

An overview of the personnel profile of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) at 1 April 2024 and how it has changed since 2014.

Published by: Workforce Statistics & Analysis, People & Organisational Development

Theme: Government

Coverage: Northern Ireland

Frequency: Annual

Contact: Martin Madine

Email: workforcestatistics&analysis@finance-ni.gov.uk

Publication Date: 09 July 2024

Key Points

- At 1 April 2024 there were 22,333 full-time equivalent staff (FTE) in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), which was a decrease of 2.1% on the figure at 1 April 2023, and a decrease of 15.4% from 1 April 2014.
- In April 2024, Executive Officer (EOI/EOII) and Administrative Officer (AO) grade were the most numerous grades, making up 32.3% and 21.8% of staff respectively. Since 2014 overall the proportion of FTE staff has generally decreased at Administrative Officer (AO) level and below, while at Executive Officer (EOI/EOII) level and above it has generally increased. The proportion of Prison Grade staff and G5+ remained relatively stable. Departments continued to differ markedly in size in 2024, ranging from just over 6,500 FTE staff (Department for Communities) to just over 400 (The Executive Office).
- At 1 April 2024, 21.6% of staff were working on a part-time basis, an increase of 1.7 percentage points since 2014. In terms of gender 33.4% of women and 9.8% of men were part-time.
- The proportion of women working part-time varied by grade level, ranging from 10.8% at Grade 5 and above to 44.0% at AO level. The proportion of females working part-time increased at most grades from 2014 with the exception of G6/7, Staff Officers, Executive grades, and Industrial grades.
- The 2023/2024 leaving rate was the same as the previous financial year (4.8%). Resignations and age retirement accounted for the largest proportion of leavers, each accounting for 33.5 % of leavers.



CONTENTS

- 1 Number of Staff
- 2 Part-Time Working
- 3 Leavers
 - Appendix 1 Data Coverage
 - Appendix 2 Definitions
 - Appendix 3 Abbreviations

This is an Official Statistics publication.

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website

These official statistics are produced in compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. Our [Statistics Charter](#) provides further details of how we apply the principles and practices of the Code in the production and publication of our official statistics. Areas that we are working to improve are included in the [Background Quality Report](#).

Page

1 **Next publication: Summer 2025**

4

6 Would you like to sign up to our User List to receive information on our latest publications?

7

8 [Add me to the User List?](#)

9

User Feedback

We are constantly trying to improve our service and would like to hear your feedback on how we are doing.

[Do you have time to complete our short Personnel Statistics for the NICS User Survey?](#)

If you require this publication in a machine-readable format, the tables supplied in .xlsx format can be saved as .csv files by Microsoft Excel or by the free Apache OpenOffice suite.

All media enquiries should be directed to DoF Press Office

Telephone: 028 9081 6724 or 028 9081 6895

Further information can be obtained from:

Martin Madine

Workforce Statistics & Analysis

2 - 4 Bruce Street

Belfast, BT2 7JD

Telephone: 028 9038 8440

Email: workforcestatistics&analysis@finance-ni.gov.uk

1 Number of Staff

All Staff

On 1 April 2024 the headcount for the NICS was 23,944, an increase of 2.2% from April 2017 (Figure 1). The full time equivalent (FTE) number of staff in the NICS at 1 April 2024 was 22,333 and of these 661 were industrials.

Figure 2 shows that industrial staff numbers are the lowest they have been during the last ten years.

The FTE number of casual staff decreased each year from 2014 to 2019, reaching a low of 37 by April 2019, before increasing to 152 in 2022. In 2024 there were 94 casual staff (Figure 3).

Figure 1: All Staff (Headcount) Comparing the NICS and GB Civil Service^{1, 2} Index (April 2016=100; non zero y axis)

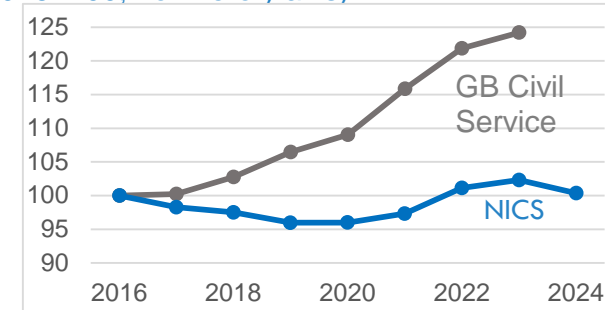


Figure 2: All Industrial and Non-Industrial NICS Staff (FTE), 2014 to 2024^{1, 3}

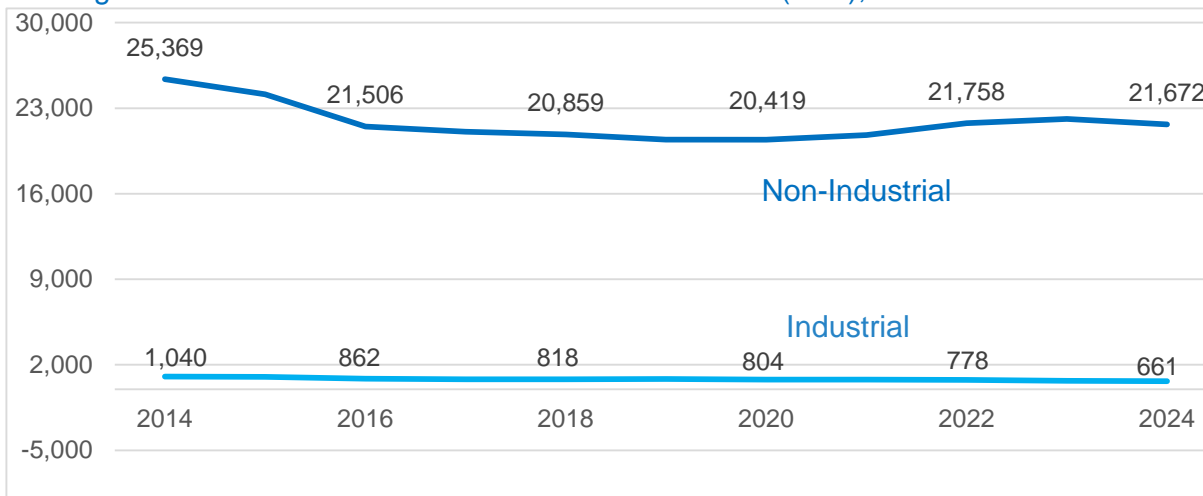
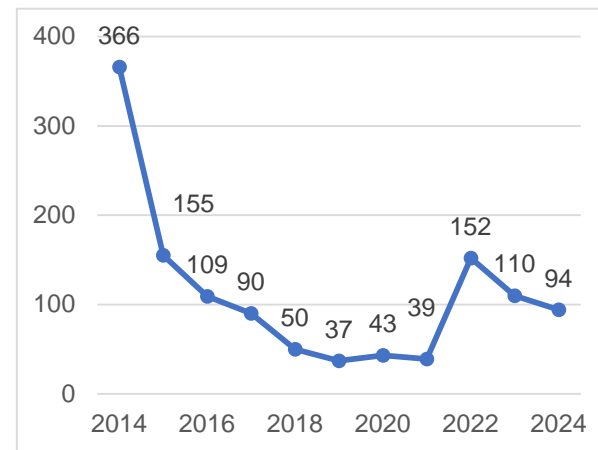


Figure 3: Casual Staff (FTE), 2014 to 2024¹



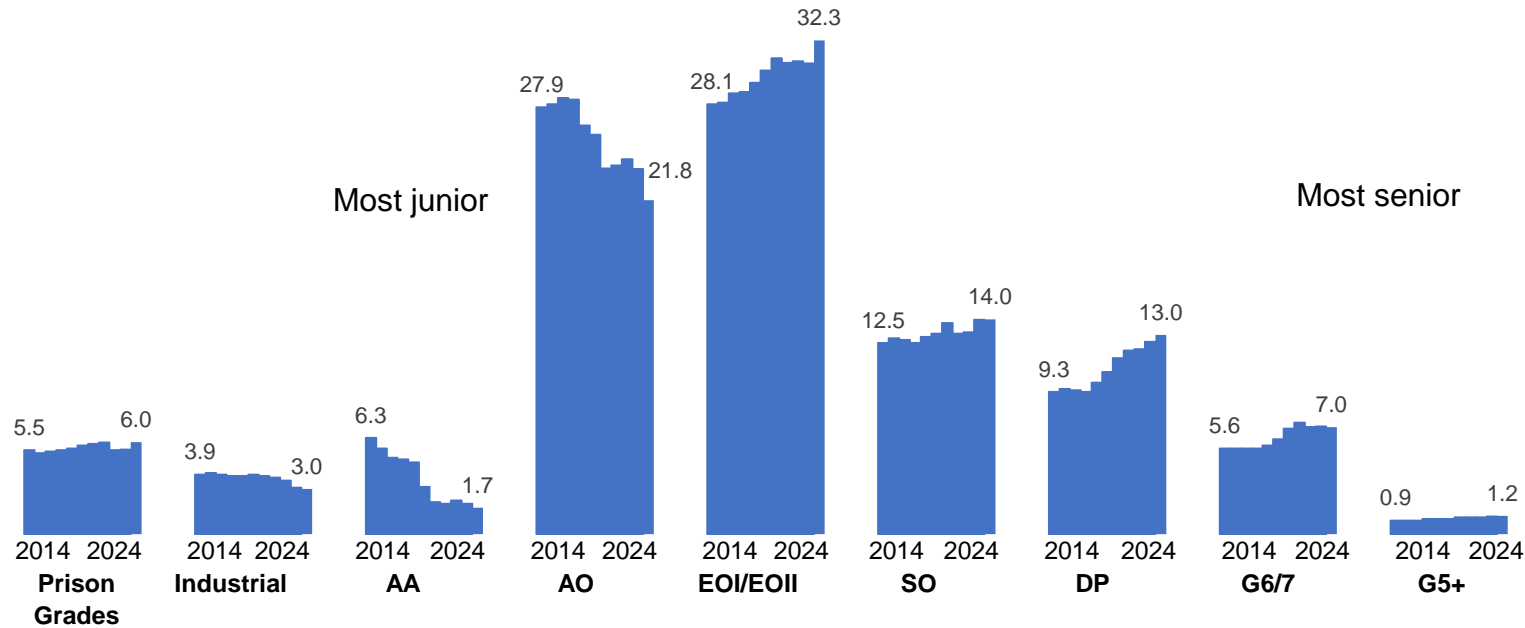
¹ See accompanying tables

² GB comparators for 2024 will be published at a future date at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-statistics>.

³ Non-Industrial and Industrial totals from figure 2 may not sum to overall total due to rounding.

1 Number of Staff

Figure 4: All Staff (FTE) at each analogous grade level, 2014 to 2024¹



Grade Profile

In April 2024, Executive Officer (EOI/EOII) and Administrative Officer (AO) grade were the most numerous grades, making up 32.3% and 21.8% of staff respectively. Since 2014 overall the proportion of FTE staff has generally decreased at Administrative Officer (AO) level and below, while at Executive Officer (EOI/EOII) level and above it has generally increased. The proportion of Prison Grade staff and G5+ remained relatively stable. The largest decrease since 2014 was at AO level (6.1 percentage points), while the largest increase was at EOI/EOII level (4.2 percentage points). Grade 5 and above (G5+) has increased from 0.9 percentage points (2014) to 1.2 percentage points (2024).

Between 2023 and 2024 the proportion of Executive, DP and Prison grades increased, while it decreased for Administrative grades. The proportion remained the same for Industrial grades, Staff Officers (SO), G6/G7 and G5+.

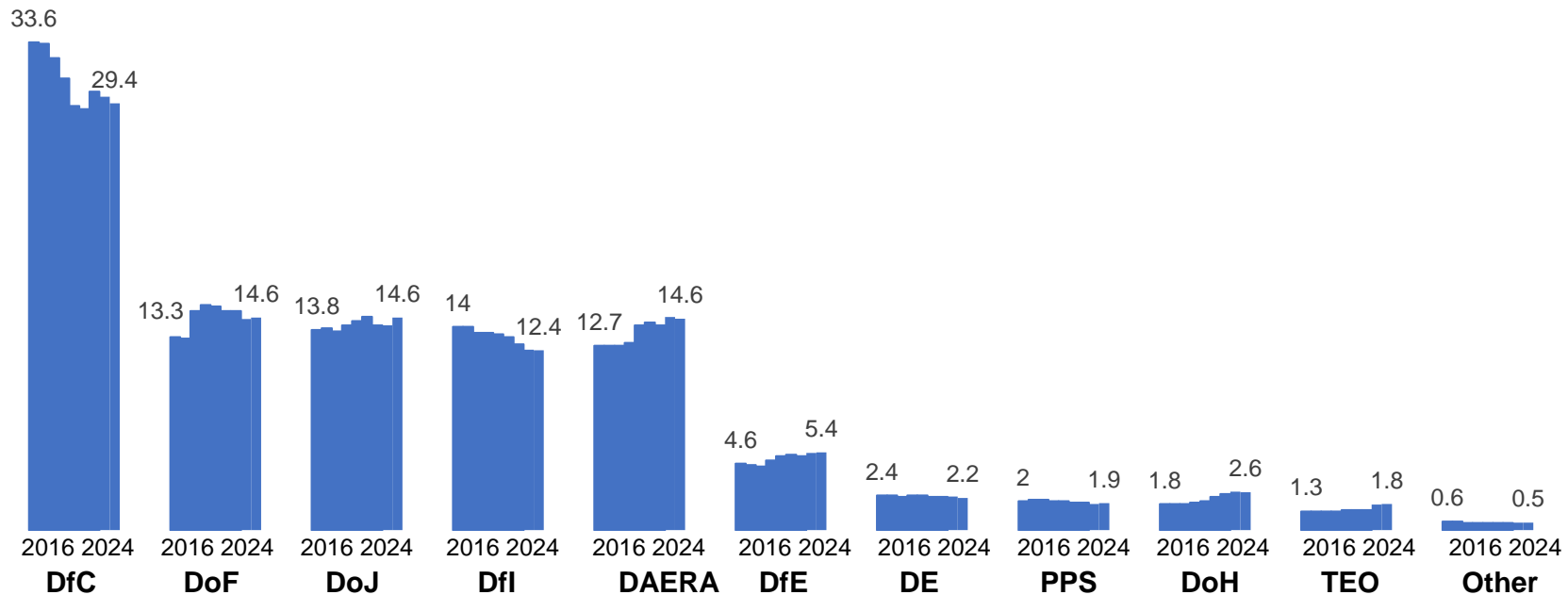
¹ See accompanying tables

1 Number of Staff

Departmental Composition¹

Departments continued to differ markedly in size in 2024, ranging from just over 6,500 FTE staff (DfC) to just over 400 (TEO). Each of the smallest three ministerial departments and the PPS had fewer than 1,000 FTE staff; the largest five each had more than 2,700 FTE staff. Since April 2022, DoJ, DAERA, DfE, DoH and TEO have increased in the number of FTE staff, with the biggest increase in TEO (25.8%). All other departments and PPS have experienced a decrease in FTE staff since 2022.

Figure 5: All Staff (FTE) by Department 2016² to 2024³



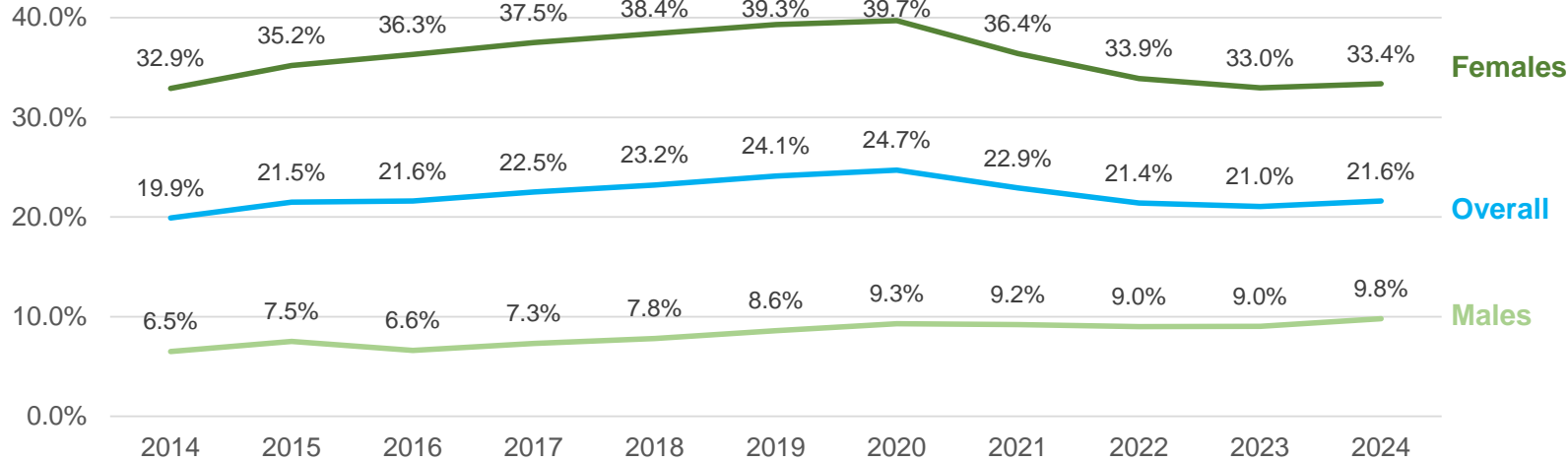
¹ See accompanying tables for changes in departmental composition over the period 2022 - 2024

² In May 2016, restructuring within the NICS saw the number of ministerial departments decrease from twelve to nine. Staff at 1 April 2016 were re-allocated to one of the new departments.

³ Departmental calculations were based on unrounded figures and therefore may not equal overall total due to rounding

2 Part-time Working

Figure 6: Proportion of Staff (Headcount) Working Part-Time, 2014 to 2024



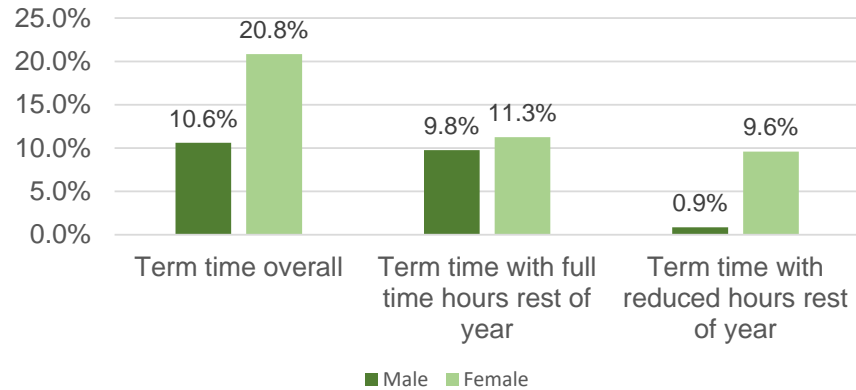
Overall

The overall proportion of staff working on a part-time basis generally increased to a peak of 24.7% in 2020, before starting to fall to 21.0% in 2023.

In 2024, the proportion of part-time workers started to rise again to 21.6%. Since 2014 the proportion of males and females working part-time has increased by 3.3 and 0.5 percentage points respectively (Figure 6).

In 2024, 10.6% of male and 20.8% of female part-time staff had a term time work pattern. The proportion of females who were full time with term time working was 11.3%, and those who were on reduced hours and had term time working accounted for 9.6%. The corresponding proportions for males was 9.8% and 0.9% respectively.

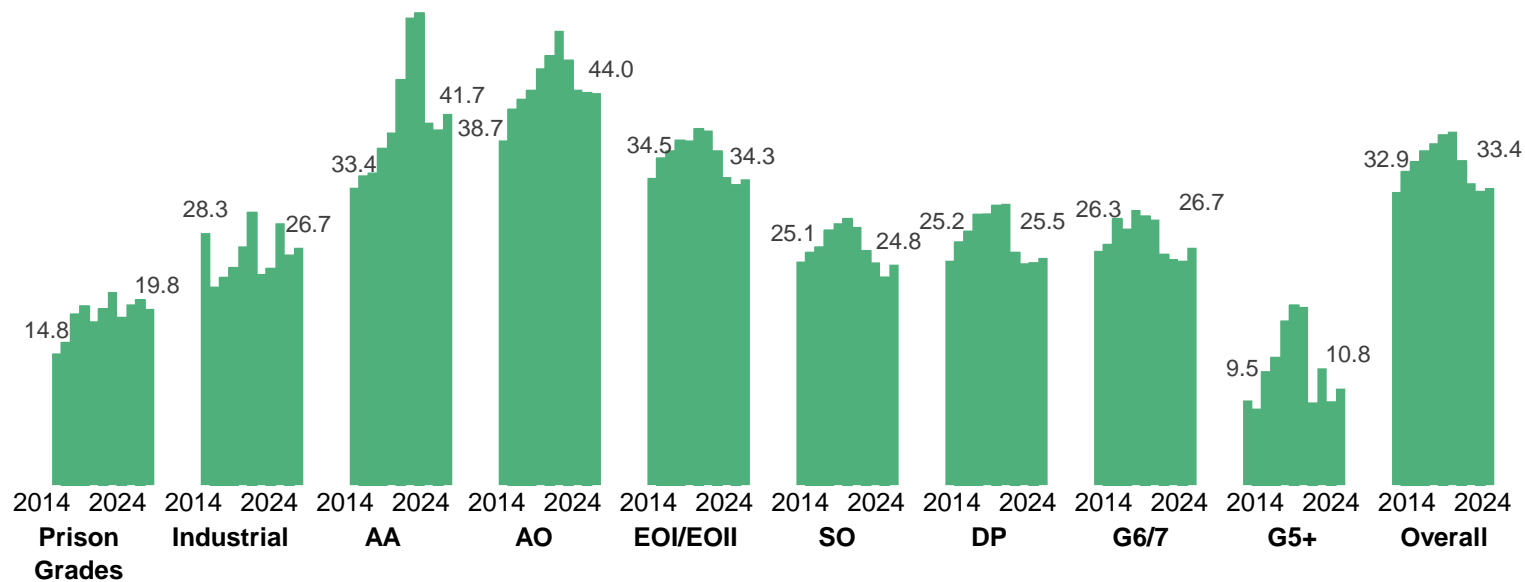
Figure 7: Term Time Working Percentage of All Part-Time Staff (Headcount) 1 April 2024¹



¹ See accompanying tables

2 Part-time Working

Figure 8: Percentage of Part-time Female Staff (Headcount) at each analogous grade level, 2014 to 2024¹



Grade Profile for Part-Time Female Staff

An analysis by grade was undertaken for female staff only as they accounted for the vast majority (77.4%) of part-time workers. The analysis showed that the proportion varied markedly by grade, ranging from around 10.8% at Grade 5+ to 44.0% at AO level.

The proportion of females working part-time increased at all grades from 2014 with the exception of Executive grades, Staff Officers and Industrial grades. Female staff at AA grade had the biggest increase (8.3 percentage points). This was followed by Administrative Officers (5.3 percentage points). Overall the proportion has increased by 0.5 percentage points.

¹ See accompanying tables

3 Leavers

Reasons for leaving

Resignations (33.5%) and Age retirement (33.5%) accounted for the majority of all leavers in 2023/24. The 2023/2024 leaving rate was the same as the previous financial year (4.8%).¹

Figure 9: Reasons for Leaving All Staff (Headcount) 2023/2024^{2, 3}

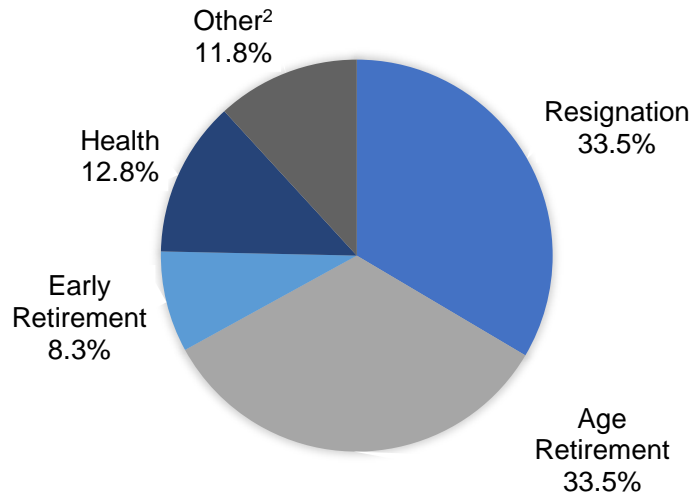
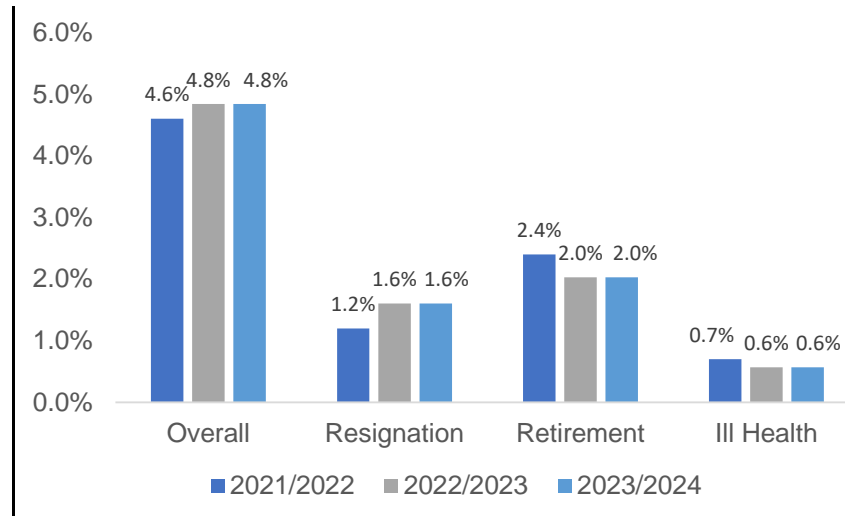


Figure 10: Leaving Rates^{2, 4} by Reason for Leaving (Excluding Other) All Staff (Headcount) 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024



¹GB comparators will be published at a future date at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-statistics>.

² See accompanying tables

³The “Other” classification includes those leaving the NICS under Death in Service, Casual Contracts, Fixed Term Contracts, Transfer to Non Participant Organisation and Disciplinary and Inefficiency-Performance categories.

⁴Leaving rates are calculated by dividing the number of staff who left during the financial year by the number of staff in post at the start of the financial year, then multiplying by 100.

Appendix 1 Data Coverage

This report provides an overview of the human resource profile of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) in 2023 and how it has changed over time. Where appropriate, comparisons are made with the Civil Service in Great Britain (GB).

The primary data source for this report, with the exception in part of the NI Prison Service (NIPS), was HRConnect, the Human Resource Service for the NICS. Data for NIPS staff not on HRConnect was obtained from NIPS's own personnel data systems. Figures are based on actual staff in post at 1 April each year; analyses of leavers are on a financial year basis.

Figures relate to employees with an employment contract who are being paid by the organisation. Employees can be permanent, on a fixed-term contract or employed on a casual basis. Permanent employees have a contract with no agreed expiry date or a fixed-term contract of more than 12 months.

Temporary/casual employees are those with a fixed term contract of twelve months or less, or employed on a casual basis. Self-employed, contract workers and agency workers are excluded from the figures. Civil servants working on secondment to other organisations and staff on career break have also been excluded.

Figures for 2024 relate only to NICS staff in the nine NICS Departments plus the Public Prosecution Service. It also includes the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland and Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland

Details of the methods used to count civil servants - headcount and full time equivalent (FTE) - are presented in the Background Quality Report. A full list of grade levels, occupations, and numbers at each grade level in the various Departments are included in the Appendices. The report does not include information on absence, pay, or equality. Separate reports on these topics can be found at:- [Sickness Absence Statistics](#)
[Pay Statistics](#)
[Equality Statistics](#).

Additional tables can be found in the corresponding xlsx tables;
Table 1: Changes in departmental composition; All Staff (FTE) - 1 April 2022, 2023, 2024

Table 2: Occupations of Staff (Headcount) 1 April 2024

Table 3: Staff (FTE) by Grade Level in Each Department - 1 April 2024

Appendix 2 Definitions

Two methods of counting Civil Servants are used in this report:

Headcount

Each civil servant is counted as one member of staff, regardless of whether he or she works full-time or part-time. This is appropriate, for example, when recording the numbers leaving the service.

Full-time Equivalent (FTE)

Each full-time civil servant is counted as one member of staff and each part-time civil servant is counted as a proportion (based on hours worked) of a full-time member of staff. Thus, for example, someone working 18.5 hours per week counts as 0.5 staff, since a full-time employee works 37 hours per week. This is appropriate, for example, when recording the number of staff required to perform Civil Service functions.

Rounding

Percentages may not appear to add up due to rounding.

Appendix 3 Abbreviations

Department Names

DAERA - Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

DfC - Department for Communities

DfE - Department for the Economy

DE - Department of Education

DoF - Department of Finance

DoH - Department of Health

DfI - Department for Infrastructure

DoJ - Department of Justice

TEO - The Executive Office

PPS - The Public Prosecution Service

Other - Includes the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland and Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland

Analogous grade

G5 - Grade 5 (Assistant Secretary)

G6/G7 - Grade 6 (Senior Principal) and Grade 7 (Principal)

DP - Deputy Principal

SO - Staff Officer

EOI/EOII - Executive Officer I and Executive Officer II

AO - Administrative Officer

AA - Administrative Assistant