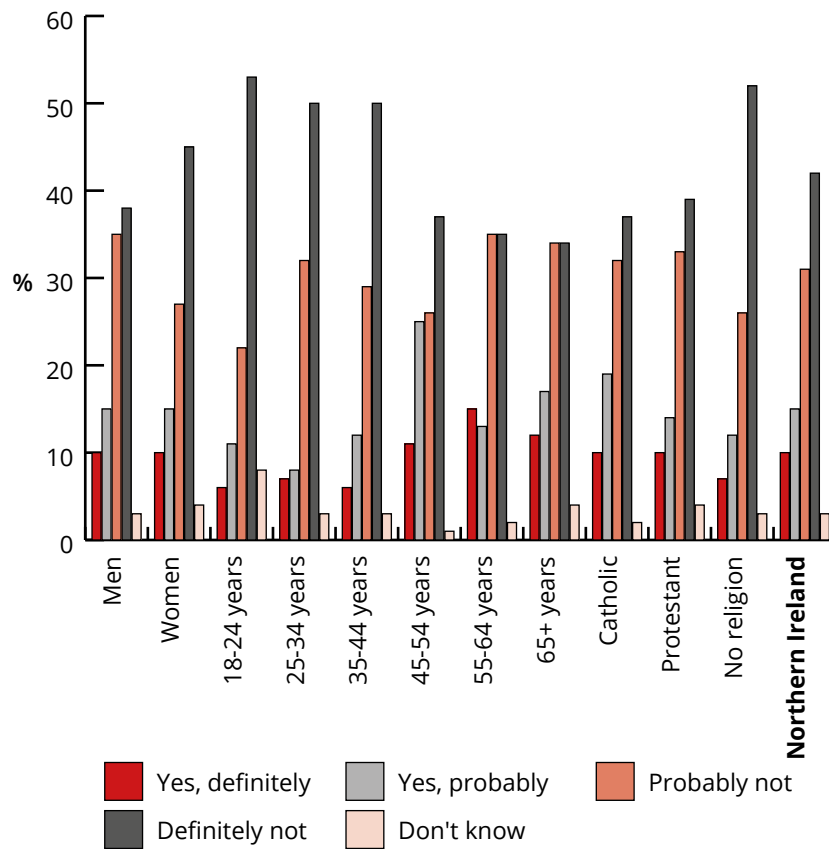
- People aged 45-54 years than people aged 18-44 years and people aged 55 years and over by 7-21 percentage points, 36% compared with 15-29%
- People of Catholic religion than people of Protestant religion, and people with No religion by 5-10 percentage points, 29% compared with 24% and 19%, respectively (Participation Figure 47)

By contrast, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups that had higher combined percentages of people aged 18 years and over who felt they definitely did not have any influence over local decisions were:

- Women
- People aged 18-44 years
- People of 'No' religion (see Participation Figure 47)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 47:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over by self-reported degree of influence over local decisions, 2019



Source: ARK: Northern Ireland Life & Times Survey, Module: Community Relations, Year: 2019, INFLOCAL

Across all population groups with one exception (people aged 55-64 years), the 'Yes, probably' response accounted for a larger proportion of responses than the 'Yes, definitely' response.

Influence over decision-making in Northern Ireland

In 2019, there were differences among population groups for the combined percentages of people aged 18 years and over who felt they definitely or probably had any influence over decisions made about what happens in Northern Ireland. There were higher percentages of:

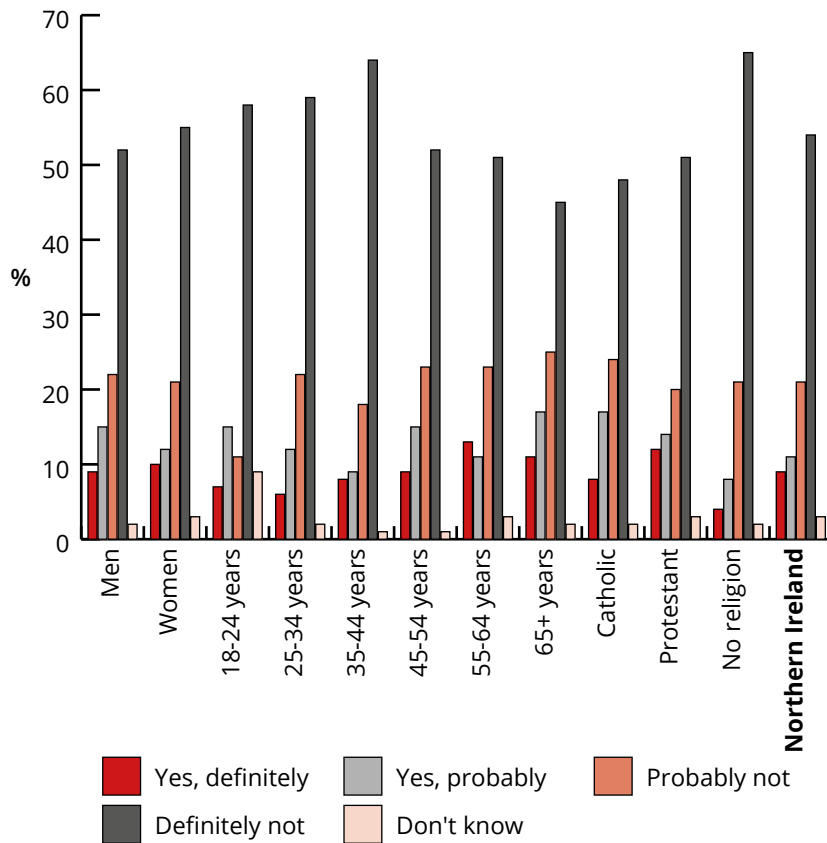
- Men than women by 2 percentage points, 24% compared with 22%
- People aged 65 years and over than people aged 18-64 years by 4-11 percentage points, 28% compared with 17-24%
- People of Protestant religion and of Catholic religion than people of No religion by at least 13 percentage points, 25-26% compared with 12% (see Participation Figure 48)

By contrast, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups that had higher combined percentages of people aged 18 years and over who felt they definitely did not have any influence over decisions made about Northern Ireland were:

- Women
- People aged 18-44 years
- People of 'No' religion (see Participation Figure 48)

PARTICIPATION FIGURE 48:

Percentage (%) of people in Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over by self-reported degree of influence over decisions made about Northern Ireland, 2019



Source: ARK: Northern Ireland Life & Times Survey, Module: Community Relations, Year: 2019, INFLNI

Across all population groups with one exception (people aged 55-64 years), the 'Yes, probably' response accounted for a larger proportion of responses than the 'Yes, definitely' response.

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019, in Northern Ireland:

- Between 2 and 3 out of every 10 people aged 18 years and over felt they definitely or probably had some influence on local decisions
- 2 out of every 10 people felt they definitely or probably had some influence on decisions about Northern Ireland

For all but one of the population groups (people aged 55-64 years), the percentages of people who felt they definitely had influence on local decisions and on decisions about Northern Ireland were lower than the percentages of people who felt they probably had influence on local decisions and on decisions made about Northern Ireland.

Between 2013 and 2019, in Northern Ireland, the combined percentage of people who felt they definitely or probably had any influence on local decisions and on decisions made about Northern Ireland decreased.

Inequalities and the potential for inequity in Northern Ireland

In 2019, when compared with Northern Ireland, the population groups with lower combined percentages of people who felt they definitely or probably had any influence on local decisions and on decisions about Northern Ireland (see shaded cells) are shown in Participation Table 7.

PARTICIPATION TABLE 7:

Population groups in Northern Ireland with lower combined percentages (see shaded cells) of feeling they have influence on local decisions and decisions made about Northern Ireland when compared with Northern Ireland, 2019

Population group	Lower levels of influence	
	Local decisions	Decisions about Northern Ireland
People aged 18-24 years		
People aged 25-34 years		
People aged 35-44 years		
People of Protestant religion		
People of 'No' religion		

From Participation Table 7, it can be seen that three population groups had lower combined percentages of people who felt they definitely or probably had any influence over both local decisions and decisions made about Northern Ireland:

- **People aged 25-34 years**
- **People aged 35-44 years**
- **People of 'No' religion**

It can also be seen that more population groups had lower combined percentages of people who felt they definitely or probably had influence on local decisions when compared with decisions made about Northern Ireland.

Furthermore, in 2019, there were five population groups with higher percentages of people aged 18 years and over who felt they definitely did not have any influence both on local decisions and decisions made about Northern Ireland:

- **Women**
- **People aged 18-24 years**
- **People aged 25-34 years**
- **People aged 35-44 years**
- **People of 'No' religion**



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