



Audit of Inequalities 2021-2025

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

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Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public bodies when carrying out their work to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine categories of persons:

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

Public authorities must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Whilst considerable progress has been made, there still remain persistent inequalities within our society. In April 2010 the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) published new statutory guidance [‘Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities’ \(2010\)](#).

The Commission recommends in this Guide that public authorities should undertake an audit of inequalities by examining their functions and how these relate to the promotion of equality and good relations. Specific actions to address the inequalities identified should then be set out in an action plan, and these actions linked to the authority’s corporate planning cycle.

The audit of inequalities is additional and complementary to the development of an equality scheme. It is intended to produce a more strategic picture of inequalities that a public authority may be in a position to influence, rather than examining inequalities on a policy by policy basis. It should be similar to other approaches undertaken by organisations to review and evaluate their performance, to make decisions about the way forward and to prioritise actions over time.

It is a review and evaluation of existing reliable and verifiable data, both qualitative and quantitative, for each of the Section 75 equality and good relations categories. There should be opportunities to share information between public authorities and take a sectoral, collaborative approach to make best use of resources. The ECNI also produced a document with advice on approaching an Audit of Inequalities ([Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act - Advice to Public Authorities: Approaching an ‘Audit of Inequalities’](#)).



DAERA Background

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has responsibility for food, farming, environmental, fisheries, forestry and sustainability policy and the development of the rural sector in Northern Ireland. The Department assists the sustainable development of the agri-food, environmental, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

DAERA provides a business development service for farmers and growers and a veterinary service for administration of animal health and welfare. The Department's College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) delivers training and further and higher education courses in the agri-food sector. DAERA is responsible for the administration of agricultural, environmental, fisheries and rural support schemes in Northern Ireland, and effective liaison with Defra, Scottish and Welsh counterparts on those affecting the whole of the United Kingdom. The Department also oversees the application of European Union agricultural, environmental, fisheries and rural development policy to Northern Ireland, insofar as this is required by the UK/EU Withdrawal and Trade and Cooperation Agreements.

DAERA has responsibility for environment, the Green Growth agenda and climate change, food, farming, fisheries, marine, forestry, rural development and sustainability policy. The Department supports the development of thriving rural communities; the conservation and enhancement of the environment; the sustainable development of a £5 billion agri-food industry, having regard for the needs of the consumers, the protection of human, animal and plant health and the welfare of animals; the development of the fisheries sector; and the development of our forested land. Given the importance of the EU exit agenda to these sectors and activities, DAERA is at the centre of the transition arrangements.



DAERA Purpose and Strategic Objectives

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

Natural Environment To protect and enhance our natural environment now and for future generations whilst advocating its value to and wellbeing for all.
Economic Growth To enhance our food, forestry, fishery and farming sectors using efficient and environmentally sustainable models which support economic growth.
Rural Communities To champion thriving rural communities that contribute to prosperity and wellbeing.
Exemplar Organisation To be an exemplar, people focused organisation, committed to making a difference for the citizens we serve.

Sustainability for the Future - DAERA'S Plan to 2050

On 19 May 2021 DAERA launched the [Sustainability for the Future](#) plan.

This is an ambitious plan that frames the Department's work for the next three decades. It showcases some of the high level work that DAERA aims to deliver in improving the lives of our people, supporting our communities and businesses and in continuing to protect and enhance our natural environment. Sustainability for the Future outlines DAERA's roadmap for the next three decades and is supported by the Green Growth Strategy.

This Plan is underpinned by 10 goals and 6 principles and supports the Department's Purpose and four Key Priorities. The challenge of achieving these goals will need to be taken forward collaboratively with other Departments, our Arms' Length Bodies and our stakeholders.

This Plan to 2050, will be supported by Five Year Plans for the Department which will provide additional clarity around our common purpose in the medium term including key outcomes and performance measures.



DAERA Structure

DAERA Top Management Group comprises:

- Rural Affairs, Forest Service and Estate Transformation Group (RAFSETG);
- Central Services and Contingency Planning Group (CSCPG);
- Veterinary Service Animal Health Group (VSAHG);
- Environment Marine and Fisheries Group (EMFG); and
- Food and Farming Group (FFG).

DAERA has two Executive Agencies:

- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA); and
- Forest Service (FS).

Public Life Positions

Public bodies are organisations set up to manage, provide advice or deliver important and essential public services. While they are set up by government they work separately, at arm's length from government. DAERA currently has responsibility for four Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) and one Statutory Advisory Body. These are:

Executive NDPBs:

- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI);
- Agricultural Wages Board for NI (AWB);
- Livestock and Meat Commission for NI (LMC); and
- Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA).

Statutory Advisory Body:

- Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC).

North South Implementation Body:

DAERA is jointly responsible for one North South Body:

- The Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC).

Ad-Hoc Advisory Groups:

- TB Eradication Partnership (TBEP);
- College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) College Advisory Group; and
- Review of Decisions - External Panel.



Commitment to the effective implementation of the Audit of Inequalities Action Plan

DAERA is committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of the plan across all its business areas and this will be overseen and strategically directed by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group which is a committee of the Departmental Board. This demonstrates leadership and ownership of the equality duties at the most senior levels, which, in turn, will ensure they are better promoted and championed within the Department and wider.

DAERA will ensure objectives and targets in relation to the implementation and monitoring of the equality duties are included in corporate and business plans where relevant.

This Audit of Inequalities Action Plan is a living document and as such will be subject to change as actions are completed and new actions added over time. It will be monitored on an annual basis and updated as appropriate.

Report on Progress

The ECNI have further advised that, “The completion of a public authority’s annual progress report to the Commission is also a timely opportunity to undertake an annual review of audit information and actions” (Stage 8: Review the Audit of Inequalities - [Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act - Advice to Public Authorities: Approaching an ‘Audit of Inequalities’](#)).

DAERA will submit a progress report to the Equality Commission each year on the implementation of this Action Plan. We will publish annual updates on the Department’s website as part of the Annual Progress Report (APR) on equality.

The Department will also carry out a five-year review of its Audit of Inequalities Action Plan and submit it to the Equality Commission. A 5-year review of the previous audit and action plan (Audit of Inequalities & Action Plan 2011-2016) has been completed. Indeed, this was actually extended to a 10-year review to cover the period 2011 to 2021 and has helped to shape this new audit and action plan (2021-2025).

Proposed Action Measures

In our Action Plan, we have outlined the actions we propose to take in the coming years along with targets and timescales to achieve the intended outcomes. We will review and update this plan on a regular basis, and will continue to engage with key organisations and individuals representing the interests of people in Northern Ireland.



We are committed to monitoring and reviewing our policies and practices to ensure that we continue to deliver an effective service. Progress towards this Action Plan will be incorporated into equality updates to the Departmental Board where relevant and reported formally to our Equality and Diversity Steering Group twice per year and reported on annually to the Equality Commission.

Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG)

The Equality and Diversity Steering Group is chaired by the Permanent Secretary and is a committee of the DAERA Board. The steering group is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the Department's progress against its equality and diversity obligations and relevant strategies, policies and action plans.

An Equality and Diversity Working Group has also been established which reports and makes recommendations to the steering group. This group, which will assist with the effective implementation of our Action Plan, is also responsible for promoting the use of equality and diversity best practice across business areas and maximising collaborative working on equality and diversity initiatives where possible.

DAERA has a dedicated business area responsible for Equality and Diversity and this team will support the implementation of our Action Plan and reviewing its progress. The team will ensure that progress is reported to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group and any issues or risks which may impact on effective implementation of the actions in this plan are managed and escalated where relevant. This team will also lead on the preparation of an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of the Action Plan and will include this as part of DAERA's Annual Progress Report (APR) on the implementation of its Equality Scheme.

While the day-to-day implementation of our Action Plan is mainstreamed across the various business areas throughout DAERA, there is a dedicated Equality Officer in post whose role is to enable and assist DAERA to ensure effective implementation of its Action Plan and will act as the main point of contact for this work.

These governance structures send out a strong message that the DAERA Board is committed to leading by example and to tackling inequalities wherever they continue to persist. Minutes of previous [EDSG meetings](#) are available on our website.



The Rural Context

There is no single definition of ‘rural’ although NISRA¹ has proposed that settlements with a population of 5,000 or less should be defined as rural. Using this definition, the 2011 Census identified that approximately 36% (644,087 people) of the total NI population live in rural areas.

Approximately 79 per cent of the total NI land area of 1.35 million hectares is used for agriculture, including common rough grazing. Around 8.7 per cent of the total land area is used for forestry. The greater part (52.9 per cent) of the total forested area (118,000 hectares) is managed by the Forest Service (DAERA)².

Sustainable development shapes the work of the Department; what we do and how we do it, whether it is in relation to the countryside and the rural environment; the agri-food industry and delivering services; or rural development work. Our work to strengthen the social and economic infrastructure of rural areas is primarily taken forward through the Rural Development Programme. This current programme runs until 2023, or until funds are exhausted (whichever comes first) and aims to create more sustainable businesses and jobs, support projects that will enhance the quality of life of local communities and support strong community infrastructure.

Changes in Agriculture

The last few years have seen significant changes in agriculture; and in the coming years further restructuring and efficiencies will be implemented along with higher standards of environmental protection and care for animal welfare. Farming continues to be an important economic and social part of the rural economy, dominated by suckler beef, dairy and sheep production. However the culture is slowly changing, with a gradual decrease in the number of traditional family farms that continue to be economically viable and sustainable. This is however, being offset by more farms implementing diversification activities and by the growth of a stronger and more diverse rural community.

The rural landscape has been gradually changing too, as more people choose to live and work in the countryside and travel longer distances to work in urban locations. This has increased pressure for improved transport networks, access to schools and hospitals and access to a range of other locally available services. The services within rural areas are generally less accessible than urban areas, with rural dwellers being required to travel considerably further for essential services such as health and education.

¹ [Review of the Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#) and [Rural statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Statistical review of NI agriculture 2007 onward | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#) and [Stats Review 2020 final_1.pdf \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#) Page 35 of Review and Page 37, Table 3.1 Land Use, 2020.



DAERA's [Future Agricultural Policy Framework Portfolio for Northern Ireland](#) launched in August 2021 and this document seeks to chart a way forward to a future agricultural policy which better meets the needs of Northern Ireland.

The Framework document sets out the following picture of the industry. The agri-food sector (comprising the agricultural industry and the food and drinks processing sector) plays a significant role in the economy of Northern Ireland. The value of gross output from the agricultural industry in 2020 was £2.2 billion³. The agri-food sector also accounts for approximately 4.6% of total employment in Northern Ireland⁴.

Over the coming decades, the agri-food industry is facing many significant developments, such as changing international markets, consumer demand, technological advances and on a global scale from the impact of changes to our climate. This will bring a number of challenges, but it also presents significant opportunities for Northern Ireland, which through collaborative working can be developed to ensure the farming sector is sustainable, resilient, productive and profitable.

Engagement with Customers and Consultees

DAERA business areas have for many years, been engaging with rural stakeholders, customers, individuals, and representative organisations on policy and service developments. This has helped to increase our understanding of many of the barriers that different groups of people can experience when accessing public services and has provided a framework for this action plan. The Equality Unit also maintain a Section 75 consultee list that is regularly updated when necessary.

Two Recent Action Plans

We recently published our Equality Scheme 2021-25, with its associated Action Plan and our Disability Action Plan 2019-24. Both action plans were developed through consultation with DAERA business areas, ECNI and the Departmental Section 75 consultees. These plans set out the priority areas that the Department is taking forward over the next number of years, and some of the key actions are reflected in our Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan too.

Equality data

In addition, throughout the lifetime of our previous Equality Scheme a significant number of Equality Screening exercises have been completed. This has resulted in considerable quantitative and qualitative information being gathered, as well as equality monitoring data,

³ [Statistical review of NI agriculture 2007 onward | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\) 2020](#)

⁴ [Key statistics from 2007 onward | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\) 2020](#)



where applicable, and feedback we have received from our consultees. Customer complaints are monitored, and while these may not always relate to specific equality issues, they do flag up important issues for business areas to address in relation to how the public can access our services; how we communicate and provide information for our customers; and the barriers to participation and services that continue to exist.

This is just some of the equality data that has been used to fulfil the requirement set by the ECNI. They have advised that, “It is recommended good practice to review and update the audit and / or action plan as new information / data becomes available, thus giving the public authority a reliable, verifiable and up to date evidence base to evaluate its action plan against.” (Stage 8: Review the Audit of Inequalities - [Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act - Advice to Public Authorities: Approaching an ‘Audit of Inequalities’](#)).

DAERA Budget

The NI Executive’s [2021-2022 Budget](#), which covers a one year period, was announced by the Minister for Finance and Personnel on 1 April 2021. It sets out the Executive’s agreed final budget with the departmental priorities over the forthcoming Budget period. The Department has set out its own spending and savings proposals over the period 2021-2022.

In common with other departments, DAERA is going through a period of significant change, with two of the major issues being the Covid-19 pandemic and the exit from the EU. Such impacts will have consequential changes in the Departments priorities and how these should be funded. With the current budget covering only one year then these priorities may change in subsequent years and when new budgets are drafted in the future.

This Audit of Inequalities and the accompanying Action Plan have been developed with consideration given to the Budget proposals. However, it is possible that the Action Plan may need some further changes when final Budget decisions are made over the coming reporting periods.

The Action Plan will be aligned with our corporate and business planning cycles and implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process. The Action Plan is a living document and as such will be subject to change as actions are completed and new actions added. It will be monitored on an annual basis and amended as appropriate.



Section 75 Categories





Men & Women Generally

Gender Inequalities - Women

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
<p>Under-representation in decision-making</p>	<p>Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) to undertake innovative outreach measures to increase applications from women, and the numbers of women taking up public appointees.</p> <p>Review membership across all internal management decision-making boards/ teams etc. and take action to ensure fair representation by both women and men.</p> <p>Actively encourage our rural partners, farming and rural groups, etc. to review levels of participation to ensure fair representation by both women and men.</p>	<p>CEDAW</p> <p>NI Gender Strategy</p> <p>2019/20 CPANI Annual Report</p> <p>DAERA Annual Progress Reports to the ECNI</p> <p>Article 55 and Gender Review 2019</p> <p>ECNI - Gender Equality: Priorities and Recommendations</p>
<p>Low take-up for RDP funding</p>	<p>Pro-active measures to target women and women's groups to encourage Rural Development Programme (RDP) funding applications.</p>	<p>NISRA RDP S75 statistics</p>
<p>Low participation on key CAFRE programmes</p>	<p>Pro-active engagement with rural women and representative groups to find ways to remove barriers to women's participation on the College of Agriculture, Food & Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) people and diversification programmes.</p>	<p>NI Gender Strategy</p>
<p>Rural isolation, unemployment and poverty</p>	<p>Innovative approaches needed to help reduce the personal barriers that prevent many rural women from entering employment or non-traditional occupations, training and education opportunities.</p> <p>Anti-poverty measures to specifically target those most disadvantaged and excluded, and in partnership, to ensure the provision of affordable and accessible services such as rural transport.</p>	<p>Consortium for the Regional Support for Women in Disadvantaged and Rural Areas - March 2021</p> <p>TRPSI</p> <p>NI Gender Strategy</p> <p>Lifetime Opportunities 2015 Update Report</p>



<p>Lack of understanding of issues relating to domestic and sexual violence</p>	<p>Ensure all staff are made aware of the Domestic Violence Policy and the support services available for those who have been victims.</p> <p>Through our public offices and various rural services to raise awareness of the help and support available.</p> <p>Raise awareness with key front-line staff, student support staff and rural customers to help develop a better understanding of domestic and sexual violence, the impacts of it on individuals and their families; and the help available for those who have been victims.</p>	<p>Women's Aid NI</p> <p>NIRWN</p> <p>NI Gender Strategy</p> <p>CEDAW</p>
<p>Lack of Accessible services</p>	<p>Ensure rural services are delivered in a flexible and accessible way to suit the specific needs of women.</p>	<p>NI Gender Strategy</p>





Gender Inequalities - Women

NI Gender Strategy

A new Gender Strategy for NI is currently being drafted by the Department for Communities (DfC). Following the Executive approval on 24 September 2020, work began on the development of the Social Inclusion Strategies⁵: Anti-Poverty, Disability, Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation. The Gender Equality Strategy⁶ will bring focus to identifying and addressing the issues, barriers and disadvantages that undermine equality of opportunity in our community and fulfil the commitments in New Decade, New Approach and the Executive's Programme for Government. Subject to the Executive's agreement the completed Strategy will then be published.

An Expert Panel was established with the knowledge and expertise to allow it to make effective recommendations on the themes and key actions the Strategy should address. The Expert Panel has provided its recommendations to the DfC Minister (Report from the Gender Equality Strategy Expert Advisory Panel⁷).

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights) is the leading UN entity on human rights. They represent the world's commitment to the promotion and protection of the full range of human rights and freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition to the International Bill of Rights and the core human rights treaties, there are many other universal instruments relating to human rights. One of these instruments is the rights of women.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women⁸ is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)⁹.

The NI Gender Strategy should show how it is meeting its international commitments under the CEDAW Convention and the actions that will be taken forward to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed across all aspects of policy development and service delivery.

⁵ [Social inclusion | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

⁶ [Gender | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

⁷ [Report from the Gender Equality Strategy Expert Advisory Panel | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

⁸ [OHCHR | Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women](https://www.ohchr.org)

⁹ [OHCHR | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](https://www.ohchr.org)



Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI)

The ECNI have listed a number of gender equality issues - Gender Equalities: Priorities and Recommendations¹⁰ on their website. The key points listed in their Key Point Briefing¹¹ are: Attitudes; Education; Employment; Caring; Public Life; Violence; Health Care; Sport; Social Protection; Law Reform; and Institutional Mechanisms.

Gender Statistics

The 2011 Census reported that 49% of the population in Northern Ireland are male and 51% are female.

The estimated employment rate in NI for those aged 16-64 in 2020 was 74.8% for males (432,000) and 66.5% for females (392,000). The estimated economic inactivity rate (16-64) was 22.8% for males (132,000) and 31.6% for females (186,000)¹².

The number of self-employed (aged 16+) in Northern Ireland was estimated at 134,000 in 2019, equivalent to just over 15% of all employed people aged 16+. Self-employment was more likely among employed men than women, 22% of all employed men were self-employed, compared with 8% of all employed women¹³.

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey¹⁴ shows that for Jan-Mar 2020 the self-employment rate for men in NI was 22.7% (104,000) compared to 7.7% (32,000) for women. For Jan-Mar 2021 the rate substantially decreased for men 15.6% (67,000) although it slightly increased for women with 8% (33,000) and this is likely to be as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Out of all the self-employed people 10.1% worked in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry.

Public Appointments

In the 2020-21 reporting period the number of females on the Department's public bodies is still below the 50% target set by the Executive. Of the 28 public appointments on its regulated bodies at 31 March 2021¹⁵, 13 (46%) were held by women. The Department is continuing to move closer towards achieving the overall target. The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) Board has exceeded the 50% target at an individual level, the gender breakdown being seven females (70%) and three males (30%).

¹⁰ [ECNI - Delivering Gender Equality in Northern Ireland \(equalityni.org\)](https://www.equalityni.org/)

¹¹ [GenderPolicyPriorities-KeyPointBrief.pdf \(equalityni.org\)](https://www.equalityni.org/GenderPolicyPriorities-KeyPointBrief.pdf)

¹² [Labour Force Survey Annual Summary 2020 \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/labour-force-survey-annual-summary-2020)

¹³ [Self-employment in Northern Ireland 2019 \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/self-employment-in-northern-ireland-2019)

¹⁴ [Quarterly Labour Force Survey Tables - May 2021 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/quarterly-labour-force-survey-tables-may-2021)

¹⁵ [DAERA Annual Progress Reports to the ECNI - See APR 2020-21](https://www.daera.gov.uk/annual-progress-reports-to-the-ecni)



Rural Representation

[DAERA Equality Indicators Report 2018](#)¹⁶ indicates that 9% of principal farmers were female. Female farmers were more likely than their male counterparts to farm on very small farms, 87% of women farmers had small farms compared to 75% of male farmers. Farmers engaged in 'Other types' of farming (such as running specialist horse farms) were twice as likely to be women as were farmers engaged in other activity types. [The Agricultural Census 2018](#)¹⁷ gives the figure for farmers as approximately 8% female and 92% male.

While farming continues to be a male-dominated industry, women are often the backbone of the business; and action is needed to recognise their significant contribution and to increase the participation of rural women in rural decision-making processes. Having a fairer representation will ensure a more democratic and inclusive approach to decision-making processes, with a better use of wider experience, skills and knowledge too.

Internal Representation

The number of females in the Senior Civil Service (Grade 5 and above) continues to increase from 31.7% in 2013, 37.3% in 2016, 38.2% in 2019 to 41.5% in 2020. This figure has increased from 11.3% Senior Civil Service female representation in 2000¹⁸. There has also been an increase in females at Grade 3 from 26.5% in 2016 to 29.4% in 2019, and Grade 2 and above from 0% in 2016 to 25% in 2019. This shows continued positive progress towards the goal of increasing the number of females in the Senior Civil Service.

As of November 2020, females make up 44.8% (1,435) of DAERA staff with males being 55.2% (1,769). There are 59.4% of females who are employed in the general service grades; whilst 34% of females are employed in Professional & Technical and industrial grades¹⁹. At 1 February 2021 the Department employed a total of 3,255 permanent staff, of which 3,068 were non-industrial employees and 187 were industrial employees²⁰.

Women continue to be under-represented across DAERA NDPBs, internal and external decision-making boards, committees and management teams. As representation on internal management teams and boards is often made up by individuals in specific management grades this can often, mean that women are excluded simply because they are not at the appropriate grades.

¹⁶ [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report)

¹⁷ [Agricultural Census in Northern Ireland 2018: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Agricultural Census 2018 final results.PDF](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Agricultural%20Census%202018%20final%20results.PDF)

¹⁸ [Article 55 reviews | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](http://finance-ni.gov.uk) - See Article 55 and Gender Review 2019.

¹⁹ NICSHR data, November 2020.

²⁰ NICSHR data, February 2021.



Action is needed to encourage female interest and participation in areas currently under-represented and to work to eliminate those barriers that may hinder or limit their involvement. While grade is likely to remain a key aspect at times, it is however, important to seek representation from those with the necessary skills and competences needed, rather than only those from specific grades of management.

Rural Development Programme (NIRDP)

A total of 41,393 Section 75 survey forms were issued to NIRDP 2014-2020 scheme applicants²¹. 13,927 were completed or partially completed, giving a total programme response rate of 34 per cent. This showed that 16 per cent of the applicants were female. This is low in comparison to 50 per cent of the rural population reported as female and 24 per cent of the farm labour force.

To date there has been limited evidence to show that the potential inequalities highlighted in the Programme's Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) have been addressed. Although it had been agreed that this NIRDP would proactively target women and young people who have historically had low representation in NIRDP activities, there is little evidence to show that this has actually happened.

Looking to the future, the UK will not be part of the next Rural Development Programming period (2021-2027) as the UK left the EU on 31 January 2020. Projects funded under the NI Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 will continue to receive funding for the lifetime of the project. The European Commission has advised that commitments can be made under the 2014-2020 RDP's up until 2023 and receive EU funding until 31 December 2023 or until EU funds are exhausted (whichever is earlier)²².

Childcare

The findings from the Northern Ireland Childcare Survey 2020 report²³ highlights the underlying challenges. Rising costs for parents and providers, families struggling to access and afford the childcare they need and many providers struggling just to break even - but also how these challenges have been amplified by Covid-19, with the vital role of childcare to our economy and society now widely recognised.

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey Tables - May 2021²⁴ estimates that Lone Parents make up 14.1% of all households. The NISRA publication, Women in Northern Ireland 2020²⁵ shows that,

²¹ [Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme \(NIRDP\) 2014-2020: Section 75 Report 2020](#)

²² [Funding of the NI Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 post EU Exit - Guidance for Beneficiaries | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

²³ [Northern Ireland Childcare Survey 2020 - Employers For Childcare](#)

²⁴ [Quarterly Labour Force Survey Tables - May 2021 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#) (Households Table 2.43 - October-December 2020 dataset).

²⁵ [Women in NI 2020_0.pdf \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#)



76% of women with dependent children were economically active, compared with 92% of men with dependent children. In addition, the economic activity rate for women with pre-school age children (74%) was substantially lower than for men with pre-school age children (93%). Women were much more likely than men to be working part-time schedules, regardless of whether they have dependent children. Furthermore, the age of youngest child was related to work pattern: 53.2% of women whose youngest child was of pre-school age worked full-time. This increased to 60.5% of women whose youngest child was of secondary school age.

The Gender Expert Advisory Panel to the Department for Communities (DfC) highlight that, *“...the lack of affordable childcare becomes a real barrier to women’s employment and an independent income leaving them more vulnerable to poverty. For lone parents childcare costs are likely to be a major barrier²⁶.”* Women make up the vast majority (91%) of lone parents²⁷.

Rural Transport

The Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS) is delivered in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Rural Community Transport Partnerships across NI. The Scheme delivers passenger trips for rural dwellers entitled to a SmartPass and most in need of rural transport (mainly the elderly and disabled)²⁸.

The NI rural Women’s Network (NIRWN) note that, “Women are much less likely to have access to their own private transport than men. This means that women depend much more on public transport, and are at an economic disadvantage to men.

The accessibility of education, training, work and childcare provision and the cost of public transport are factors in determining women’s participation, especially in rural areas. The economic disadvantages of lack of access to transport are compounded by the impeded ability to access basic services and social isolation²⁹”.

Access to Educational and Training Courses

It is vital that women whether returning to education after raising a family, or wishing to balance education or training whilst working and caring for children or other dependants have access within their rural communities to the supporting infrastructure needed such as childcare and regularly available and affordable transport arrangements.

²⁶ [Gender Equality Strategy \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#) Expert Advisory Panel Report pg. 84.

²⁷ [Gender Equality Strategy \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#) Expert Advisory Panel Report pg. 55.

²⁸ [Initiatives to Tackle Rural Poverty and Social Isolation \(TRPSI\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

²⁹ [Rural Transport - Northern Ireland Rural Women’s Network NIRWN](#)



Gender Budgeting

A briefing paper was prepared in April 2020 for the Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights, to examine legal bases underpinning current uses of gender budgeting in government, in particular a constitutional basis. The opening paragraph of the conclusion states that, “Gender disparities persist in many countries, as evidenced by extensive research findings. Northern Ireland is amongst those countries. If Northern Ireland is to constructively address persist gender inequalities in its society; its past and current contexts suggest it would be beneficial for the Executive (including its departments) and the Assembly (including committees), to further expand their understanding of gender budgeting; and then use that knowledge to explore how best they could strategically and methodically use gender budgeting in a sustainable and effective manner?”³⁰

Domestic Violence

On 1 March 2021, the Northern Ireland Assembly passed The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021³¹ which is intended to improve the operation of the justice system by creating an offence that recognises the experience of victims, the repetitive nature of abusive behaviour and the potential cumulative effect of domestic abuse.

Domestic violence is a serious crime that cannot be tolerated in any society. In a survey conducted by the Women’s Resource and Development Agency (WRDA)³² 58.4% of all respondents (141 respondents in total) had been victims of domestic abuse, stalking, harassment, hate crime or assault.

While domestic violence can also be directed against men, such violence is still predominately carried out by men against women. There is a need for raising awareness of domestic and sexual violence issues and the support services available, whether that is within the home, in the workplace, or in the rural community.

Accessing the appropriate support services in rural locations can be particularly difficult because of a lack of access to transport, distance from family and friends, isolation and poverty³³. There are also potential difficulties with regards to accessing of refuges and their availability³⁴.

³⁰ [Raise-briefing-paper-for-the-ad-hoc-committee-on-a-bor-re-gb.pdf \(niassembly.gov.uk\)](#) Gender Budgeting in government: a comparative perspective on legal bases - Eileen Regan (Page 26).

³¹ [Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

³² Women’s Policy Group COVID-19 Feminist Recovery Plan Supplementary Research Report: Putting Women’s Voices at the Core - July 2021.

³³ Women’s Policy Group COVID-19 Feminist Recovery Plan Supplementary Research Report: Putting Women’s Voices at the Core - July 2021.

³⁴ [Final-Womens-Aid-Annual-Report-2019-20.pdf \(womensaidni.org\)](#)



Gender Inequalities - Men

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
<p>Low awareness of health and well-being</p>	<p>Action to promote awareness of male health and well-being issues and improved work-life balance, with CAFRE students, DAERA staff, farmers and customers.</p> <p>Working with others to help raise awareness of farming health and safety issues, high suicide rates.</p>	<p>WHO/Europe Gender - Fact sheet - Men's health and well-being in the WHO European Region (2018)</p> <p>Mental health statistics: suicide Mental Health Foundation</p>
<p>Poverty and Isolation</p>	<p>Support services for older, single men in rural areas who often lead solitary lives and may have financial, health, disability or work related difficulties.</p> <p>Support for separated fathers and lone parents.</p> <p>Support for those with learning, disability or education limitations.</p>	<p>WHO/Europe Gender - Fact sheet - Men's health and well-being in the WHO European Region (2018)</p>
<p>Access to information and services</p>	<p>Ensure that services, including access to and content of information we provide, suits the specific needs of older farmers and rural dwellers.</p> <p>Action is needed to enable older men to lead independent lives; to make informed decisions without having to rely on others, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.</p>	<p>WHO/Europe Gender - Fact sheet - Men's health and well-being in the WHO European Region (2018)</p> <p>Older Men's Health</p>



Gender Inequalities - Men

Gender Statistics

The 2011 Census reported that 49% of the population in Northern Ireland are male and 51% are female. [The DAERA Equality Indicators Report 2018](#)³⁵ indicates that 91% of principal farmers were male, with 9% being female.

The estimated employment rate in NI for those aged 16-64 in 2020 was 74.8% for males (432,000) and 66.5% for females (392,000). The estimated economic inactivity rate (16-64) was 22.8% for males (132,000) and 31.6% for females (186,000)³⁶. The number of self-employed (aged 16+) in Northern Ireland was estimated at 134,000 in 2019, equivalent to just over 15% of all employed people aged 16+. Self-employment was more likely among employed men than women, 22% of all employed men were self-employed, compared with 8% of all employed women³⁷.

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey³⁸ shows that for Jan-Mar 2020 the self-employment rate for men in NI was 22.7% (104,000) compared to 7.7% (32,000) for women. For Jan-Mar 2021 the rate substantially decreased for men 15.6% (67,000) and this is likely to be as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Out of all the self-employed people 10.1% worked in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry.

Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)³⁹ point out that, gender equality is generally seen as a woman's issue given that women have been to the forefront of gender equality concerns and strategies. However, men also benefit from gender equality as they also face gender specific issues such as lower life expectancy, bad health, lower education levels and rigid gender norms.

Health, Mental Health and Suicide

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust NI (HSCNI) highlight some of the health related issues that men in NI face⁴⁰:

- Men are more likely to die from coronary heart disease than women;
- Deaths from bowel cancers are higher in men than women;
- Men are more likely than women to drink above the weekly guidance limit of 14 units;

35 [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report)

36 [Labour Force Survey Annual Summary 2020 \(nisra.gov.uk\)](http://nisra.gov.uk)

37 [Self-employment in Northern Ireland 2019 \(nisra.gov.uk\)](http://nisra.gov.uk)

38 [Quarterly Labour Force Survey Tables - May 2021 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](http://nisra.gov.uk)

39 [Men and Gender Equality | European Institute for Gender Equality \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

40 [Men's Health | Southern Health & Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](http://hscni.net)



- Men who smoke are more likely than women to be heavy smokers;
- 74% of suicides in Northern Ireland in 2016 were males; and
- Male life expectancy is 3.8 years lower than that for women (2014-16).

In addition, they note that, men experience gaps in access, services and treatment in rural or remote areas, in areas of social disadvantage and for specific groups, particularly Traveller, gay, bisexual or transgender males.

Prostate problems, heart disease and bladder cancer can be of particular concern if you are a man over 50 years of age⁴¹.

There were 6,507 deaths by suicide in the UK in 2018 (a rate of 11.2 deaths per 100,000 people). These rates vary across the UK, with the highest rate in 2018 observed in NI (18.6 deaths per 100,000), followed by Scotland (16.1 deaths per 100,000 people, then Wales (12.8 deaths per 100,000 people) and England (10.3 deaths per 100,000 people). Overall, men accounted for three-quarters of UK deaths by suicide in 2018 ^{42&43} .

The World Health Organisation (WHO) summarise the issues for men, which are beyond biology, as follows, “Men’s behaviours, exposure to risk and health-seeking patterns are influenced by many factors, including the place they live and their employment situation, education, cultural context and social networks. Growing evidence suggests that factors affecting notions of masculinity and femininity and the way gender roles are defined in societies have a massive effect on the health of men and women in the European Region⁴⁴.”

Education

In education, males underachieve in comparison to females and teaching does not appear to be a role that males aspire to.

Female pupils in the final year of an A-level, as in Year 12, performed better than their male counterparts. 73.4% of female pupils in Year 14 achieved 3 or more A-levels at grades A*-C (including equivalents) compared with 69.6% of male pupils in 2018/19⁴⁵.

In addition, 77.2% of all teachers are female and 22.8% are male in 2020/21, compared to 76.8% of females and 23.2% of males in 2016/17. Most notable, is the lack of male teachers in nursery

⁴¹ [Older men’s health | nidirect](#)

⁴² [Mental health statistics: suicide | Mental Health Foundation](#)

⁴³ [Suicides in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴⁴ [WHO/Europe | Gender - Fact sheet - Men’s health and well-being in the WHO European Region \(2018\)](#)

⁴⁵ [Revised - Year 12 and Year 14 Examination Performance at Post Primary schools in Northern Ireland 2018_19 _ Revised.pdf \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](#) (Page 16).



schools (noted at 0). In primary and preparatory schools 15.5% of teachers are male, in post primary schools 30.2% of teachers are male and in special schools 20.3% of teachers are male⁴⁶.

One of the priorities within the New Decade, New Approach⁴⁷ agreement (January 2020) is as follows, “The Executive will establish an expert group to examine and propose an action plan to **address links between persistent educational underachievement and socio-economic background**, including the long-standing issues facing working-class, Protestant boys.”

Farmers

Older males dominate the farming industry in NI with the 2016 EU Farm Structure Survey showing that 96%⁴⁸ of farmers in NI are male and the median age of farmers (58 years) was the same as recorded in 2013. Six percent (6%) of farmers were aged under 35 in 2016 (4 percent in 2013). The ages of farmers differed for each business size; on Very Small farms, 36 percent were aged 65 or more, compared with 24 percent on Small and 21 percent on Medium or Large farms.

The [Agricultural Census 2018](#)⁴⁹ shows that of the 12,000 employees, there is greater participation by males, approximately 84% are male and 16% are female. The 2018 Census gives the figure for farmers as approximately 92% male and 8% female. Males make up 76%⁵⁰ of the paid agricultural workers with 24% being female. For the 45+ age group there are 95% males in comparison to 5% females.

The evidence gathered indicates that significant differences in the level of participation between men and women exist in agriculture and horticulture. This male-female imbalance is indicative of the continuing trend for sons to inherit farms and the manual nature of the sector, which has traditionally meant that it is a predominantly male sector of employment.

In NI it is estimated that 22%⁵¹ of the population have some form of disability. Amongst farmers this figure is slightly higher, with 26% reporting they suffer from some form of disability⁵². In [DAERA's Equality Indicators Report 2018](#)⁵³, almost a third (30%) of farmers stated that they had a long-term illness or disability which limited their daily activities, with the incidence of disability

46 [Teacher workforce statistics in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](#) Page 8.

47 Page 7, NDNA - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/856998/2020-01-08_a_new_decade__a_new_approach.pdf

48 Table 3.1, <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/17.18.088%20EU%20Farm%20Structure%20Survey%202016%20V2.pdf>

49 [Agricultural Census in Northern Ireland 2018](#) : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Agricultural_Census_2018_final_results.PDF

50 Hired and Paid Family Labour Survey, DAERA, 2019.

51 Northern Ireland Census 2011, provided by NISRA.

52 Northern Ireland Census 2011, provided by NISRA.

53 [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018](#) : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report



inversely related to farm size. The proportion of farmers of very small farms stating that their activities were limited a lot (16%) was twice that of farmers of large farms (8%).

Farmers in disadvantaged areas (16%) were slightly more likely than lowland farmers (12%) to state that their activities were limited. Some of the differences in farm characteristics by disability may be partly due to the variation in age profiles of those with and without disabilities. The incidence of those reporting that their activities were limited either a little or a lot rises steeply with age⁵⁴.

According to the Farmers Weekly/De Lacy's survey, people working in farm-based roles worked an average of 51.6 hours in a typical week and an average of 84.6 hours in a busy week⁵⁵.

DAERA Staff

As of November 2020, males make up 55.2% (1,769) of DAERA staff. Females is 44.8% (1,435). 40.6% of males are employed in general services grades; whilst 66% are employed in professional, technical and industrial grades⁵⁶.



⁵⁴ Key Findings, Figures 29 & B, [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018; www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report)

⁵⁵ [A beginner's guide to careers in agriculture and farming - Farmers Weekly \(fwi.co.uk\)](http://www.fwi.co.uk) April 2015.

⁵⁶ NICSHR data, November 2020.



Religious Belief & Political Opinion

Inequalities - Religious Belief and Political Opinion

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
<p>Uptake level of projects to benefit cross community relations</p>	<p>Where relevant, encourage suitable projects that are likely to improve community relations, addressing sectarianism and conflict issues.</p> <p>Through the NIRDP, applications submitted for project funding under Axis 3 are required to demonstrate how projects benefit cross community relations and will help promote inclusive activity in rural areas.</p>	<p>NI Good Relations Indicators Annual Update November 2019</p> <p>NIRDP 2014-2020</p> <p>PSNI Annual Bulletin November 2020</p>





Inequalities - Religious Belief and Political Opinion

Statistics

The 2011 Census of Northern Ireland found that 45 per cent of the population were either Catholic or brought up as Catholic, while 48 per cent belonged to or were brought up in Protestant, Other Christian or Christian-related denominations. A further 0.9 per cent belonged to or had been brought up in Other Religions and Philosophies, while 5.6 per cent neither belonged to, nor had been brought up in, a religion⁵⁷.

The Census further recorded that in rural communities, 52% of households recorded a head of household as following (or being brought up in) the Protestant or other Christian religious belief, with 45% following or being brought up in the Catholic belief. Three percent (3%) recorded their religion as 'Other' or 'None'.

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2019⁵⁸ found that 44% of respondents identified as Protestant, 34% as Roman Catholic and 22% as neither.

Analysis undertaken by NISRA in respect of the Census results detailed religious belief/upbringing identified that the industry sector, which displayed the highest share of Protestants among people aged 16-74 in employment was Agricultural, forestry and fishing; for which 64 per cent were or had been brought up as Protestants, compared with 34 per cent as Catholics⁵⁹.

Catholics were much more likely than Protestants to farm on very small farms, with 85% of Catholics farming small farms compared to 68% of Protestants, and only 2% having large farms compared to 10% of Protestant farmers⁶⁰.

Election Results

The December 2019 Westminster election results⁶¹ showed that: the DUP won 8 seats (vote share 30.6%), UUP 0 (11.7%), Alliance 1 (16.8%), SDLP 2 (14.9%), SF 7 (22.8%) and Others 0 (3.6%). There were 1,293,971 people eligible to vote, up 51,273 from the 2017 general election and 62.09% (803,367) of eligible voters turned out, down 3.5 percentage points from the last general election. Almost 38% of the people who were eligible to vote did not turn out to do so.

⁵⁷ Table KS212 <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/2011-census-results-key-statistics-northern-ireland-report-11-december-2012.pdf>

⁵⁸ NILT 2019 <https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/>

⁵⁹ Paragraph 14, page 6 and page 53 Table DC2621NI <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/2011-census-results-detailed-characteristics-statistics-bulletin-16-may-2013.pdf>

⁶⁰ DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018 : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report

⁶¹ [The Electoral Office of Northern Ireland - EONI](http://www.eoni.gov.uk/)



In the May 2019 Local Government elections the results were as follows: DUP won 122 seats (vote share 24.1%), UUP 75 (14.1%), Alliance 53 (11.5%), SDLP 59 (12.0%), SF 105 (23.2%) and Others 48 (15.1%). 1,305,553 people aged 18 and over were eligible to vote, and 52.68% (687,733) of the electorate turned out. Just over 47% of the people who were eligible to vote did not turn out to do so.

Contested Space

The NI Good Relations Indicators Annual Update⁶² (November 2019 Report) shows that 43% of adults and 42% of young people think that relations between Protestants and Catholics are better now than they were five years ago. However, these are significant decreases on the corresponding 2017 figures of 49% and 46%. This is the lowest proportion since the launch of the TBUC (Together: Building a United Community Strategy (2013)) Strategy in 2013.

Ninety-one percent (91%) of respondents said they would prefer a mixed religion workplace; 76% a mixed religion neighbourhood; and 68% mixed religion schools. There has been little change in preference for mixed religions neighbourhoods, workplaces, and schools, since 2017. However, since 2013, preference for all three has increased significantly - preference for mixed religion neighbourhoods increasing 5 percentage points, workplaces 13 percentage points, and preferences for mixed religion schools increasing 12 percentage points.

In 2018/19, 622 sectarian and 702 racially motivated hate crimes were recorded. All other categories of hate crimes when combined are less than half the number of either sectarian or racially motivated hate crimes.

In 2018, 31% of adults and young people think that relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in five years' time. Since 2017, there has been a significant decrease (11 percentage points to 31%) in the proportion of adult respondents who think relations will be better in five years' time; the corresponding figure for young people decreased by 6 percentage points (to 31%). These are the lowest proportions since the launch of the TBUC strategy in 2013.

Since 2017, there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of adults who feel they have an influence on local decisions (7 percentage point reduction from 26% to 19%) and Northern Ireland decisions (8 percentage point reduction from 24% to 16%).

The PSNI report on Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes⁶³ shows that, between 2005/06 and 2015/16 sectarian incidents accounted for the largest number of incidents recorded in any of the hate motivation strands. In 2016/17 the number of sectarian incidents was exceeded

⁶² <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/execcoffice/ni-good-relations-indicators-annual-update-2019-report.pdf>

⁶³ [Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2019/20](#)



by the number of racist incidents for the first time and this has remained the case since then. Sectarian crimes have accounted for the largest number of crimes recorded in any of the hate motivation strands with the exception of 2017/18 and 2018/19 when higher numbers of racist crimes were recorded.

With the exception of sectarian incidents, hate motivated incidents have recorded their highest levels in more recent years; 2014/15 for racist and disability incidents, 2015/16 for homophobic incidents, 2017/18 for faith/religion and 2019/20 for transphobic incidents.

Sectarian incidents were at their highest level in 2009/10 and have shown a general decline since then. The number of sectarian incidents in 2019/20 was just over half the number recorded at the beginning of the data series in 2005/06.





Racial Group

Inequalities - Race and Ethnicity

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
Language and communication barriers	<p>Pro-active translation of information and web pages likely to be of significant public interest.</p> <p>Offer to provide language translations of other information when asked to do so.</p>	
Under-representation in decision-making processes	<p>Increased engagement with organisations representing the interests of people from ethnic minority backgrounds.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to raise awareness of public appointments vacancies and encourage applications from ethnic minority applicants.</p>	2019/20 CPANI Annual Report
Low take-up for RDP funding	Pro-active measures to target ethnic minority groups and encourage their interest in RDP funding opportunities.	NISRA RDP statistics NIRDP 2014-2020





Inequalities - Race and Ethnicity

Statistics

The 2011 Census found that over 98% of the population state their ethnic origin to be White⁶⁴. The main language spoken in NI during the 2011 Census⁶⁵ was English (96.86%). Polish was the next most popular language spoken with 1.02% of All Usual Residents aged 3 and over speaking it.

In autumn 2017, DAERA completed a [Survey of Migrant Labour in Northern Ireland Agriculture 2018](#)⁶⁶ to obtain information on the number and origin of migrant workers employed in the agricultural sector in Northern Ireland.

On 1 November 2017, there were an estimated 1,404 seasonal and non-seasonal workers from outside the UK and the Republic of Ireland employed in agriculture in Northern Ireland. Of these, 1,397 were from EU countries, while 7 were from the rest of the world (RoW). This accounts for around 20 per cent of the NI paid agricultural workforce (full-time, part-time and casual workers). Horticulture as a whole accounted for almost three-quarters of seasonal migrant labour.

Almost a third of non-seasonal migrant workers were from Bulgaria, with 28 per cent from Lithuania, 16 per cent from Poland and 10 per cent from Latvia. Over half of the seasonal workers were from Romania, with 17 per cent from Bulgaria, 12 per cent from Lithuania and 11 per cent from Poland.

Accessing Services

It is recognised that many migrants face difficulties when accessing public services, such as on housing, employment, benefits, health and consumer rights especially where English is not their first language. While some important information services may be available in a wide range of languages, this service is limited, and for many government services is provided more as a welcoming gesture. Some migrants have also faced varying degrees of racism, prejudice and hostility.

Rural areas are becoming increasingly diverse, populated more frequently by communities who are no longer simply concentrated in urban areas. There are significant numbers of migrant workers within farming and fishing industries and those employed in food production plants, many of whom also have families living in rural areas. However, there will also be many people living in small rural areas who may be the only ones from a particular ethnic background within their community.

64 Northern Ireland Census 2011 : <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/2011-census-results-key-statistics-northern-ireland-report-11-december-2012.pdf>

65 Table KS207NI 2011 Census - Key Statistics for Northern Ireland - Report ([nisra.gov.uk](https://www.nisra.gov.uk))

66 DAERA Survey of Migrant Labour in Northern Ireland Agriculture 2018 : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Migrant_Labour_in_NI_Agriculture.pdf



UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination by its State parties. All States parties are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights are being implemented⁶⁷.



⁶⁷ [OHCHR | Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#) [Broken link????](#)



Age

Inequalities - Children and Young People

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
<p>Lack of participation and involvement in decision-making processes</p>	<p>Meet and involve young people in the development of policies and services that impact on their lives.</p> <p>Encourage young people to take part in consultations and to tell us their views.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for educational activities.</p>	<p>NICCY</p> <p>Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030</p>
<p>Limited development opportunities for rural young people</p>	<p>Provide a range of opportunities to develop rural young people, students at the DAERA College (CAFRE), our young staff, and school leavers, through opportunities for work placements.</p> <p>Successfully achieve the targets set out in the Children and Young People's Action Plan.</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030</p> <p>Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster</p>
<p>Child Poverty and Exclusion</p>	<p>Make sure that at least 5% of Axis 3 of the NIRDP funding is spent on projects that specifically benefit children and young people in rural areas.</p> <p>Take action to engage with young people and their representative organisations to encourage take up of NIRDP funding applications.</p> <p>Through the delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the Rural Development Programme, provide benefits for rural young people through rural transport and rural childcare measures.</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030</p> <p>NISRA RDP statistics</p> <p>NIRDP 2014-2020</p> <p>Anti-Poverty Strategy</p> <p>Report from the Anti-Poverty Strategy Expert Advisory Panel</p>



<p>Information and services need to be young person friendly</p>	<p>Proactively provide accessible services and age-appropriate information and promote availability of these to young people and their representative organisations. More use of Plain English, Easyread documents, short summaries, flyers, etc.</p> <p>Seek the active involvement of young people in the review of websites.</p> <p>Review the impact of the information and support services we provide for our students and young staff. Adapt to suit changing needs and demands.</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030</p> <p>NICCY</p>
<p>Safe play areas</p>	<p>Proactively seek partnerships with others to provide age appropriate, safe recreation and play areas for children and young people.</p>	<p>NIRDP 2014-2020</p> <p>TRPSI</p> <p>NICCY</p>





Inequalities - Children and Young People

As the Department's vision is for, "*Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.*" it is important that we listen to young people and actively involve them in those decision-making processes that impact on their lives. If the rural community and environment are truly to thrive and be sustained, then we need to ensure that the children and young people who live there and who may become its future caretakers are supported to develop to their full potential.

Statistics

The 2011 Census showed that around 25% (25.25%) of the NI population was 55 years or older and around 47% (46.99%) were under 35 years old⁶⁸. The Mid-year Population Estimates⁶⁹ show that by mid-2019, the proportion of the population aged 0 to 15 years has decreased from 25.4 per cent in mid-1994 to 20.9 per cent in mid-2019. This is a decrease of 17.8% since mid-1994 to mid-2019. However, Northern Ireland still had the highest proportion of children aged under 16 years of age of any country within the UK in mid-2019⁷⁰. The proportion of the population who are of working age (i.e. people aged 16 to 64 years) has remained relatively stable over the period.

During the April to June 2021 reporting period, the Labour Force Survey⁷¹ reports that, the rate of NI young people not in employment, full-time education or training (NEETS) was 12.2% (24,000 young people) which is the highest in the UK - the UK average was 8.9%. The gender split for NI was 14.6% males (15,000) and 9.5% females (9,000, although there was a small sample size for females).

In 2018/19, 24% of children were in poverty (Before Housing Costs (BHC)), approximately 107,000 children^{72&73}. This is higher than the 2017/18 estimate of 19% (85,000 children). 21% of children were in absolute poverty, representing approximately 92,000 children. This is an increase on the 2017/18 estimate of 16% (69,000 children). This is a statistically significant increase.

Statistics from the 2011 Census shows the make-up of the rural community to be 22% aged under 15; 24% aged 16-34; 39% aged 35-64; and 14% aged 65+. The EU Farm Structure Survey 2016⁷⁴ showed that the median age for farmers in Northern Ireland in 2016 was 58 years.

68 Table P1 [2011 Census - Population Tables \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2011-census-population-tables)

69 Page 3, [2019 Mid-year Population Estimates - statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2019-mid-year-population-estimates)

70 [Population estimates for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/publications/population-estimates) 2019 report published in June 2020.

71 [Quarterly Labour Force Survey Tables - August 2021 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/quarterly-labour-force-survey-tables)

72 <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities-ni-poverty-bulletin-201819.pdf> Page 3.
And <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-poverty-bulletin-2018-19>

73 [2020/21 Report on the Northern Ireland Executive's Child Poverty Strategy \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/2020-21-report-on-the-northern-ireland-executive-child-poverty-strategy) Pages 7-8.

74 Table 3.5 & Paragraph 3.4, <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/17.18.088%20EU%20Farm%20Structure%20Survey%202016%20V2.pdf>



Only 6% of farmers were under 35 years old, and only 1% under the age of 25. There was virtually no difference in age profile across land types. However, farmers aged under 40 were slightly more likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas than older farmers⁷⁵.

As of November 2020, there were less than 1% (0.7%) of DAERA staff aged 24 and below (23 staff) and these were either Non-General Service or Industrial staff⁷⁶.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)⁷⁷ is an international human rights treaty that recognises and protects the human rights of children. The Convention is separated into 54 articles; most give social, economic, cultural or civil and political rights to children and young people, whilst others set out how Governments must publicise or implement the Convention.

The UNCRC requires all state parties to report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child⁷⁸ their progress against the convention. The UNCRC is a set of minimum standards that the UK Government and its devolved administrations have committed to upholding for all children, through ratification of the Convention⁷⁹.

Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030

The Department of Education (DE) is the lead Department in overseeing the effective delivery of the Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030⁸⁰. However, the Strategy will be delivered by all nine government Departments and DAERA contribute to a number of the actions and outcomes within the Strategy. DAERA also has responsibility for the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE). Through the work of the DAERA Children's Champion, we aim to raise awareness at a senior level of the issues that impact on the lives of rural children.

Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2014-2020

Evidence from previous Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) shows that there is a very low percentage of beneficiaries under 25 years, i.e. only 5% of the beneficiaries were aged 16-24, compared to 16% in the NI population and 15% in the rural population⁸¹.

⁷⁵ [Key Findings DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report) : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report

⁷⁶ NICSHR data request - November 2020.

⁷⁷ [OHCHR | Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/article/48c4d626/convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child)

⁷⁸ [OHCHR | Committee on the Rights of the Child](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/article/48c4d626/convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child)

⁷⁹ [niccy-socnri-2-main-report-web-nov-20.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/article/48c4d626/convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child) Page 11.

⁸⁰ [final-executive-children-and-young-people-s-strategy-2020-2030](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/final-executive-children-and-young-people-s-strategy-2020-2030) (education-ni.gov.uk).

⁸¹ [Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 Section 75 Report](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/northern-ireland-rural-development-programme-2014-2020-section-75-report) (daera-ni.gov.uk) Page 4.



The Rural Basic Services Scheme 2014-2020 delivered under Priority 6 of the Rural Development Programme in Northern Ireland - An analysis in January 2020⁸² found applications from 16-40 year olds at 20 per cent are under representative of the rural population when compared to the context figure of 42 per cent.

To date there has been limited evidence to show that the potential inequalities highlighted in the Programme's Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) have been addressed. Although it had been agreed that this NIRDP would proactively target women and young people who have historically had low representation in NIRDP activities, there is little evidence to show that this has actually happened.

Looking to the future, the UK will not be part of the next Rural Development Programming period (2021-2027) as the UK left the EU on 31 January 2020. Projects funded under the NI Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 will continue to receive funding for the lifetime of the project. The European Commission has advised that commitments can be made under the 2014-2020 RDP's up until 2023 and receive EU funding until 31 December 2023 or until EU funds are exhausted (whichever is earlier⁸³).

Play and Recreation Areas

The Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030 highlights some of the barriers to play and recreation, "During the Strategy's co-design process and in the consultation responses, concern was expressed that the right to play and leisure opportunities is being diminished. Children and young people, and their parents, told us that barriers to play included a lack of time, the speed and volume of traffic, lack of suitable accessible outdoor spaces within communities, pressure from school work, increased screen time, the perceived fear of strangers and new parental working patterns. The negative attitudes of adults towards children and young people playing was also a factor⁸⁴."

⁸² DAERA analysis of the Rural Basic Services Scheme 2014-2020 delivered under Priority 6 of the Rural Development Programme in Northern Ireland (January 2020).

⁸³ [Funding of the NI Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 post EU Exit - Guidance for Beneficiaries | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

⁸⁴ [final-executive-children-and-young-people's-strategy-2020-2030 \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](#) Page 44, paragraph 6.29.



Inequalities - Older People

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
Access to information and services	<p>Ensure access to, and content of information and service provision meets the needs of older people.</p> <p>Through accessible services: enable older people to lead independent lives; to make informed decisions without having to rely on others; and to participate fully in their community and wider society.</p>	AgeNI
Access to rural public services including transport services	<p>Ensure that older people and particularly those in isolated rural communities can access and use our services.</p> <p>In partnership with DfI ensure the availability and delivery of accessible rural transport services.</p> <p>Work with others to ensure older people are not excluded or marginalised and can access the range of rural support services they require.</p>	AgeNI The Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS) Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2022
Access to funding through the NIRD 2014-2020	<p>Provide opportunities for older people to benefit from the RDP and for projects that specifically encourage their social participation and inclusion.</p>	NISRA RDP statistics NIRD 2014-2020
Social exclusion and pensioner poverty	<p>Support services for older people in rural areas, who often lead solitary lives and may have financial, health, disability or work related difficulties.</p> <p>Through the delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the Rural Development Programme take action to assist older people living in poverty in rural areas. In partnership with others, work to help meet government targets to eradicate fuel poverty.</p>	AgeNI TRPSI Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2022 Anti-Poverty Strategy NIRD 2014-2020
Support services for carers	<p>Raise awareness of the issues impacting on carers in the workplace, including the practical and emotional support services available.</p>	Carers UK Carers NI



Inequalities - Older People

Statistics

The 2011 Census showed that around 25% (25.25%) of the population was 55 years or older and around 47% (46.99%) were under 35 years old⁸⁵.

The Mid-year Population Estimates⁸⁶ show that by mid-2019, one in six people in NI were aged 65 and over (314,700 people). The proportion of the population aged 65 or more has increased from 13.0 per cent in mid-1994 to 16.6 per cent in mid-2019.

The proportion of the population aged 65 and over has experienced the largest increase over the 25 year period (1994 to 2019)⁸⁷, with a distinct accelerated growth in this population occurring from mid-2007. As a result the proportion of the population aged 65 and over has increased by 28.1 per cent from mid-1994 to mid-2019. The proportion of the population who are of working age (i.e. people aged 16 to 64 years) has remained relatively stable over the period.

The population aged 85 and over increased by 2.7 per cent (from 37,700 to 38,700) between mid-2018 and mid-2019, representing 2.0 per cent of the population.

The older working age population (i.e. people aged 40 to 64 years) grew by 0.7 per cent in the year ending mid-2019 (from 600,400 to 604,500), representing 31.9 per cent of the population⁸⁸.

Over one in five people (21.4 per cent) living in Ards and North Down Local Government District (LGD) in mid-2019 were estimated to be aged 65 and over. Conversely, Mid Ulster LGD had the lowest proportion of population aged 65 and over (14.5 per cent)⁸⁹.

NI Population Projections to 2043

In mid-2018, the population in NI was estimated to be 1.88 million people⁹⁰. Over the next 15 years from mid-2018 to mid-2033, the population of NI is projected to increase by 85,800 people to 1.95 million. In the longer term the population projections show that the population of NI is projected to rise by 107,600 people to reach 1.99 million over the next 25 years to mid-2043.

As well as a projected growth in the overall numbers of people in NI over the 25 year projection period, the age structure of the population is also projected to change.

85 Table P1 [2011 Census - Population Tables \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/census/2011/population-tables)

86 Page 3, [2019 Mid-year Population Estimates - statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistical-bulletin/2019/mid-year-population-estimates)

87 Section 5.2 How is the age structure of the population changing? (pg. 9) [2019 Mid-year Population Estimates - statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistical-bulletin/2019/mid-year-population-estimates)

88 [2019 Mid-year Population Estimates - statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistical-bulletin/2019/mid-year-population-estimates) Page 11.

89 [2019 Mid-year Population Estimates - statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistical-bulletin/2019/mid-year-population-estimates) Page 15.

90 [Statistical Bulletin - 2018 based Population Projections for Northern Ireland \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistical-bulletin/2018/population-projections)



In mid-2018, the number of people aged 65 and over in NI was estimated to be 308,200 and is projected to increase to 481,400 (56.2% increase) by mid-2043.

In addition, in mid-2018, there was an estimated 37,700 people aged 85 and over and by mid-2043 this population is projected to increase to 77,900, a growth of 106.4% over the next 25 years.

Ageing Farming Community

[DAERA's Equality Indicators Report 2018](#)⁹¹ shows that the agriculture sector reflects an older age profile. The average age of farmers in Northern Ireland was 59 years (the mean average age of the NI population is 38 years). Only 8% of farmers were aged under 40 years, and more than a third (36%) were aged 65 years or older.

There was little variation in the age profile of farmers by farm size, although farmers of very small farms (which account for three-quarters of all farms in Northern Ireland) had a slightly older age profile than those of larger farms. There was also little variation in age across farming activity type. However, farmers engaged in cattle and sheep farming, general cropping and horticulture had the oldest age profiles, while pig and poultry farmers had the youngest age profiles. Poultry farmers were around twice as likely to be aged under 40 as other farmers.

There was virtually no difference in age profile across land types. However, farmers aged under 40 were slightly more likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas than older farmers.

Active Ageing Strategy 2016-22

The Executive's Active Ageing Strategy⁹² has a vision of an age friendly region in which people, as they grow older, are valued and supported to live actively to their fullest potential; with their rights respected and their dignity protected. The purpose of the Strategy is to transform attitudes to, and services for, older people.

Many have difficulty accessing the sorts of opportunities that most people in society can often take for granted. Older people also tend to have lower incomes, are more benefit dependent and spend more on necessities than the rest of the population. They also experience other forms of exclusion, such as isolation from friends, relatives, services and facilities and increased fear of crime. Older people, particularly women and those living in isolated or marginalised areas can experience particular difficulties in accessing public services.

NI Pensioners and Poverty

In 2018, data showed that 370,000 people in NI lived in poverty. This figure consisted of 110,000 children, 220,000 working-age adults and 40,000 pensioners⁹³.

⁹¹ [Key Findings DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018](#) : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report

⁹² [Active Ageing | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

⁹³ [Poverty in Northern Ireland 2018 | JRF](#)



Poverty in NI is slightly lower than in England or Wales, but it is higher than in Scotland. Furthermore, poverty among pensioners has fallen considerably over the last decade.

There were 14% of working-age adults in relative poverty, approximately 162,000 working-age adults, before housing costs⁹⁴. This is lower than the 2018/19 estimate of 18% and this change was statistically significant. 18% of pensioners were in relative poverty, approximately 52,000 pensioners. This is higher than the 2018/19 estimate of 15%.

Of the working-age adults 11% were in absolute poverty, representing approximately 126,000 working-age adults. This is a decrease on the 2018/19 estimate of 16%. This is a statistically significant decrease. 14% of pensioners were in absolute poverty, representing approximately 40,000 pensioners. This is a rise from the 2018/19 estimate of 12%.

Fuel Poverty

The 2016 House Condition Survey (conducted by the Housing Executive) estimated that approximately 22% (160,000) of households in NI were in fuel poverty⁹⁵. This represents a significant improvement in fuel poverty levels since 2011 when the figure was 42% (294,000). This decrease of 20 percentage points in the five year period is statistically significant and is largely due to lower average fuel prices, lower modelled household energy use (mainly due to improved energy efficiency of the stock, particularly dwelling fabric and heating systems) and increased income.

The survey further showed that, although fuel poverty has dropped significantly, similar types of households continue to be affected:

- Low income continued to be a significant cause of fuel poverty in Northern Ireland (55% of households with an annual income of less than £10,399 were in fuel poverty). Indeed, 78% of all households in fuel poverty had incomes of £15,599 per annum or less.
- More than half (52%) of households living in older dwellings (pre 1919) were in fuel poverty.
- One-third (34%) of households living in small villages, hamlets or open country areas were in fuel poverty.
- Almost two-fifths (38%) of households headed by an older person (75 plus) were in fuel poverty and one-third (34%) of older household types were fuel poor.
- Fuel poverty was higher in households with the Household Reference Person (HRP) who were not working (32%) or retired (31%).

⁹⁴ [Northern Ireland Poverty Bulletin 2019-20 | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

⁹⁵ [House Condition Survey Main Report 2016 \(nihe.gov.uk\)](https://www.nihe.gov.uk) Page 15.



Rural Transport

The Commissioner for Older People for NI (COPNI) highlighted that, “Safe, affordable and accessible community transport is a vital support for many older people across Northern Ireland, with many depending on it as their only means of getting out of the house. It connects older people to friends, family and their community, allowing them to enjoy a social life and to remain active and engaged in community life. Many older people rely on community transport to attend medical appointments, and without this vital service they may not be able to attend their appointments or they may become reliant on others to help with lifts, which would reduce their independence. Community transport allows older people to maintain dignified and independent lives and should remain a priority⁹⁶.”

The Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS) is delivered in partnership with the DAERA, Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Rural Community Transport Partnerships across NI. The Scheme delivers passenger trips for rural dwellers entitled to a SmartPass and most in need of rural transport (mainly the elderly and disabled)⁹⁷.

Caring Responsibilities

The 2011 Census of NI found that 12% of people were providing unpaid care to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of their long term physical or mental ill health or disability, or problems related to age⁹⁸.

Many people provide informal care to others. In 2018/19, 9% of the population were informal carers⁹⁹. This breaks down as 12% of working age adults and 10% of State Pension age adults. The percentage of carers by age has remained broadly stable over time.

Many carers balance their caring responsibilities with paid work. However, it also shows that carers are more likely to be economically inactive due to sickness/disability or other reasons than the general adult population overall. Of all adult carers ‘full-time employee’ was the largest group (26% in 2018/19). The next largest groups were those who were retired (20%), other inactive (20%), and those who were themselves permanently sick/disabled (14%).

CarersNI¹⁰⁰ show that 72% of carers in NI responding to the Carers Week survey reported poor mental health, while 67% said their physical health had deteriorated. Two thirds of carers (69%) say they are worried about continuing to care without a break.

⁹⁶ [Community transport for older people in Northern Ireland \(copni.org\)](https://www.copni.org) May 2015.

⁹⁷ [Initiatives to Tackle Rural Poverty and Social Isolation \(TRPSI\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

⁹⁸ Table KS301NI: Health and Provision of Unpaid Care [2011 Census - Key Statistics for Northern Ireland - Report \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk)

⁹⁹ [Family Resources Survey: Northern Ireland 2018/19 \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

¹⁰⁰ [Worn out unpaid carers in Northern Ireland uncertain the services they rely on will continue post-pandemic - Carers UK](https://www.carersuk.org) - June 2021.



Marital Status

Inequalities - Marital Status

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
Lack of support for older, single men	<p>Support services for older, single men in rural areas who often lead solitary lives and may have financial, health, disability or work related difficulties.</p> <p>Support for separated fathers and lone parents.</p>	<p>Men's Health</p> <p>WHO Fact Sheet 2018</p>
Support for lone parents	<p>Innovative approaches needed to help reduce the financial difficulties that lone-parents face when wishing to re-enter employment, training and education opportunities.</p> <p>Anti-poverty measures to target those most disadvantaged and excluded, and in partnership, to ensure the provision of affordable and accessible services such as rural transport.</p>	<p>NI Gender Strategy</p> <p>Women in NI 2020</p> <p>TRPSI</p> <p>The Executive Office</p>





Inequalities - Marital Status

The 2011 Census showed that around 48% (682,074) of the population were married or in a civil partnership, and 36% (517,393) were single¹⁰¹.

In 2020 there were 19.4 million families in the UK, with 2.9 million being lone parent families and this accounts for 14.7% of families in the UK. The proportions ranged from 11.1% in the South East of England to 21.3% in Northern Ireland¹⁰². In 2020 the estimated number of lone parent families in NI was 113,000, with 93,000 being lone mothers and 20,000 being lone fathers¹⁰³.

The 2016 EU Farm Structure Survey found that 30% of all NI farmers had no spouse¹⁰⁴, ranging from 32 percent for those with Very Small businesses to 17 percent of those with Large businesses. Approximately half (48 percent) of farmers' spouses contributed to the work of the farms.

Consideration of the breakdown of rural statistical data in the 2011 Census of NI shows the make-up of the rural households to be 22.24% one person households, 48.67% married couple households, 0.03% same-sex civil partnership couple households, 4.58% cohabiting couple households, 11.05% lone parent households and 6.58% other types of households.

[DAERA's Equality Indicators Report 2018](#)¹⁰⁵ shows that almost three quarters (73%) of farmers were married, with the proportion of married farmers increasing with farm size; 84% of farmers of large farms were married, compared to 71% of farmers of very small farms. Conversely, twice as many farmers (18%) of very small farms were single as farmers of medium sized (9%) or large farms (9%).

Across farm activity types, a very high proportion of pig farmers (88%) and farmers who engaged in horticulture (88%) in 2010-11 were married¹⁰⁶. Lowland farmers were slightly more likely to be married (77%) than farmers in Disadvantaged (73%) or Severely Disadvantaged (71%) Areas¹⁰⁷.

101 Table KS103 <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/2011-census-results-key-statistics-northern-ireland-report-11-december-2012.pdf>

102 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2020> - March 2021.

103 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/datasets/familiesbyfamilytyperegionsofenglandandukconstituentcountries> - March 2021.

104 Table 3.3, <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/17.18.088%20EU%20Farm%20Structure%20Survey%202016%20V2.pdf>

105 [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report)

106 Key Findings, Figure 15, [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report)

107 Key Findings, Figure 17, [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report)



Sexual Orientation

Inequalities - Sexual Orientation

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
<p>Lack of Awareness and Discrimination</p>	<p>Raise awareness of LGBTI+ issues and the support services available with staff, students and customers.</p> <p>Proactive measures to ensure target individuals and representative groups to put forward projects for funding.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the appropriate policies and the disciplinary procedures in place to deal effectively with actions of discrimination or harassment.</p>	<p>OUTstanding in your field 2016 - The Rainbow Project/DAERA</p> <p>Sexual Orientation 2019 - ONS (Annual Population Survey)</p>





Inequalities - Sexual Orientation

Statistics

Between 2018 and 2019, the estimated proportion of people who identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) increased for England (2.7%, up from 2.3%) and Scotland (2.7%, up from 2.0%). Wales (2.9%) and Northern Ireland (1.3%) remained stable. The overall UK proportion in 2019 was 2.7%, which has increased from 2.2% in 2018¹⁰⁸.

Younger people (aged 16 to 24 years) were most likely to identify as LGB in 2019 (6.6% of all 16 to 24 year olds, an increase from 4.4% in 2018); older people (aged 65 years and over) also showed an increase in those identifying as LGB, from 0.7% to 1.0% of this age category.

In 2019, a lower proportion of people in NI identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) than in other UK countries and a higher proportion did so in London than in other English regions. However, the figures for NI are based on relatively small sample sizes, which produce less reliable estimates.

The 2019 NILT Survey¹⁰⁹ shows that 90% of people in NI are heterosexual and 2% are homosexual. 1% were bi-sexual, 1% gave 'Other' as their response and 7% did not wish to answer this question.

People who identify as lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) tend to rate their quality of life as lower than the UK average, ONS analysis in 2017 shows¹¹⁰.

In 2016 The Rainbow Project (supported by DAERA) conducted a study¹¹¹ which showed that LGB&/T people living in a rural area are less likely to be 'out' than those living in an urban area are. They are also more likely to report needing the support of an LGB&/T community based organisation but not accessing services compared to those living in an urban area. Additionally LGB&/T people living in a rural area are twice as likely not to access the services they need because they are not 'out' compared to those living in an urban area. LGB&/T people living in a rural area were three times as likely not to access services they are aware of because it is too far to travel compared to those living in an urban area. Seven in every eight LGB&/T people living in a rural area feel that it is important to have access to an LGB&/T support service in their local area.

108 [Sexual orientation, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk) 2019.

109 NILT 2019 <https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/> and NI Life and Times Survey - 2019 : ORIENT2 (ark.ac.uk)

110 [Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people say they experience a lower quality of life - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk) 2017.

111 OUTstanding in your field: Experiences of LGB&/T people in rural areas, 2016.



Sexual Orientation Strategy

A new Sexual Orientation Strategy¹¹² for NI is currently being drafted by the Department for Communities (DfC). Following the Executive approval on 24 September 2020, work began on the development of the Social Inclusion Strategies¹¹³: Anti-Poverty, Disability, Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation. The Sexual Orientation Strategy will bring focus to identifying and addressing the issues, barriers and disadvantages that undermine equality of opportunity in our community and fulfil the commitments in New Decade, New Approach and the Executive's Programme for Government. Subject to the Executive's agreement the completed Strategy will then be published.

An Expert Panel was established with the knowledge and expertise to allow it to make effective recommendations on the themes and key actions the Strategy should address. The Expert Panel has provided its recommendations to the DfC Minister (Report from the Sexual Orientation Strategy Expert Advisory Panel¹¹⁴).



¹¹² [Sexual orientation | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk)

¹¹³ [Social inclusion | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk)

¹¹⁴ [Report from the Sexual Orientation Strategy Expert Advisory Panel | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk)



Disability

Inequalities - Disability

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
Under-representation in decision-making processes	Innovative action to encourage interest, applications and representation on DAERA public appointments and other associated bodies.	2019/20 CPANI Annual Report DAERA Disability Action Plan 2019-2024
Obstacles to participation in education, training and employment	<p>Ensure physical accessibility of DAERA public buildings, including their external facilities; entrance and exit arrangements, and facilities provided inside.</p> <p>Engage with disabled people to identify and remove hidden barriers to full participation.</p> <p>Take action to challenge attitudes, and work to promote inclusive practices and policies.</p>	DDA 1995 Disability Action
Lack of accessible information services	<p>More use of Easyreads to accompany longer documents. Accessible and easy-to-use websites. Promote availability of accessible information services and availability of alternative formats.</p> <p>Ensure people with disabilities have equality in how they can access our information services, and in the quality of information services we provide.</p>	Understanding accessibility requirements for the public sector bodies - GOV.UK DDA 1995



<p>Access to rural public services including transport services</p>	<p>Work with others to ensure that rural people with disabilities are not excluded or marginalised and can access the range of rural support services they require</p> <p>In partnership with DfI ensure the availability and delivery of affordable and accessible rural transport services.</p>	<p>NI Rural Development Council</p> <p>AgeNI</p> <p>TRPSI</p>
<p>Invisibility of disabled people in the workforce</p>	<p>Actively promote disability equality and the work of the NICS Disability Staff Network. Increase in the % of staff declaring a disability.</p> <p>Successfully achieve the actions set out in our Disability Action Plan.</p>	<p>Article 55 and Gender Review 2019</p> <p>DAERA Disability Action Plan 2019-2024</p>
<p>Low take-up for RDP funding</p>	<p>Pro-actively target rural people with disabilities and their representative groups to ensure increased take-up of RDP funding opportunities.</p>	<p>NISRA RDP statistics</p> <p>NIRDP 2014-2020</p>





Inequalities - Disability

Rate of Disability

The 2011 Census of NI showed that around 12% of the population found their day-to-day activities to be limited a lot due to a disability and around 9% found their activities limited a little¹¹⁵ which basically means that one person in every five potentially has a disability that meets the definition of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995¹¹⁶. Consideration of the breakdown of rural statistical data in the 2011 Census shows that 40% of rural households contain at least one person with a long-term health problem or disability. People with a disability reported significantly lower levels of life satisfaction (score of 6.99) than those without a disability (score of 8.20)¹¹⁷.

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

The purpose of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)¹¹⁸, “...is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

Under-Representation in Decision-Making

People with disabilities are still under-represented in government public appointments¹¹⁹. Disabled people in rural areas generally consider that they lack any power or influence to help bring about change within their local communities.

Disability Action highlight that, “Disabled people and their organisations (Disabled Peoples Organisations - DPOs) were very much locked out of COVID-19 emergency responses, leading to disabled people bearing the brunt of the worst impacts of the pandemic¹²⁰.” They further point out that, State parties have duties under the UNCRPD to include disabled people and their representative organisations in the development of policies and strategies, as well as in emergency response planning.

115 Table KS301 <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/2011-census-results-key-statistics-northern-ireland-report-11-december-2012.pdf>

116 [Disability Discrimination Act 1995 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/50)

117 [Personal Wellbeing in Northern Ireland: 2019/20 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/personal-wellbeing-in-northern-ireland-2019-20)

118 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx>

119 [CPANI Annual Report 1920 \(publicappointmentsni.org\)](https://www.cpni.gov.uk/annual-report-2020) Page 12.

120 [DPOs should be involved in the development of policies and strategies | Disability Action Northern Ireland](https://www.disabilityactionni.org/) - August 2021.



Access to Employment, Training and Education

As of June 2020, the employment rate for people (aged 16-64) without disabilities was 81.6% which is over twice the rate of disabled people (38.6%) in employment ¹²¹.

The proportion of people with a disability (aged 21-64) whose highest qualification is 'degree' is much lower (13.5%) than people without a disability (35.2%)¹²². In addition, the proportion of people with a disability (aged 21-64) who have 'no qualification' is much higher (28.8%) than people without a disability (9.2%).

DAERA Workforce with a Disability

Overall, the proportion of NICS employees declaring a disability in 2019 remained the same as the previous two years (5.6%). This figure is lower than that for the comparator NI economically active population aged 16-64 years who have a disability, which is 10.4%. It should be noted that those whose disability information is missing (58.3% of staff in 2019) have been allocated to the 'No disability declared' category. The true proportion of disabled staff is, therefore, likely to be higher¹²³.

As of November 2020, females make up 44.8% (1,435) of DAERA staff with males being 55.2% (1,769). There are 59.4% of females who are employed in the general service grades with males being 40.6%. Whilst 34% of females are employed in Professional & Technical and industrial grades and 66% are male¹²⁴.

DAERA Disability Awareness Raising

Our Disability Action Plan 2019-24 sets out a number of specific actions that DAERA is currently taking forward to address disability inequalities to increase participation levels and to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities. DAERA's Disability Champion actively works to raise awareness levels and to support the work of the Department. This is in conjunction with the work of the EDSG senior managers group and the DAERA Equality Unit. Staff from the DAERA Equality and Diversity Units are members of the NICS Disability Staff Network which ensures a joined up approach across the NICS.

¹²¹ [Disability and employment - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk) Table 7.

¹²² [Disability and education - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk) Table 6.

¹²³ [Article 55 reviews | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://finance-ni.gov.uk) - See Article 55 and Gender Review 2019.

¹²⁴ NICS HR data, November 2020.



Disability Strategy

A new Disability Strategy for NI is currently being drafted by the Department for Communities (DfC). Following the Executive approval on 24 September 2020, work began on the development of the Social Inclusion Strategies¹²⁵: Anti-Poverty, Disability, Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation. The Disability Strategy¹²⁶ will bring focus to identifying and addressing the issues, barriers and disadvantages that undermine equality of opportunity in our community and fulfil the commitments in New Decade, New Approach and the Executive's Programme for Government. Subject to the Executive's agreement the completed Strategy will then be published.

An Expert Panel was established with the knowledge and expertise to allow it to make effective recommendations on the themes and key actions the Strategy should address. The Expert Panel has provided its recommendations to the DfC Minister (Report from the Disability Strategy Expert Advisory Panel¹²⁷).

Disability and Farmers

In NI it is estimated that 22%¹²⁸ of the population have some form of disability. Amongst farmers this figure is slightly higher, with 26% reporting they suffer from some form of disability¹²⁹.

In [DAERA's Equality Indicators Report 2018](#)¹³⁰, almost a third (30%) of farmers stated that they had a long-term illness or disability which limited their daily activities, with the incidence of disability inversely related to farm size. The proportion of farmers of very small farms stating that their activities were limited a lot (16%) was twice that of farmers of large farms (8%).

Farmers in disadvantaged areas (16%) were slightly more likely than lowland farmers (12%) to state that their activities were limited. Some of the differences in farm characteristics by disability may be partly due to the variation in age profiles of those with and without disabilities. The incidence of those reporting that their activities were limited either a little or a lot rises steeply with age¹³¹.

DAERA and the Public Health Agency (PHA) NI manage the [Farm Families Health Checks Programme](#) that offers a means for farmers and their families to access health checks from a portable clinic and from local community settings¹³².

¹²⁵ [Social inclusion | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

¹²⁶ [Disability | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

¹²⁷ [Report from the Disability Strategy Expert Advisory Panel | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

¹²⁸ Northern Ireland Census 2011, provided by NISRA.

¹²⁹ Northern Ireland Census 2011, provided by NISRA.

¹³⁰ [DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018 : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](#)

¹³¹ [Key Findings, Figures 29 & B, DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers 2018 : www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report](#)

¹³² [20,000 people benefit from Family Farm Health Check | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)



Accessible Information Services

More work is needed to ensure that our rural customers with disabilities are able to access and use our services. In recent years, considerable work has been taken forward to improve accessibility of information in line with the Government accessibility requirements for public sector bodies¹³³.

Accessibility requirements are a necessary part of the Departments communications, with one example being the implementation of the new DAERA Equality Screening template which takes on-board the accessibility recommendations and which was developed in conjunction with the ECNI and other NICS departments.

DAERA has also produced a number of Easyread publications. These short Easyread documents accompany much longer / complicated documents and are designed to assist those customers who may have a reading, learning or comprehension difficulty.

Access to Transport

Access to transport is particularly important for people with disabilities who live in rural areas, as they are less likely to have access to a car than other households¹³⁴.

The Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS) is delivered in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Rural Community Transport Partnerships across NI. The Scheme delivers passenger trips for rural dwellers entitled to a SmartPass and most in need of rural transport (mainly the elderly and disabled)¹³⁵.



¹³³ [Understanding accessibility requirements for public sector bodies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

¹³⁴ WHSCT Audit of Sensory Support Services (2010).

¹³⁵ [Initiatives to Tackle Rural Poverty and Social Isolation \(TRPSI\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](https://daera-ni.gov.uk)



Dependants

Inequalities - Dependants

What are the Inequalities?	Potential Action needed	Source of Evidence
<p>Anti-poverty and Social Inclusion</p>	<p>Innovative approaches needed to help reduce the financial difficulties that lone-parents face when wishing to re-enter employment, training and education opportunities.</p> <p>Anti-poverty measures to target those most disadvantaged and excluded; and in partnership, to ensure the provision of affordable rural childcare provision and rural transport.</p>	<p>NI Gender Strategy</p> <p>Anti-Poverty Strategy</p> <p>TRPSI</p>
<p>Support services for carers</p>	<p>Raise awareness of the issues impacting on carers in the workplace, including work-life balance policies; practical and emotional support services.</p>	<p>Carers NI</p>





Inequalities - Dependants

Statistics

The 2011 Census of NI found that around 34% (33.86%) of all households had one or more dependent children¹³⁶. The Census also found that on Census day 12% of people were providing unpaid care to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of their long term physical or mental ill health or disability, or problems related to age¹³⁷.

CarersNI¹³⁸ show that 72% of carers in NI responding to the Carers Week survey reported poor mental health, while 67% said their physical health had deteriorated. Two thirds of carers (69%) say they are worried about continuing to care without a break.

Lone-parents and Childcare

The findings from the Northern Ireland Childcare Survey 2020 report¹³⁹ highlights the underlying challenges. Rising costs for parents and providers, families struggling to access and afford the childcare they need and many providers struggling just to break even - but also how these challenges have been amplified by Covid-19, with the vital role of childcare to our economy and society now widely recognised.

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey Tables - May 2021¹⁴⁰ estimates that Lone Parents make up 14.1% of all households. The NISRA publication, Women in Northern Ireland 2020¹⁴¹ shows that, 76% of women with dependent children were economically active, compared with 92% of men with dependent children. In addition, the economic activity rate for women with pre-school age children (74%) was substantially lower than for men with pre-school age children (93%). Women were much more likely than men to be working part-time schedules, regardless of whether they have dependent children. Furthermore, the age of youngest child was related to work pattern: 53.2% of women whose youngest child was of pre-school age worked full-time. This increased to 60.5% of women whose youngest child was of secondary school age.

The Gender Expert Advisory Panel to the Department for Communities (DfC) highlight that, "... the lack of affordable childcare becomes a real barrier to women's employment and an

¹³⁶ Table KS106NI [2011 Census - Key Statistics for Northern Ireland - Report \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#)

¹³⁷ Table KS301NI: [Health and Provision of Unpaid Care 2011 Census - Key Statistics for Northern Ireland - Report \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#)

¹³⁸ [Worn out unpaid carers in Northern Ireland uncertain the services they rely on will continue post-pandemic - Carers UK](#) - June 2021

¹³⁹ [Northern Ireland Childcare Survey 2020 - Employers For Childcare](#)

¹⁴⁰ [Quarterly Labour Force Survey Tables - May 2021 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#) (Households Table 2.43 - October-December 2020 dataset).

¹⁴¹ [Women in NI 2020_0.pdf \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#)



independent income leaving them more vulnerable to poverty. For lone parents childcare costs are likely to be a major barrier¹⁴².” Women make up the vast majority (91%) of lone parents¹⁴³.

Rural Transport

The Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS) is delivered in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) and the Rural Community Transport Partnerships across NI. The Scheme delivers passenger trips for rural dwellers entitled to a SmartPass and most in need of rural transport (mainly the elderly and disabled)¹⁴⁴.

The NI rural Women’s Network (NIRWN) note that, “Women are much less likely to have access to their own private transport than men. This means that women depend much more on public transport, and are at an economic disadvantage to men.

The accessibility of education, training, work and childcare provision and the cost of public transport are factors in determining women’s participation, especially in rural areas. The economic disadvantages of lack of access to transport are compounded by the impeded ability to access basic services and social isolation¹⁴⁵”.

¹⁴² [Gender Equality Strategy \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#) Expert Advisory Panel Report pg. 84.

¹⁴³ [Gender Equality Strategy \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](#) Expert Advisory Panel Report pg. 55.

¹⁴⁴ [Initiatives to Tackle Rural Poverty and Social Isolation \(TRPSI\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁴⁵ [Rural Transport - Northern Ireland Rural Women’s Network NIRWN](#)



Appendix 1 List of consultees

This consultation list is indicative and not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to DAERA's functions and policies.

- Alliance Party of NI
- An Munia Tober
- Autism NI
- Advice NI
- Age NI
- ACSONI
- African and Caribbean Support Organisation of Northern Ireland
- Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
- Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
- Ards & North Down Borough Council
- Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
- AWARE
- Defeat Depression
- Action on Hearing Loss NI
- Belfast Hebrew Congregation
- Bishop of Down and Connor
- British Deaf Association (NI)
- Bryson Charitable Group
- Bryson Inter-Cultural
- Belfast Butterfly Club
- Baha'i Council for Northern Ireland
- Barnardos
- Belfast City Council
- Belfast Islamic Centre
- Belfast Jewish Community
- Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance
- Community Foundation for NI
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
- Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee
- Conradh na Gaeilge
- Coiste-na n-iar-chimi
- Community Places
- The Cedar Foundation
- CO3 Chief Officers of Third Sector
- Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council
- Carers Northern Ireland
- Children's Law Centre
- Children in Northern Ireland
- Chinese Welfare Association (CWA)
- COPNI
- Commissioner for Older People NI
- Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
- Community Development & Health Network (NI)
- Community Relations Council (CRC)
- Council for the Homeless (NI)
- Confederation of Community Groups
- Cruse Bereavement Care (NI)
- Chrysalis Women's Centre
- Catholic Bishops of NI
- Democratic Unionist Party
- Derry City & Strabane District Council
- Derry Well Woman
- Disability Action
- DAERA Disability Forum
- Down's Syndrome Association
- European Commission Office in NI
- Employers for Disability NI
- Early years - The organisation for young children
- Employers' Forum on Disability
- Equality Coalition
- Equality Commission for NI
- Statutory Duty Team
- Equality Forum NI
- Falls Women's Centre
- Focus: The Identity Trust
- Foyle Women's Information Network
- Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
- Falls Community Council
- Foras Na Gaeilge
- Foyle, Carlingford & Irish Lights Commission
- Green Party
- Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland
- Gay Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland (GLYNI)
- General Consumer Council
- GMB Trade Union
- Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
- Institute of Directors



- Irish Congress of Trade Unions - NI Committee (ICTUNI)
- Include Youth
- Information Commissioners Office
- Indian Community Centre
- Lord Chief Justice's Office
- Leonard Cheshire
- Here NI
- Lesbian Line
- Livestock & Meat Commission for NI
- Local Government Staff Commission
- Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
- Loughs Agency
- Magherafelt Women's Group
- Mens Action Network
- MENCAP
- Methodist Church in Ireland
- Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
- Mid Ulster District Council
- National Beef Association (NBA)
- NI Association for Mental Health (Niamh)
- NI Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO)
- National Autistic Society Northern Ireland
- NI Commissioner for Children and Young People
- NICS LGBT Staff Network
- Newry & Mourne District Council
- Newtownabbey Senior Citizens Forum
- NI Agricultural Consultant's Association (NIACA)
- NI Muslim Family Association
- NI Council for Voluntary Action
- NI Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)
- NI Local Government Association (NILGA)
- NI Rural Women's Network
- NI Women's Aid Federation
- NIAPA
- NIPSA
- North West Community Network
- Northern Ireland Committee ICTU
- Northern Ireland Youth Forum
- NSPCC
- Oi Kwan Chinese Women's Group
- Omagh Ethnic Communities Support Group
- Progressive Unionist Party
- Playboard NI
- Parenting NI
- Parents & Professionals & Autism
- POBAL
- Press for Change
- Presbyterian Church in Ireland
- Queer Space
- Rainbow Project
- Rare Breeds Survival Trust
- RNIB
- Rural Community Network
- RSPB
- Rural Support
- Roman Catholic Church
- Schomberg Society
- Sinn Fein
- Save the Children
- Social Democratic and Labour Party
- Strategic Investment Board
- Sense NI
- Sikh Women's and Children's Association
- South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP)
- South West Age Partnership (SWAP)
- Transgender NI
- The Women's Centre
- Training for Women Network Ltd
- The Participation Network
- Ulster Unionist Party
- ULTACH
- YFCU
- Ulster Farmers' Union
- UNISON
- Ulster-Scots Agency
- Volunteer Now
- Workers Party
- Women's Centre
- Waterways Ireland
- Women's Forum NI
- Women of the World (WOW)
- Women's Resource & Development Agency
- Women's Support Network
- Youth Action
- Youth Council for Northern Ireland

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