In Brief

- The data in the 2008 returns largely relates to employment trends before the current recession. As such the data shows that the monitored Northern Ireland workforce experienced modest growth in 2008. Total employment now stands at 529,857, the highest figure ever recorded, representing an increase of (0.7%) or 3,646 employees on 2007.

- The composition of the monitored workforce was [54.8%] Protestant and [45.2%] Roman Catholic 1, representing an increase of 0.6 percentage points in the Catholic share from 2007.

- The LFS Religion Report (2007) 2 estimated that the Catholic share of the economically active (working age) lies somewhere between 44.1% and 47.7%.

- Compared with 2001 (the first year in which both full and part-time employees were monitored), the Roman Catholic share of employment has increased by 4.9 percentage points (see chart below).

- The total monitored private sector workforce expanded for the seventh year in succession, increasing by (1.7%) during the year to 339,904. The composition was [54.8%] Protestant and [45.2%] Roman Catholic.

- The total public sector workforce contracted for the third year in succession, and now stands at 189,953. The composition was [54.6%] Protestant and [45.4%] Roman Catholic.

- Females account for just over half (51.9%) of the total monitored workforce, almost half (48.3%) of full-time employees, and nearly three-quarters (71.5%) of the part-time workforce.

### Composition of the Monitored Northern Ireland Workforce by Community Background, 2001 - 2008

![Bar chart showing percentage share of the monitored workforce by community background from 2001 to 2008.](image)
The Fair Employment Monitoring and Review


The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 requires registered employers, amongst other duties, to:

- monitor the community composition of their workforce and of those applying to fill vacancies and submit an annual monitoring return to the Commission (Article 52); and;

- review their workforce composition and employment practices at least once every three years, “for the purposes of determining whether members of each community are enjoying... fair participation” and the “affirmative action (if any) which would be reasonable and appropriate.” (Article 55).

This research update, which is based upon ‘Monitoring Report No. 19 – A Profile of the Northern Ireland Workforce (Summary of Monitoring Returns 2008)’ Report, builds upon the first of these employer duties by aggregating the compositional data that employers submit annually to the Commission. It sets out a broad picture of composition across the Northern Ireland monitored workforce as a whole, and in specific sub-sectors. While the report does not consider questions of fair participation, it does set out to inform employers (or interested parties) about wider compositional trends. Used alongside information on local labour availability, this may better inform their own considerations of fair participation in specific employment(s).

The Monitored Northern Ireland Workforce

Monitoring Report No. 19 presents an analysis of monitoring returns submitted to the Commission by 103 public bodies and 3,988 private sector employers during 2008. This update presents a summary of key findings.

Readers should be mindful of two key points when considering key findings relating to the 2008 returns. Firstly, the data in the 2008 returns largely relates to compositional trends before the current recession. Secondly, data relating to employment ‘flows’ (applicants, appointees; promotees and leavers) is less comprehensive in certain sectors than in previous years (information on 11 new health and education bodies is not available to the Commission). As such, ‘flow’ information is not presented in this summary report. ‘Stock’ information (regarding employees) is unaffected, and is presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Northern Ireland Part-time Workforce by Occupation and Gender, 2008</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Managers &amp; Senior Officials</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Professional Occupations</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Associate Professionals</td>
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<td>4. Admin &amp; Secretarial</td>
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<td>5. Skilled Trades</td>
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<td>6. Personal services</td>
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<td>7. Sales &amp; Customer services</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Plant &amp; Machine operatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Elementary occupations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male - Blue; Female - Light Blue

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35%
All Employees

The monitored Northern Ireland workforce experienced modest growth in 2008, and now stands at 529,857, an overall increase of 3,646 employees (0.7%). This represents the highest figure recorded since all employees (full and part time) were first monitored in 2001.

Similar to 2007, growth was limited to the private sector, with a (1.7%) rise in employee numbers, compared with a fall of (1.1%) in the public sector. Employment counts rose for Roman Catholics during the year by (2.1%) and fell for Protestants by (0.7%). The community composition was [54.8%] Protestant and [45.2%] Roman Catholic, representing an [0.6] percentage point rise in the Catholic share of monitored employment. In 2008, females accounted for just over half (51.9%) of the total monitored workforce.

Full-time Employees

In 2008, there were 447,654 monitored full-time employees, an increase of (0.9%) compared with the previous year. The community composition of the monitored full-time workforce was [55.2%] Protestant and [44.8%] Roman Catholic, representing an increase of (0.8) of a percentage point in the Protestant share during the year. In 2008, females accounted for almost half (48.3%) of the full-time workforce.

Part-time Employees

There were 82,203 monitored part-time employees, a decrease of (0.7%) during the year. The composition in 2008 was [52.2%] Protestant and [47.8%] Roman Catholic. This represents an increase of [0.2] of a percentage point in the Protestant share since 2007. Females account for nearly three-quarters (71.5%) of the monitored part-time workforce.

The Private Sector Workforce

The private sector is comprised of three categories, namely: manufacturing, construction and services. Services, was by far the largest sector in 2008 containing (70.4%) of private sector employees, followed by Manufacturing (23.5%) and construction with (7.2%) of employees.

All Employees

In 2008, the total private sector workforce stood at 339,904 employees, an increase of 5,712 employees (1.7%) during the year. Overall, the number of Roman Catholic employees grew by (2.8%), while, the Protestant count rose by (0.4%). The composition was [54.8%] Protestant and [45.2%] Roman Catholic, an increase of [0.6] percentage points from the previous year.
Full-time Employees
In 2008, the number of private sector full-time employees stood at 287,237, an increase of 6,472 employees (2.3%) compared with 2007. The community composition was [55.5%] Protestant and [44.5%] Roman Catholic, an increase of [0.8] percentage points from 2007. During the period 2001 – 2008, the Protestant count fell by 5,096 (3.4%). In contrast, the number of Roman Catholic employees grew by 19,104 (19.5%).

Unlike the public sector (see below), the majority (58.7%) of private sector full-time employees are male, a finding which has remained relatively consistent over time.

Part-time Employees
In 2008, there were 52,667 monitored employees working in a part-time capacity in the private sector, compared with 53,427 the previous year, a fall of (1.4%) or 760 employees. The composition was [51.1%] Protestant and [48.9%] Roman Catholic, representing an increase of [0.4] of a percentage point in the Protestant share during the year. The private sector part-time workforce is predominately female, who account for over two-thirds (68.8%) of employees.

While private sector part-time employment has declined over the last three years, a review of the full period 2001 – 2008, reveals that the size of the private sector part-time workforce has increased by nearly a fifth (18.2%), from 44,544 in 2001 to 52,667 in 2008.

The Public Sector Workforce
The public sector is composed of five major components, namely: health, education, the district councils, civil service and the security-related sector; as well as 71 ‘other public authorities’ which are not contained within these categories.

Health comprises the largest proportion of the public sector (37.6%), followed by education (19.8%) and the civil service (19.2%). ‘Other public authorities’ account for (11.8%), while the security-related sector contained (7.2%) of employees. District Councils comprise the smallest proportion of the public sector (5.9%).

All Employees
The total public sector workforce now stands at 189,953 employees, a fall of 2,066 employees (1.1%) since 2007. The Catholic count increased by (0.8%), while the Protestant count dropped by (2.4%) during the year. The resultant composition was [54.6%] Protestant and [45.4%] Roman Catholic, a change of [0.8] of a percentage point from 2007. Females account for almost two-thirds (63.3%) of the public sector workforce.
The Protestant count rose in health (2.0%), education (1.3%) and the district councils (2.5%), while dropping in the civil service (8.4%). In the security-related sector, Protestant representation fell, by nearly one-in-five employees (18.7%). The Roman Catholic count increased in health (1.1%), education (2.7%), the district councils (4.4%) and decreased in the civil service (6.6%). In contrast to their Protestant counterparts, the number of Catholics employed by the security-related sector rose by (3%) during the year. The composition of the Security related sector was [81%] Protestant and [19%] Roman Catholic.

Full-time Employees
In 2008 there were 160,417 public sector full-time employees, a fall of (1.4%) on the corresponding figure for 2007. The composition of the public sector full-time workforce was [54.7%] Protestant and [45.3%] Roman Catholic, representing an increase of [0.9] of a percentage point in the Catholic share during the year. In 2008, females accounted for almost two-thirds (60.8%) of the public sector full-time workforce.

Part-time Employees
There were 29,536 part-time employees in the public sector, an increase of (0.7%) compared with 2007. The composition was [54.2%] Protestant and [45.8%] Roman Catholic, representing an increase of [0.1] of a percentage point in the Catholic share during the year. In 2008, females accounted for over three-quarters (76.8%) of the public sector part-time workforce. The small increase in female public sector part-time employment during 2008 tends to obscure a little-notice trend: for females in recent years, growth in public sector employment has generally occurred at the full-time level.

Summary
The data in the 2008 returns largely relates to compositional trends before the current recession. As such the data shows that the monitored Northern Ireland workforce continued to grow modestly in 2008 and now stands at 529,857. This represents an overall increase of 3,646 employees (0.7%) from 2007 and the highest figure recorded since all employees (full and part time) were first monitored in 2001.

In the Northern Ireland monitored workforce, full-time employment grew by (0.9%), a continuation of the upward trend since 2002. In contrast, part-time employment peaked in 2006, and has since fallen. In 2008, the number of part-time employees dropped by (0.7%).

The total private sector workforce has grown every year since 2002, while the public sector has contracted since 2006. There was a similar pattern in 2008 – i.e. the private sector count rose by (1.7%), compared with a fall of (1.1%) in the public sector.

Overall, employment counts rose for Roman Catholics during 2008 by (2.1%) and fell for Protestants by (0.7%). The community composition was [54.8%] Protestant and [45.2%] Roman Catholic, representing an [0.6]
percentage point rise in the Catholic share of monitored employment (again mirroring recent trends). In 2008, females accounted for just over half (51.9%) of the total monitored workforce.

5. Monitoring regulations do not require ‘new’ employers to submit ‘flow’ information to the Commission in their first year. In 2008, ‘flow’ information relating to 11 health and education bodies reconstituted as part of the Review of Public Administration is thus not available to the Commission. This impacts on both interpretation of 2008 ‘flow’ data and on comparisons with previous years. By way of example, the number of recorded applicants in the health sector fell in 2008 by 54,944 (96%). Interested readers should refer to the full monitoring report for a fuller explanation. ‘Stock’ information (regarding employees) is unaffected.

Endnotes

1. In this summary, figures and percentages relating to community composition are based on Protestants and Roman Catholics only, with the Non-Determined excluded. They are presented in a square bracket format, e.g. [54.6%]. The full monitoring report presents data for all three categories.

2. 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. Further, please note that, while LFS estimates refer to the entire workforce, monitoring data relates only to the monitored workforce. Thus, direct comparisons may be problematic.

3. 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. All private sector concerns with 11 or more employees are required to register.

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

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

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