In Brief

- The 2010 Monitoring Report reveals that for the second consecutive year the monitored workforce contracted (by 0.9%, n=4,546), although at a lesser rate than that for 2009 (2.4%, n=12,585).

- The drivers of this contraction were twofold:
  - private sector employment fell for a second year in succession (by 1.6%, n=5,195), albeit at a slower rate than in 2009, while the public sector expanded (by 0.3%, n=649) for the first time since 2005;
  - full-time employment counts fell in both the private (2.5%, n=6,879) and public (0.6%, n=1,006) sectors, while the number of part-time employees in both sectors increased (4.2%, n=3,339 overall). This was the first overall increase in part-time employee numbers since 2006.

- The Roman Catholic share of the monitored workforce was [45.9%], an increase of 0.5pp from 2009, continuing the trend observed during the last ten years [Chart 1].

- In 2010, the total number of male employees fell at nearly six times the rate of their female counterparts (3,891-v-655). Women have increased their share of the monitored workforce almost year on year between 2001 (50.4%) and 2010 (52.7%), driven mainly by an increase in the number of Roman Catholic women.

- The total public sector workforce continues to be markedly more female (63.7%) than the private sector (46.3%). In both sectors, the proportions of females in part-time employment is substantially higher than in full-time employment.

- In 2010, for a second consecutive year there were more Roman Catholic [50.7%] than Protestant [49.3%] applicants overall.

Chart 1: Composition of the NI Workforce by Community Background, 2001—2010

- Protestant
- Roman Catholic
Fair Employment Monitoring and Review

The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order requires registered employers to collect ‘monitoring data’ each year on the community composition and gender of their workforce. At least once every three years registered employers must use that information to evaluate ‘fair participation’ within their workforce (and if required, identify any affirmative action that may be appropriate to achieve the same).

Alongside this, on an annual basis, each registered employer must also provide a summary of that monitoring data to the Equality Commission via an ‘annual monitoring return’. The Commission, although not required by statute, aggregates and publishes this information in an Annual Summary of Monitoring Returns.

Monitoring Returns

This Research Update presents a summary analysis of the monitoring returns submitted to the Commission by 122 public bodies and 3,796 private sector concerns during 2010. Monitoring Report No. 21, the full report upon which this update is based, can be accessed at www.equalityni.org/research.

Monitored Northern Ireland Workforce

For the second consecutive year, the total number of monitored employees fell to 512,726, representing a decrease of 0.9% (n=4,546) on 2009. Previously, monitored employment had been on an upward trajectory between 2001 and its peak in 2008 and now stands just below 2005 levels.

When examined by sector, contraction of the monitored workforce in 2010 can be wholly attributed to the overall decrease in private sector employment (1.6%, n=5,195). Conversely, the public sector grew slightly (0.3%, n=649), as the increase in part-time employment (1,655) was greater than the decrease in full-time employment (1,006). Of note is that the total private sector workforce has contracted for the past two years.

Chart 2: Profile of the Monitored Northern Ireland Workforce, 2010

Notes:  
- **P** = Protestant; **RC** = Roman Catholic; **M** = Male; **F** = Female.
- The ‘Total’ is always greater than the sum of Protestant and Roman Catholic employees as it includes the Non-determined.
- Gender data includes Protestant, Roman Catholic and the Non-determined.
albeit at a slower rate in 2010. 2010 saw the first total public sector workforce increase since 2005.

When examined by **types of employment**, the drop in monitored employment can be attributed to decreases in full-time employees in both the private (2.5%, n=6,879) and public (0.6%, n=1,006) sectors. The number of part-time employees in both sectors increased, by 3.2% (n=1,684) and 6% (n=1,655) respectively. This was the first overall increase in part-time employee numbers since 2006.

The composition in 2010 was [54.1%] Protestant and [45.9%] Roman Catholic. **Continuing the trend of recent years [Chart 3]**, the Roman Catholic share of monitored employment showed a marginal increase from [45.4%] in 2009. This increase of [0.5 pp] suggests that the slowing of rate of growth in the Roman Catholic share in 2009 [0.2 pp] was temporary. In 2001, the Roman Catholic proportion of monitored employment was [40.3%].

In 2010, men were more affected by the decline in monitored employment than women. The total number of male employees fell at nearly six times the rate of their female counterparts (3,891-v-655) [Chart 4].

The upward trend in the **female share of employment**, particularly for Roman Catholics, continued in 2010. Women account for more than half (52.7%) of all monitored employees in Northern Ireland, and have increased their share of the monitored workforce almost year on year from 50.4% in 2001. Chart 5 illustrates how the gender composition of the monitored workforce varies by sector and by full-time / part-time status.

**Full-time and Part-time Employees**

In the monitored **full-time** workforce the numbers fell in 2010 by 7,885 (1.8%), a continuation of the trend first observed in 2009. In contrast, and for the first time since 2006, there was an overall increase in **part-time** employee numbers (4.3%, n=3,339).

The upward trend in Roman Catholic female full-time representation, observed since 2001, continued again in 2010. Over the period 2001 – 2010, Roman Catholic female full-time employment increased by a quarter (25%, n=18,895), compared with a rise of 1.8% (n=1,858) for their Protestant female counterparts. Consequently, the Roman Catholic female share of the monitored full-time workforce rose by [4.0 pp] over the eight-year period, from [19.5%] in 2001.

In 2010, the composition of the full-time workforce was [54.6%] Protestant and [45.4%] Roman Catholic. The composition of the part-time workforce was [51.4%] Protestant and [48.6%] Roman Catholic.
As noted above, the decline in monitored employment has particularly affected men. In 2010, the net fall in male full-time employment was almost twice that of the drop in the female count (4,967 vs 2,918). In contrast, the net increase in male part-time employment was half that for females (1,076 -v-2,263).

Although the overall part-time workforce is still predominately female (70.2%), there has been a discernible upward trend in male representation since 2001. By 2010, the male count had risen by more than a quarter (28.7%, n=5,511) over the eight-year period, compared with an increase of 5.6% (n=3,088) for women.

**The Private Sector**

The monitored private sector in 2010 accounted for nearly two-thirds (63%) of the total monitored workforce. The total private sector workforce now stands at 322,954 employees, a decrease of 5,195 employees (1.6%) compared with 2009. The sector, which had grown in size every year since 2002, peaked in 2008 and has now fallen back to near its 2005 level.

Total Protestant employment levels fell by 2.2% during the year, while Roman Catholic employment levels dropped by 0.9%. Overall, during the period 2001 – 2010, the Roman Catholic private sector count rose by 14.7% (n=17,265), while the total number of Protestant employees fell by 7.1% (n=12,413).

Due to the steeper decline in Protestant employment levels, the Roman Catholic share of the total private sector increased by [0.4 pp] to [45.6%] from [45.2%] in 2009. In 2001, Roman Catholic representation stood at [40.4%].

In terms of gender, females accounted for 46.3% of the private sector workforce in 2010. This represented an increase (0.2 pp) on 2009 levels and their highest proportionate share in the period 2001 - 2010. The female share of private sector employees was 45.5% in 2001 and has fluctuated over the past ten-year period.

**Full-time and Part-time Employees**

The Roman Catholic proportion of the private sector full-time workforce was [44.8%] in 2010, indicating a continuation of the trend observed during the last ten years, and suggests that the pausing of rate of growth in the Roman Catholic share observed in 2009 was temporary. There was an overall rise of over 12,913 Roman Catholic employees during the 2001 – 2010 period, compared with a fall of nearly 14,607 in the Protestant count.

The Roman Catholic share of the private sector part-time workforce increased by [0.4pp] during 2010. Between 2001 and 2010, the Roman Catholic proportion rose by [2.6 pp] overall.

While women account for 46.3% of all private sector employees, there are differences in the full-time and part-time components. Women comprised 42.2% of the private sector full-time workforce in 2010, considerably less than the comparable figure for the public sector (61.3%). Although, the private sector part-time workforce is still predominately female, their share has fallen steadily from a peak of 71.8% in 2001.

**Public Sector**

Public sector employee numbers grew, albeit marginally, for the first time in five years, with the total count increasing from 189,123 in 2009 to 189,772 in 2010, a rise of (0.3%). However, it is still below its peak of 194,077 employees in 2005.

In 2010, a fall in Protestant employment levels (0.9%, n=877), coupled with a rise in the Roman Catholic count (1.5%, n=1,267), resulted in an increase in the Catholic share of the total public sector, from [45.8%] in 2009 to [46.4%] in 2010. In 2001, the Catholic proportion stood at [40.2%].

In relation to the six components which comprise the public sector, total Protestant employment numbers rose in Education (0.5%), the district councils (1.7%) and ‘other public authorities (12.1%)’, while falling in health (5.3%), the civil service (0.6%), and security-related employment (4.3%).

The total number of Roman Catholic employees rose in district councils (3.1%), security (4.2%) and other public authorities (15.8%), while falling in health (1.2%) and the civil service (0.2%). Total Roman Catholic employment in education changed very little (<0.01%).

The security-related component of the public sector continued to contract in 2010. Between 2009 and 2010, the number of employees decreased by 2.7% (n=359), from 13,451 to 13,092. When compared with 2001 data, the size of the security-related sector has fallen by over a third (38.6%), from 21,329. In terms of composition, the Roman Catholic share of the security sector has increased annually from [8.4%] in 2001 to [22.1%] in 2010.
The proportion of female employees in the public sector continued to increase in 2010, with a small rise (0.3 pp) in their share of the workforce. Women account for almost two-thirds (63.7%) of the total public sector workforce.

Full-time and Part-time Employees

The Roman Catholic proportion of public sector full-time employees continued to grow in 2010 to [46.3%), from [45.5%] the previous year. This is a continuation of a long-established upward trend in Roman Catholic representation.

Conversely, the Roman Catholic share of the part-time workforce decreased in 2010 to [47.2%), from [47.4%] in 2009, marking a halt in the upward trend of the Roman Catholic share since 2007.

In 2010, women comprised 61.3% of full-time and 76.9% of part-time public sector employees. While the female share of the public sector full-time workforce increased by 6.1 percentage points during 2001-2010, their share of the part-time workforce fell by (1.0 pp) during the same period.

While the private sector accounted for the overall fall in employment during 2010, 13% (n=1,006) of net full-time job losses occurred in the public sector. The decline in public sector full-time employment solely affected Protestants, most notably Protestant women with a fall of 2.2%, compared with 1.7% for their male counterparts.

Applicants and Appointees

Overall the number of applicants to the monitored workforce increased in 2010 by 0.3% (n=2,011). This growth was limited to the public sector which had an increase in applicants (n=19,274). In comparison, the private sector decreased by a similar amount (n=17,263).

In 2010, for a second consecutive year there were more Roman Catholic [50.7%] than Protestant [49.3%] applicants overall. The Roman Catholic share has, however, fallen marginally [0.3 pp] compared with 2009.

2010 marks the lowest number of appointees (n=70,419) to the monitored workforce since 2001. A decline in appointee levels was recorded for all major elements of the workforce, i.e. Protestants, Roman Catholics, males and females.

However, the observed drop in appointees was steeper for Protestants (n=6,714) and for females (n=6,890). As a result of the larger fall in Protestant appointees, the Roman Catholic share [52.0%] continued to exceed that of their Protestant counterparts [48.0%], as has been the case every year since 2006.
Copies of the full report can be obtained from the Equality Commission (see address below) or from our web site: www.equalityni.org/research

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End Notes

1. 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.

2. In addition to monitoring the composition (or ‘stock’) of those currently in employment, employers are also required to monitor the composition of those joining, progressing through, or leaving employment (termed ‘flows’).

3. 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 66% - 68% 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.

4. In this summary, figures and percentages relating to community composition are based on Protestants and Roman Catholics only, with the Non-Determined excluded. The full monitoring report presents data for all three categories. They are presented in a square bracket format, e.g. [54.6%]. Please note that ‘count’ refers to the number of employees, while ‘share’ relates to the relative proportions of Protestants and Roman Catholics in the relevant workforce.

5. The latest estimate (2010) for the Roman Catholic share of the economically active (working age) is that it lies somewhere in the range [43.3%] to [46.5%]. In the 2010 LFS Religion Report, the variable religious composition of the economically active (working age) has a confidence interval of +/-1.6 around the estimated value of [44.9%] for Roman Catholics and [55.1%] for Protestants. Thus, this means there is a 95% certainty that the true figure for the Roman Catholic share of the economically active population (of working age) lies somewhere between 43.3% and 46.5%.

6. In 2006, a 0.1 pp decline (to 51.7%) in the female share of monitored employees was observed.