

8 December 2015

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Equality Commission Publishes 25<sup>th</sup> Monitoring Report**

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland today publishes the 25<sup>th</sup> Fair Employment Monitoring Report. While many things have changed in Northern Ireland since monitoring was introduced in 1990, the main purpose of the legislation – promoting and securing equality of opportunity and fair participation in employment for members of the Protestant and Catholic communities within Northern Ireland, still has a value and relevance today.

This year's monitoring report shows that people from the Protestant community, at 52.6%, continue to make up the majority of the monitored workforce. The proportion of the workforce comprising people from the Roman Catholic community has continued to increase annually by 0.4% and now stands at 47.4%. This mirrors closely estimates of the composition of those available for work in Northern Ireland.

Chief Commissioner, Dr. Michael Wardlow said: "Over the past quarter of a century the monitoring process has provided an annual focus for employers on the composition of their workforce. The data accumulated as a result has helped heighten awareness of the importance of equality of opportunity and fair participation in the workplace."

"Employers involved in this process, and in the three yearly reviews assessing whether or not they are providing fair participation in their workforce, have played a pivotal role in making working environments more diverse and less contentious. Their work has provided important leadership in the promotion of greater cohesion and integration within our wider society."

In concluding Dr. Wardlow said: "Given the changing make-up of the Northern Ireland workforce, the Commission has been calling for the extension of workforce monitoring under Fair Employment legislation to include nationality and ethnic origin. This would enable employers to make more accurate and meaningful assessments as to whether they are providing fair participation, by community background, in their workforces."

## Notes to Editor:

- The Monitoring process was introduced by the Fair Employment legislation to establish, in terms of people from the Protestant community and the Roman Catholic community in Northern Ireland, the composition of the workforce in each registered concern.

All private employers employing more than 10 people, and all public employers, with the exception of the employment of teachers in a school, are covered by the legislation.

- The total monitored workforce in Northern Ireland in 2014 was 518,497, made up as follows:
  - Protestants 251,563 (48.5%).
  - Roman Catholics 226,348 (43.7%).
  - Non- determined 40,586 (7.8%).
- Considering only those for whom a community background could be determined, the composition of the total workforce was:
  - Protestant 52.6%
  - Roman Catholic 47.4%
- The full 25<sup>th</sup> Monitoring report, giving details of the aggregated Monitoring Returns and an analysis of high-level trends, can be accessed online:  
[Fair Employment Monitoring Report No.25: An overview of high level trends and aggregated monitoring returns](#) (pdf, 1.7mb)