IN BRIEF

- The monitored Northern Ireland workforce\(^1\) totalled 526,000 employees, an increase of (1.0%) on the previous year. The private sector expanded while there was a slight decline in public sector employment.

- In 2007, the total monitored workforce, and the public and private sectors (all employees) converged at 55.4% Protestant and 44.6% Roman Catholic\(^2\).

- The LFS Religion Report (2006) estimated that the Catholic share of the economically active (working age) lies somewhere between 41.6% and 45.2%\(^3\).

- Comparing the same sections of the monitored Northern Ireland workforce as were monitored in 1990\(^4\), by 2007 the Roman Catholic share had increased by 9.1 percentage points (see chart below).

- Roman Catholic representation increased in number and proportion in both the public and private sectors, while the opposite was true for Protestants.

- The drop in Protestant employment is largely accounted for by a fall in part-time work, particularly in the public sector. Overall, part-time employment contracted for the first time since 2001.

- In relation to security-related employment, in January 2001 one-in-twelve police officers were Roman Catholic. By January 2007, this figure had risen to one-in-six.

- Concerning applicants, for the first year since monitoring began, the total number of Catholic and Protestant applicants were broadly similar (271,000).

- Females accounted for (51.7%) of all monitored employees, with greater proportions in the public sector (62.4%) and the part-time workforce (71.7%).

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**Community Composition of the Monitored Northern Ireland Full-time Workforce (1990 - 2007)**

- Roman Catholic
- Protestant

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[Graph showing percentage of Catholic and Protestant workforce from 1990 to 2007 with key points: 34.9% in 1990, 40% in 1992, 65.1% in 1998, 56.0% in 2002, and 44.0% in 2007.]
Monitored Northern Ireland Workforce

The eighteenth annual Fair Employment Monitoring Report presents an analysis of monitoring returns submitted by 149 public bodies and 3,983 private sector employers during 2007. This update presents a summary of key findings.

The monitored workforce continued to grow in 2007 and now stands at 526,000, an overall increase of 5,372 employees (1.0%). Similar to 2006, growth was limited to the private sector, with a (1.9%) rise in employee numbers, compared with a fall of (0.4%) in the public sector. Employment levels rose for Roman Catholics during the year by (2.7%) and fell for Protestants by (0.8%). The community composition was 55.4% Protestant and 44.6% Roman Catholic, representing an [0.9] percentage point rise in the Catholic share of monitored employment.

The Public Sector Workforce

In 2007, the total public sector workforce was comprised of around 192,000 employees, a decrease of over 700 (0.4%) compared with 2006. The number of Protestant employees fell by (1.9%) while the Roman Catholic count rose by (1.1%). The community composition was 55.4% Protestant and 44.6% Roman Catholic, representing an [0.8] percentage point rise in the Catholic share. Females comprised (62.4%) of the total public sector workforce.

Public Sector Full-time

In 2007 there were just under 162,700 full-time employees in the public sector, an increase of over 3,300 employees (2.1%) from 2006. The public sector is comprised of five main sectors, namely: Health, containing over one-third (36.7%) of all public sector full-time employees, followed by the Civil Service (24.0%), Education (14.0%), Security-related employment (9.2%) and the District Councils (5.9%).

The community composition of Public Sector full-time employees was 55.6% Protestant and 44.4% Roman Catholic (in 1990 Catholic full-time representation was 35.3%). Compared with 2006, the Protestant and Roman Catholic counts both rose in health, education and the district council sectors. In the civil service, counts declined for both Protestants and Catholics, while the security sector saw a fall in the Protestant count only. Overall, the (2.9%) increase in the number of Catholic employees, compared with a rise of (1.0%) in the Protestant count, led to an increase of half of a percentage point in the Roman Catholic share.
In the health sector the Protestant count rose by (2.2%), while Roman Catholic employment increased by (4.0%). The civil service saw decreases of (4.3%) in Protestant and (2.4%) in Catholic employment levels. The education sector reported rises of (13.1%) and (7.8%) in Protestant and Catholic employment respectively. In the district councils, by contrast, there was a growth of (1.4%) and (3.9%) respectively in the number of Protestant and Catholic employees.

In security-related employment 6 the Protestant total declined by (5.4%) while the Roman Catholic count rose by (6.5%). In January 2001, around one in twelve police officers were Roman Catholic: by 2007 this figure had risen to one in six.

In 1990, (48.9%) of public sector full-time employees were female. By 2007, this figure had risen to (59.9%), an increase of [1.1] percentage points from 2006.

**The Private Sector Workforce**

In 2007, the total private sector workforce was comprised of just over 334,000 employees, an increase of over 6,100 (1.9%) on the previous year. The number of Protestant employees fell by (0.2%), while the Roman Catholic count increased by (3.6%). The community composition was 55.4% Protestant and 44.6% Roman Catholic, which represented a rise of one percentage point in the Catholic share of employment. The majority of the private sector workforce (54.5%) is male.

**Private Sector Full-time**

In 2007 there were approximately 280,700 full-time employees in the private sector, an increase of (2.6%) compared with 2006. The composition was 56.3% Protestant and 43.7% Roman Catholic, representing an increase of [1.2] percentage points in the Catholic share of employment.

Looking at the same sections of the full-time private sector workforce as were monitored in 1990, the overall Roman Catholic share has increased by [9.2] percentage points, from [34.6%] in 1990 to [43.8%] in 2007. The increase was [9.6] percentage points for males and [8.6] percentage points for females.

The private sector is comprised of three categories, namely manufacturing, construction and services. The services sector remained the largest grouping in 2007, comprising nearly two-thirds (65.3%) of monitored private sector full-time employees, followed by
manufacturing with (27.5%), and construction with (7.2%) of employees.

Between 2006 and 2007, monitored employment in services increased by just over 6,000 (3.4%). Although manufacturing saw an overall, marginal increase of just under 100 employees (0.1%), a pause in the long-term decline of this sector, Protestants accounted for almost 1,300 net job losses. Jobs in Construction increased by almost 1,000 (5.1%).

The growth of the service sector since 1992, and the general decline in manufacturing jobs, is illustrated by the graph on page 3.

The Part-time Workforce

The monitored Northern Ireland part-time workforce, which includes both public and private sectors, is predominately female, comprising nearly 59,300 females (71.7%) and over 23,400 males (28.3%) - a total of almost 82,800. Overall, there was a sharp fall in part-time working during the year, with a net loss of nearly 5,200 employees (5.9%). Nearly four out of five (78.9%) of these job losses occurred in public authorities. The part-time workforce has grown by over ten percent (11.2%) since statutory monitoring began in 2001.

The overall composition of the Northern Ireland part-time workforce in 2007 was 52.0% Protestant and 48.0% Roman Catholic, representing a rise of one percentage point in the Catholic share.

Three-quarters (75.2%) of the part-time workforce are concentrated in the lower occupational groups, namely: Personal services (SOC6), Sales and Customer services (SOC7) and Elementary occupations (SOC9). Only one-in-six part-timers (16.7%) are classified as either managerial, professional or associate professional occupations.

Looking at the monitored Northern Ireland workforce as a whole (526,211 employees), less than one-in-ten males (9.1%) work part-time, compared with over one-in-five (21.8%) of their female counterparts.

Applicants and Appointees

The Protestant share of applicants in the public sector [51.4%] was higher than the Catholic share [48.6%], while in the private sector, the Catholic share [50.5%] was higher than the Protestant share [49.5%].

Furthermore, the year 2007 marked the first occasion since monitoring began in 1990 that the overall number
of Roman Catholic applicants for employment (270,921) mirrored those from the Protestant community (270,735). In 2001, there were 57,000 more Protestant than Catholic applicants for employment, see above.

Among appointees in the public sector, the Roman Catholic share was [51.9%] overall, [52.9%] for females and [49.9%] for males. The Catholic proportion of private sector appointees in 2007 was [51.2%] overall, [52.0%] for females and [50.4%] for males.

In terms of gender, nearly two-thirds (65.4%) of public sector appointments were obtained by females, compared with just under half (48.0%) in the private sector.

Looking at trends since 1991, the Roman Catholic share of public sector appointments has increased from [40.3%] to [51.9%] in 2007. In the larger private sector concerns (251 + employees), the Catholic proportion was [51.7%] in 2007 compared with [40.2%] in 1991.

Summary

In summary, the 2007 Report revealed an increase in overall employment, which was wholly accounted for by growth in the private sector: in contrast, the public sector experienced a slight decline in monitored employment for the second year in a row.

The composition of the monitored workforce in 2007 was [55.4%] Protestant and [44.6%] Roman Catholic. This represented an overall increase of [0.9] of a percentage point in the Catholic share of employment since 2006. The overall fall in Protestant employment was largely accounted for by a sharp drop in part-time working.

The public sector contracted slightly during the year by (0.4%) in total, while the Roman Catholic share of employment rose by [0.8] of a percentage point. In the Private sector, overall employment levels increased by (1.9%), notably in service-type industries and construction. The Roman Catholic share of private sector employment rose by one percentage point.
Endnotes

1. The monitored Northern Ireland workforce is comprised of both full-time and part-time employees in all registered public bodies and private sector concerns in Northern Ireland. Monitoring covers around 67%-69% of those in employment, and does not include private sector concerns with less than 11 employees, school teachers, the self-employed, the unemployed, nor those on government training schemes.

2. In this summary, figures and percentages relating to community composition are based on Protestants and Roman Catholics only, with the Non-Determined excluded.

3. The LFS is a sample survey and results are therefore subject to sampling error, i.e. the actual proportion of the population with a particular characteristic may differ from the proportion of the LFS sample with that characteristic. Thus, the variable “religious composition of the economically active (working age) has a confidence interval of +/- 1.8 in the 2006 LFS Report. This means there is a 95% certainty that the actual figure for the Roman Catholic share of the economically active (working age) lies somewhere between 41.6% and 45.2%. Further, please note that while LFS estimates refer to the entire workforce, monitoring data relates only to the monitored workforce, making direct comparisons problematic.

4. In all comparisons with 1990, part-time employees and those private sector concerns with 25 or less employees are excluded.

5. The fair employment legislation requires certain employers to register with the Equality Commission and to complete an annual monitoring return detailing the community background, employment status, occupation and sex of their workforce. All public sector employers are deemed to be automatically registered with the Commission. In January 1990 all private sector concerns with over 25 employees were required to register. From January 1992, the requirement to register was extended to all concerns with 11 or more employees. Since January 2001 all registered employers are required to monitor the composition of those working less than 16 hours per week (part-time employees).

6. Monitored security related employment includes: the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Royal Irish Regiment, the Territorial Army, the Royal Naval Reserve, the Northern Ireland Prison Service and Northern Ireland Policing Board secondees from the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

7. Prior to 2001, the public sector and large private sector concerns (251+) were required to submit applicant and appointee data relating to full-time employees only. Since 2001, all public authorities and registered concerns, irrespective of size, have been required to submit applicant and appointee data on all employees.

8. Caution is required when making comparisons between the community composition of applicants and appointees. In brief, aggregated applicant and appointee data from individual employers may not necessarily refer to the same recruitment exercise, and in certain circumstances, temporary appointments may not always be recorded by employers.

Copies of the full report can be obtained from the Equality Commission (see address below) or from our web site: www.equalityni.org