



## Northern Ireland Outcome Monitoring Report with Trends 2017 – 24/25

### Improving Outcomes





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# Introduction

This report will be kept as a live report under the publications page on our website with information being updated as it becomes available.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership's main aim is improving the lives of all our children and young people. A new **Northern Ireland Children's Services Plan 2025-2028** is currently being drawn up with our approach to improving outcomes for children and young people along with agreeing key themes –which are the most important issues that will be taken forward in the Children and Young People's Plan. Detailed Action Plans will be drawn up by each Outcomes Group across Northern Ireland which will provide more detail on how we are improving outcomes for children and young people based on the high level outcomes set out in the Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030. (more details available at <https://cypsp.hscni.net/> )



**Each section of this report identifies indicators set out under the following high level outcomes:**

**Physical and Mental Health; Enjoyment of play and leisure; Learning and achieving; Living in safety and with stability; Experiencing economic and environmental well-being; Contributing positively to community and society; Living in a society which respects their rights and promotion of equality and good relations. Rights based indicators are identified throughout the document.**

This **14th** Outcome Monitoring Report shows how children and young people in Northern Ireland are doing in relation to the Government's eight outcomes and covers the period **2017** up to **2025** (where available). The report presents the information collected against agreed indicators for each outcome, providing trend analysis over time and comparison across geographical sectors. The information is also available in greater detail (Trust, District Council, New LGDs and Electoral Ward areas) on request to the CSP Information Manager, Community Care (contact details on page **125**), who can also provide information on sources and how the information was collated. Visit <https://cypsp-maps.hscni.net/> to view the indicators visually mapped. (Training on the mapping system is available from the CSP Planning & Information Manager).



In reviewing progress towards achieving the eight outcomes it is essential to be able to measure the progress for our most vulnerable children. In order to do this, the data collected needs to be disaggregated by specific groups of children identified as priority by the Children's Services Planning process as well as the Section 75 (NI Act 1998) categories. The Children's Services Plan describes how the core indicators included in this report will be analysed for specific groups of children and complemented by additional indicators. Work is also continuing to ensure the indicators allow us to measure children's rights and how they are being realised.

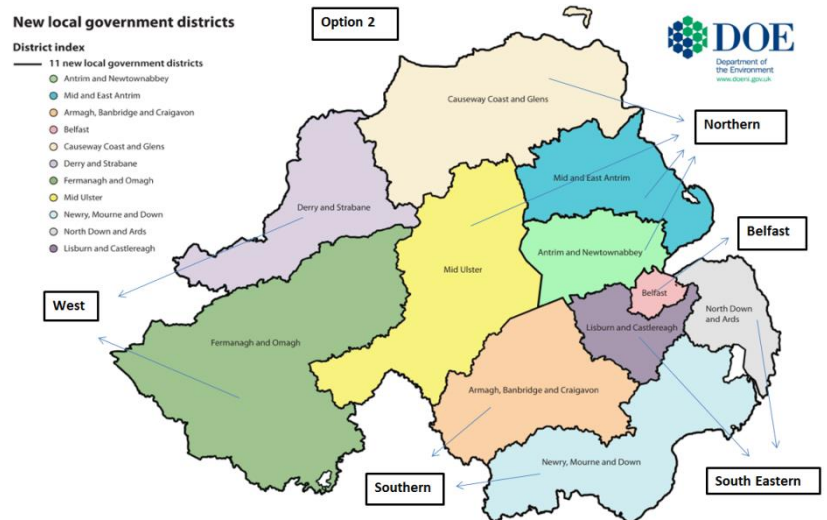
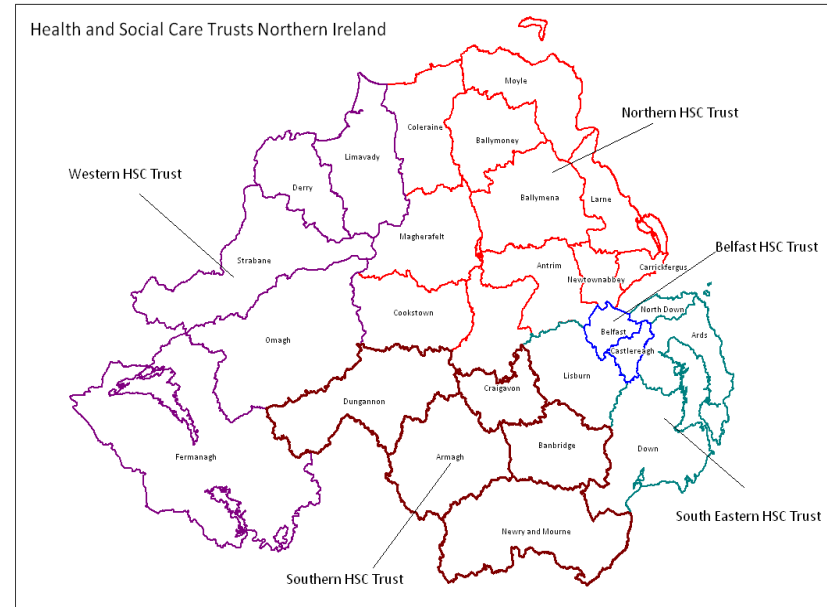
The Information collated in this report is already being used by Children's Services Planning Working Groups, together with needs assessment material collected from agencies, children and young people and communities, in the planning of services. It is also useful for locality partnerships, who can use it to help them plan better for children in a particular locality.

We are publishing this information as we hope it will be useful for any agency or partnership, at local or Northern Ireland level, in the analysis of how well our Children and Young people are doing, against our agreed outcomes. This information is also available on our CYPSP Interactive mapping system which can be found at <https://cypsp-maps.hscni.net/>



The following indicators are included in this chapter to provide information on Population:-

- Demographic Profile of Northern Ireland
- Demographic Profiles of Trusts within Northern Ireland (MYE 2024)
- 25 Year Population Projections by Trust and Age Band
- % Minority Ethnic Groups
- % NI Minority Ethnic Population
- % NI Migrant Population by Country of Birth by LGD
- Migration Statistics – Net international migration by LGD
- Net Migration and Population Change by LGD
- Number of Migrant Population who cannot speak English or speak English well
- % Migrant Population by Main Language by LGD and Top 20 Languages Requested
- Birthing Trends
- Key Messages



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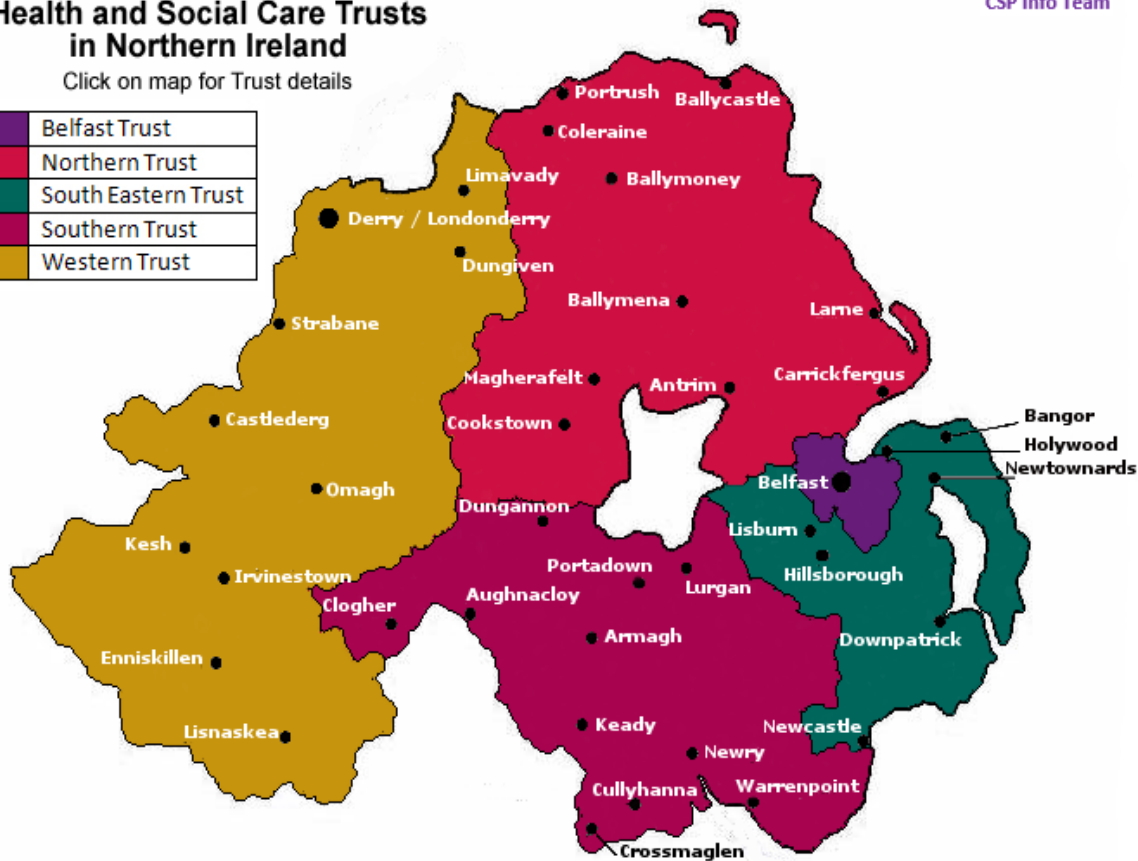
# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

## Demography

### Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland

Click on map for Trust details

<span style="color: purple;">■</span>	Belfast Trust
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	Northern Trust
<span style="color: teal;">■</span>	South Eastern Trust
<span style="color: magenta;">■</span>	Southern Trust
<span style="color: gold;">■</span>	Western Trust



### DEMOGRAPHIC HEADLINES

Current population of under 18 year olds in Northern Ireland: **435,536** (MYE 2024)

This is **22.6%** of the total population in Northern Ireland in 2024.

The Southern and Western Areas have the highest percentage of the population aged under 18 years of age (**24.9%** and **23.5%** respectively), higher than the NI percentage.

25 year percentage population change for 2018-2043 illustrate a drop (-9.6%) in the 0-17 year old population. The biggest drop in population is the 5-9 age group at **-15.7%** by 2043.



# Demographic Profiles of Trusts within Northern Ireland

Data Source: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) (MYE, 2024)

Demography

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF TRUSTS WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND 2024

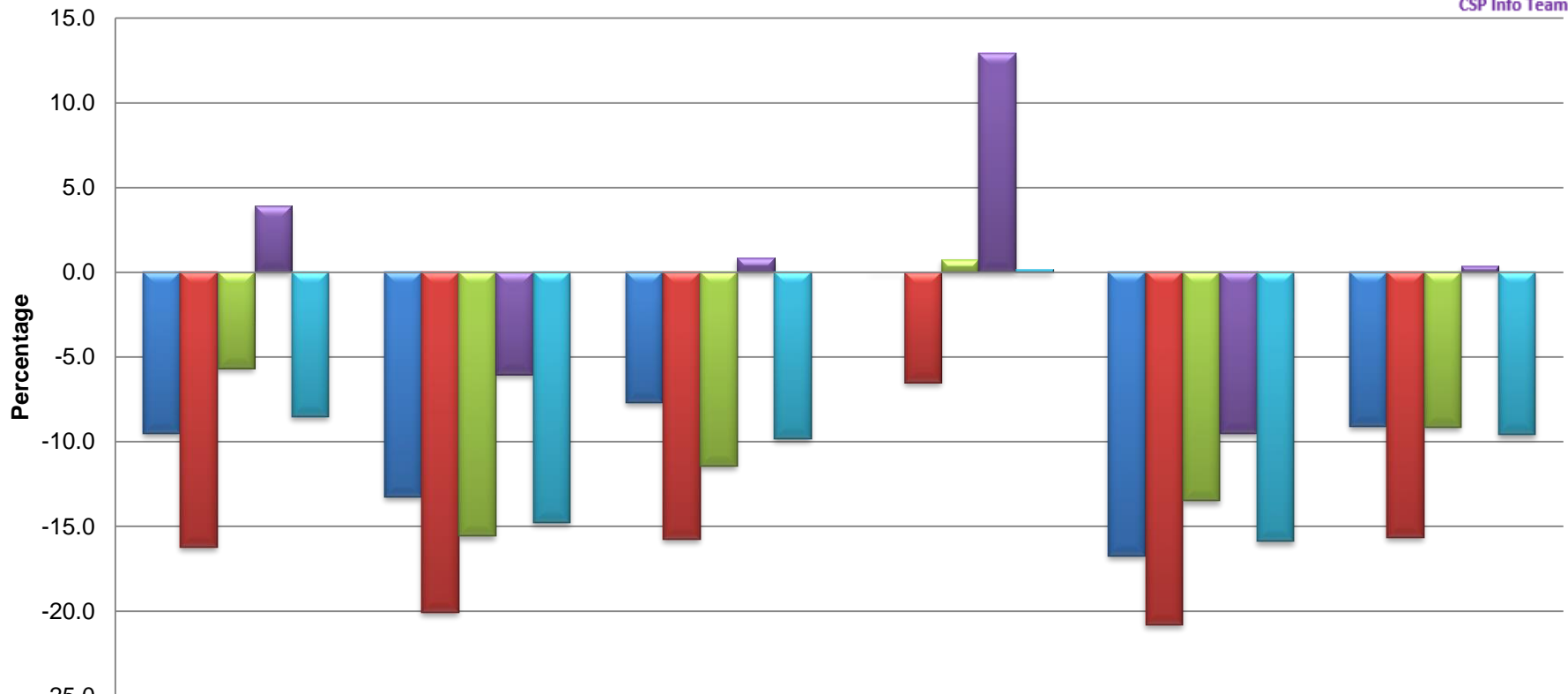
 CSP Info Team	Belfast	Northern	S Eastern	Southern	Western	NI
0-4 years	19,647	25,944	19,299	24,648	17,728	<b>107,266</b>
5-9 years	21,407	29,710	23,080	27,834	20,208	<b>122,239</b>
10-14 years	22,592	31,844	24,602	29,065	21,031	<b>129,134</b>
15-17 years	13,058	19,133	14,907	17,172	12,627	<b>76,897</b>
0-17 Year Population	76,704	106,631	81,888	98,719	71,594	<b>435,536</b>
Whole Population	371,382	483,509	372,231	396,228	304,505	<b>1,927,855</b>
Child Population as a percentage of whole population	20.7%	22.1%	22.0%	24.9%	23.5%	<b>22.6%</b>



# 25 Year Population Projections by Trust and Age Band

Data Source: NISRA Population Projections

### Percentage Population Change 2018-2043 by Trust and Age Band



	BHSCT	NHSCT	SEHSCT	SHSCT	WHSCT	NI
0-4	-9.5	-13.3	-7.7	0.0	-16.8	-9.1
5-9	-16.2	-20.1	-15.8	-6.5	-20.8	-15.7
10-14	-5.7	-15.6	-11.5	0.8	-13.5	-9.2
15-17	3.9	-6.0	0.9	13.0	-9.5	0.4
0-17	-8.5	-14.8	-9.8	0.2	-15.9	-9.6



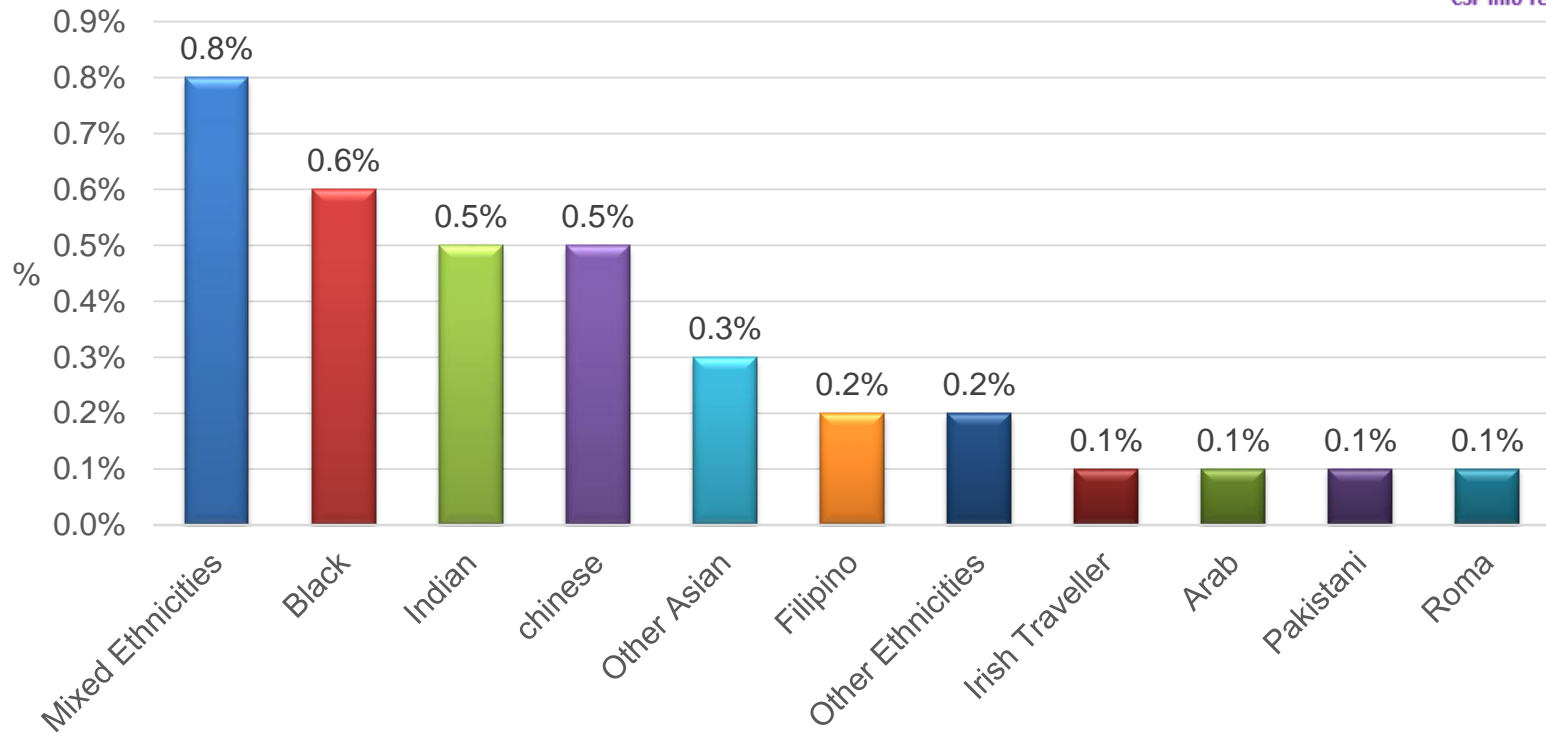
# % Minority Ethnic Groups in NI

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

Demography



### % Minority Ethnic Groups 2021



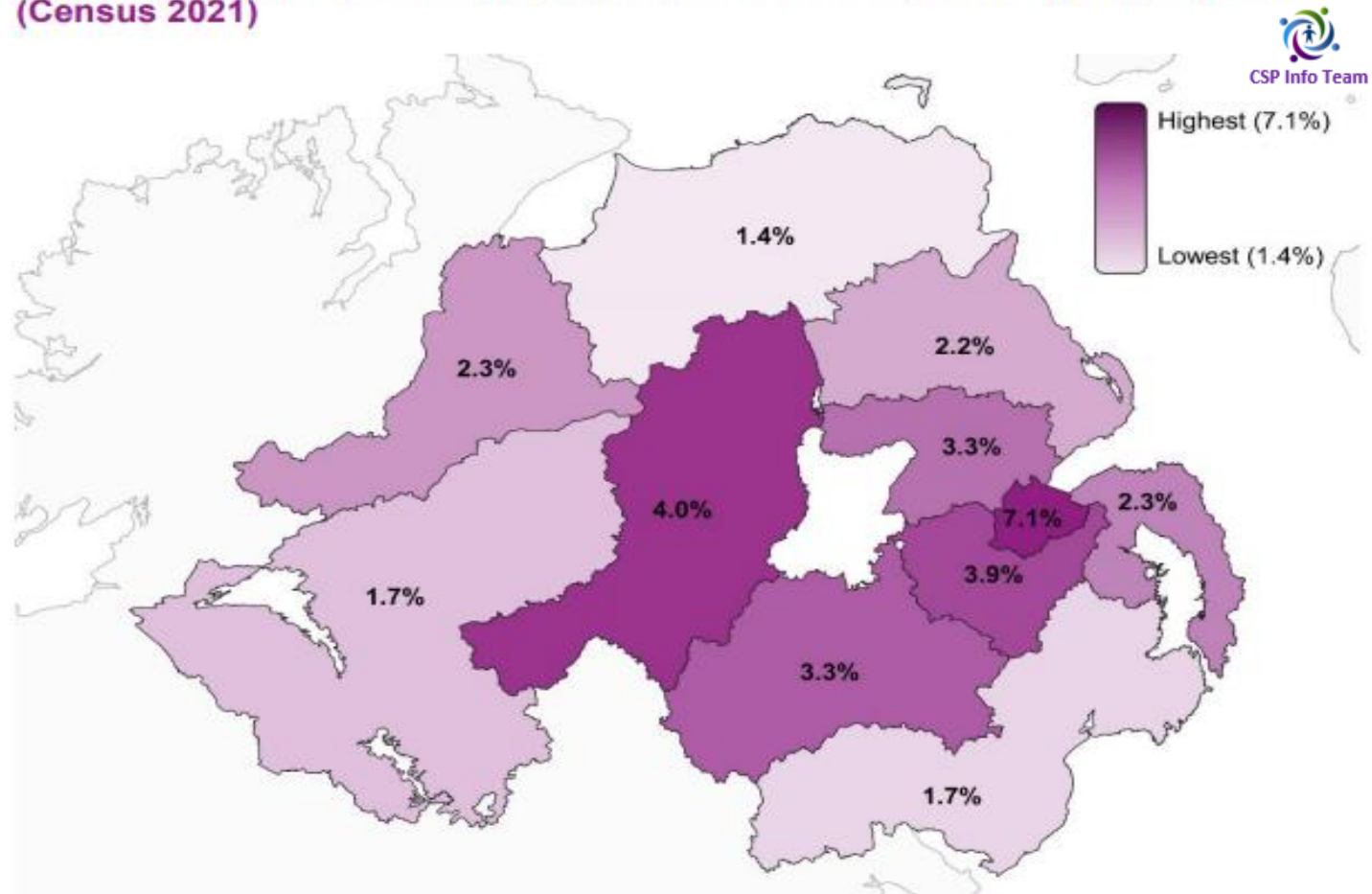
In 2021 the number of people with a white ethnic group was **1,837,600** (96.6% of the population). Conversely, the total number of people with a minority ethnic group stood at **65,600** people (3.4% of the population). Within this latter classification, the largest groups were Mixed Ethnicities (**14,400**), Black (**11,000**), Indian (**9,900**), Chinese (**9,500**), and Filipino (**4,500**). Irish Traveller, Arab, Pakistani and Roma ethnicities also each constituted **1,500** people or more.

# % Northern Ireland Minority Ethnic Population by LGD

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

Demography

**Figure 4: Percentage of the population with a minority ethnic group by LGD (Census 2021)**

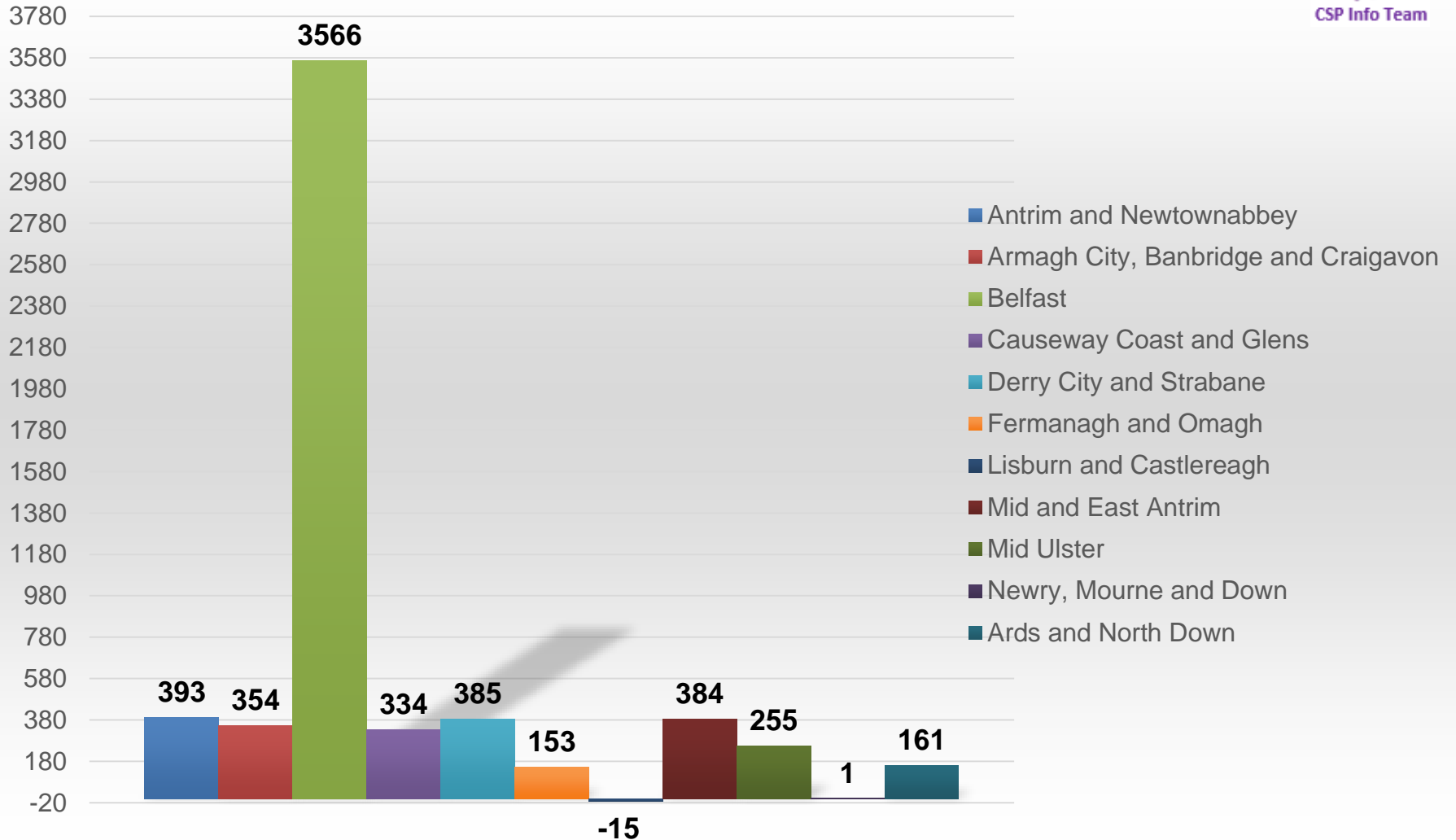


The most diverse Local Government Districts are Belfast (7.1% of the population with a minority ethnic group), Mid Ulster (4.0%) and Lisburn and Castlereagh (3.9%).





### Net International Migration by LGD 2024





# Net Migration and Population change by LGD - July 2024

Data Source: NISRA

## Demography

Area (LGD)	Net International Migration	Net Within UK Migration	Net Internal Migration	Natural and Other Changes	Total Migration: Population Change	MYE 2024 Resident Population	Population Change Percentage
Antrim & Newtownabbey	393	42	351	16	<b>802</b>	148,100	<b>0.5%</b>
Ards & North Down	161	9	673	-341	<b>502</b>	165,415	<b>0.3%</b>
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	354	101	400	-98	<b>757</b>	222,511	<b>0.3%</b>
Belfast	3,566	-586	-1,737	614	<b>1,857</b>	352,390	<b>0.5%</b>
Causeway Coast & Glens	334	0	-140	27	<b>221</b>	141,954	<b>0.2%</b>
Derry City & Strabane	385	18	-29	1,150	<b>1,524</b>	152,383	<b>1.0%</b>
Fermanagh & Omagh	153	115	-87	311	<b>492</b>	117,687	<b>0.4%</b>
Lisburn & Castlereagh	-15	4	711	147	<b>847</b>	151,669	<b>0.6%</b>
Mid & East Antrim	384	44	274	-629	<b>73</b>	139,913	<b>0.1%</b>
Mid Ulster	255	28	-58	487	<b>712</b>	152,718	<b>0.5%</b>
Newry, Mourne & Down	1	23	-358	20	<b>-314</b>	183,115	<b>-0.2%</b>
Northern Ireland	5,971	-202	0	1,704	<b>7,473</b>	1,927,855	<b>0.4%</b>

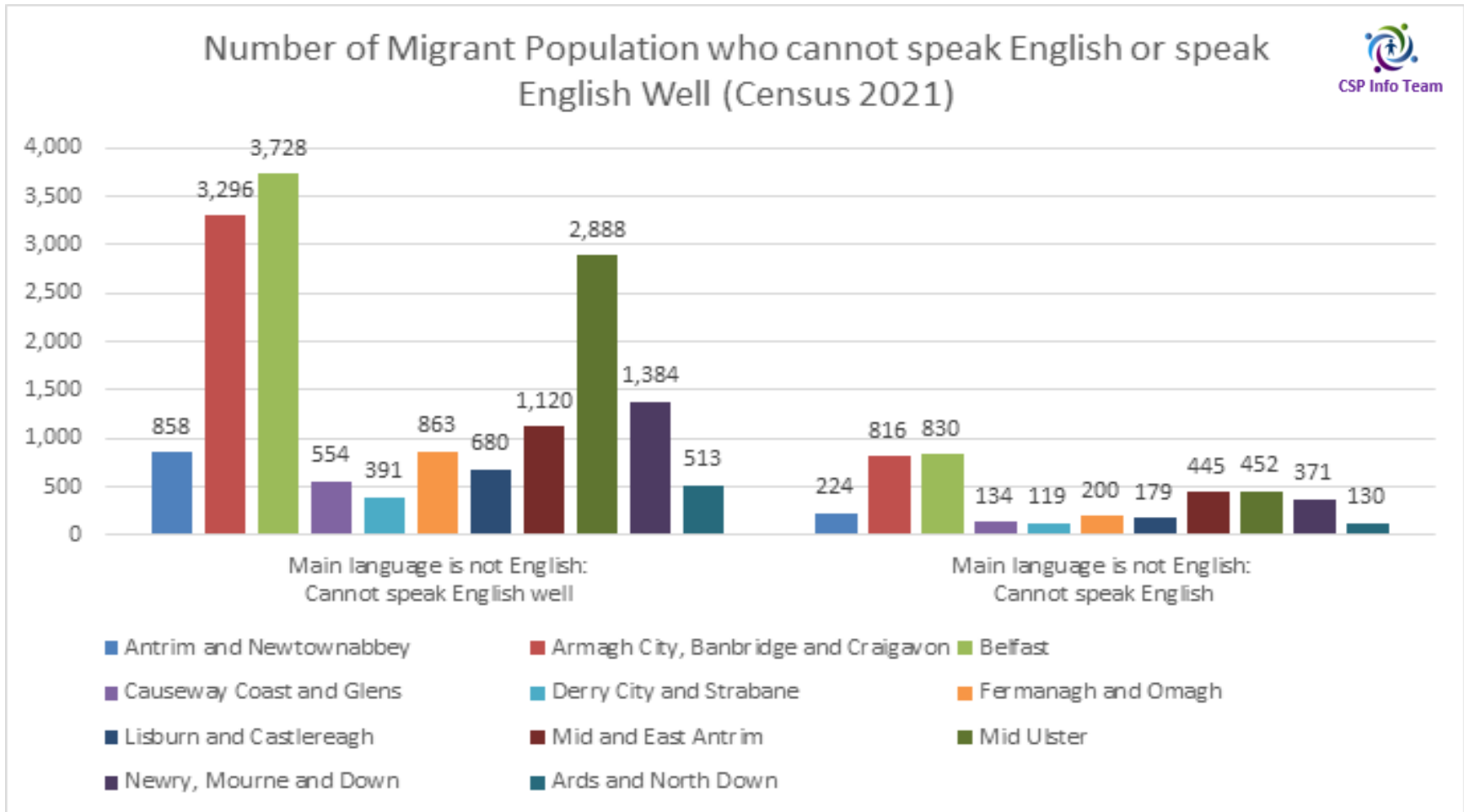
The chart shows migration data across all eleven Local Government Districts (LGDs). The LGD with the highest % population change was Derry City and Strabane..



# Number of Migrant Population who cannot speak English or speak English well

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

Demography



The number of migrants who cannot speak English well is the highest in Belfast LGD at **3,728** followed by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon LGD at **3,296**.

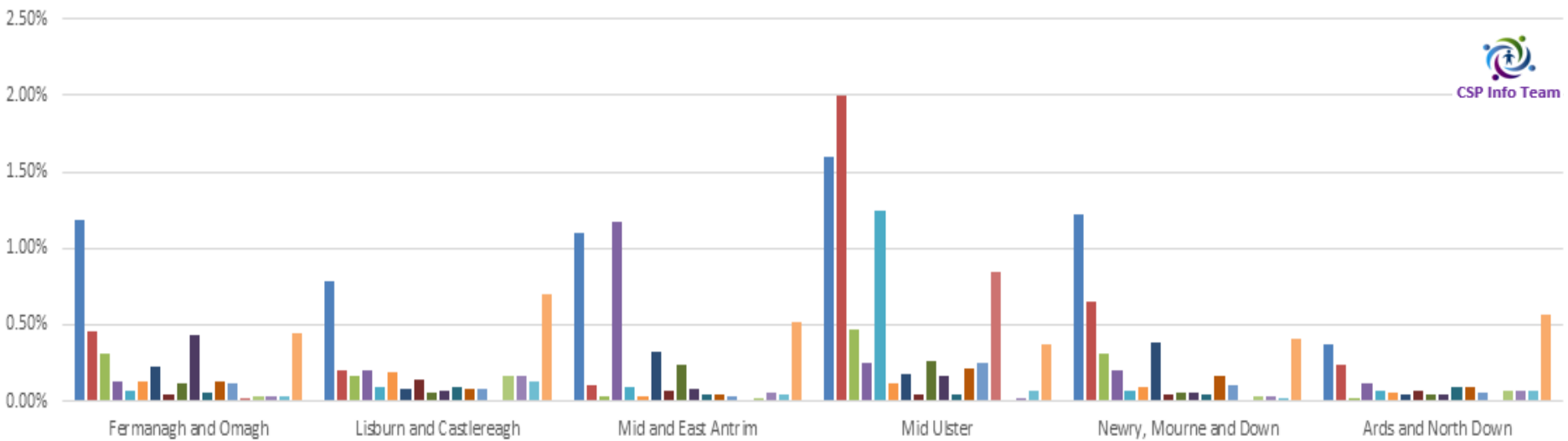
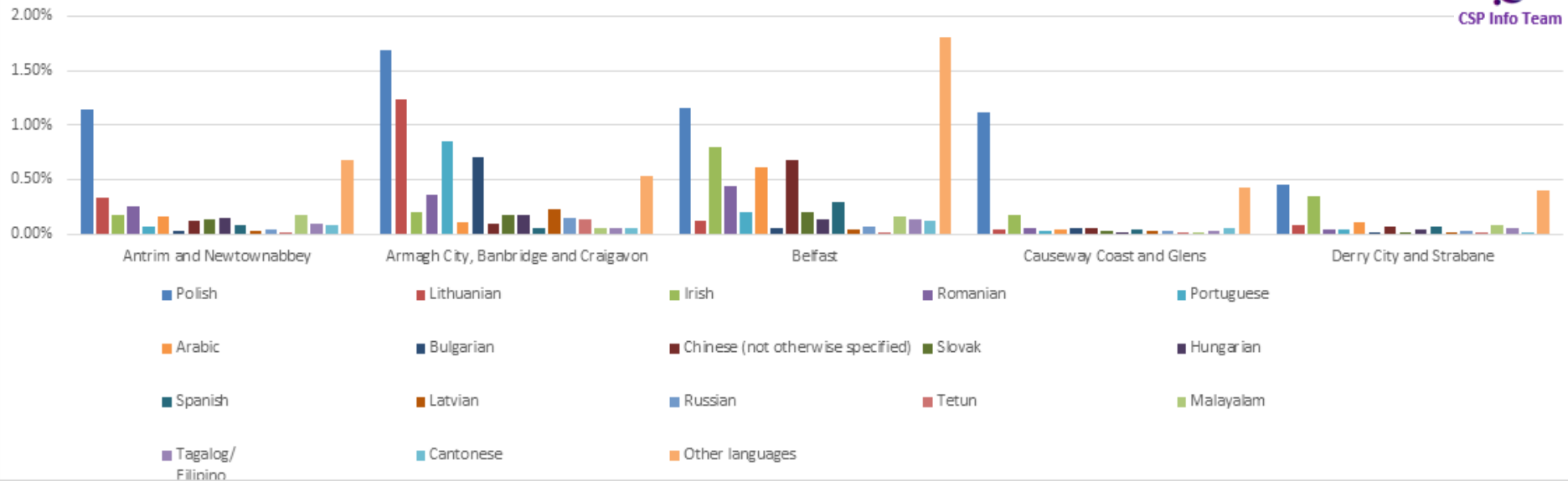


# % Migrant Population by Main Language by LGD

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

## Demography

### % Migrant Population Main Language (Census 2021)





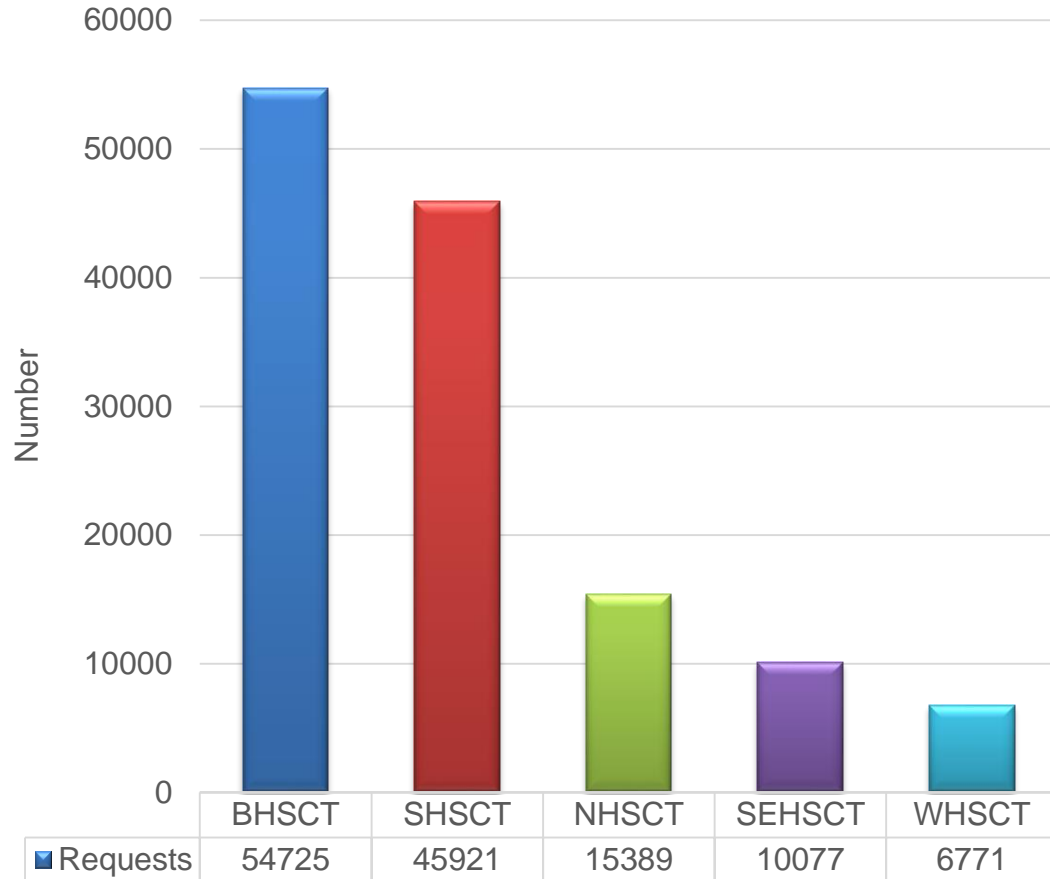
# Number and % of Interpreters Requested by HSCT 1 April – Mar 26

Data Source: BSO Interpreting Service

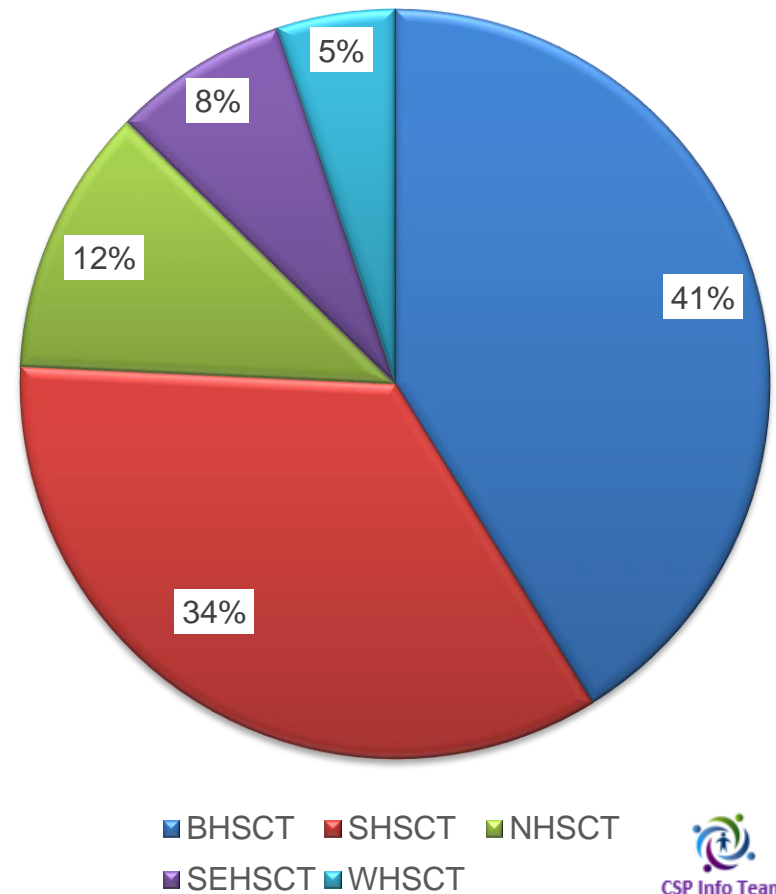
## Demography



### Number of Interpreter Requests by Trust 1 Apr 2025- 31 Mar 2026



### Percentage requests by HSCT



BHSCT had the highest % (41%) of requests for interpreters with SHSCT (34%) and the other 3 Trusts making up 25%.

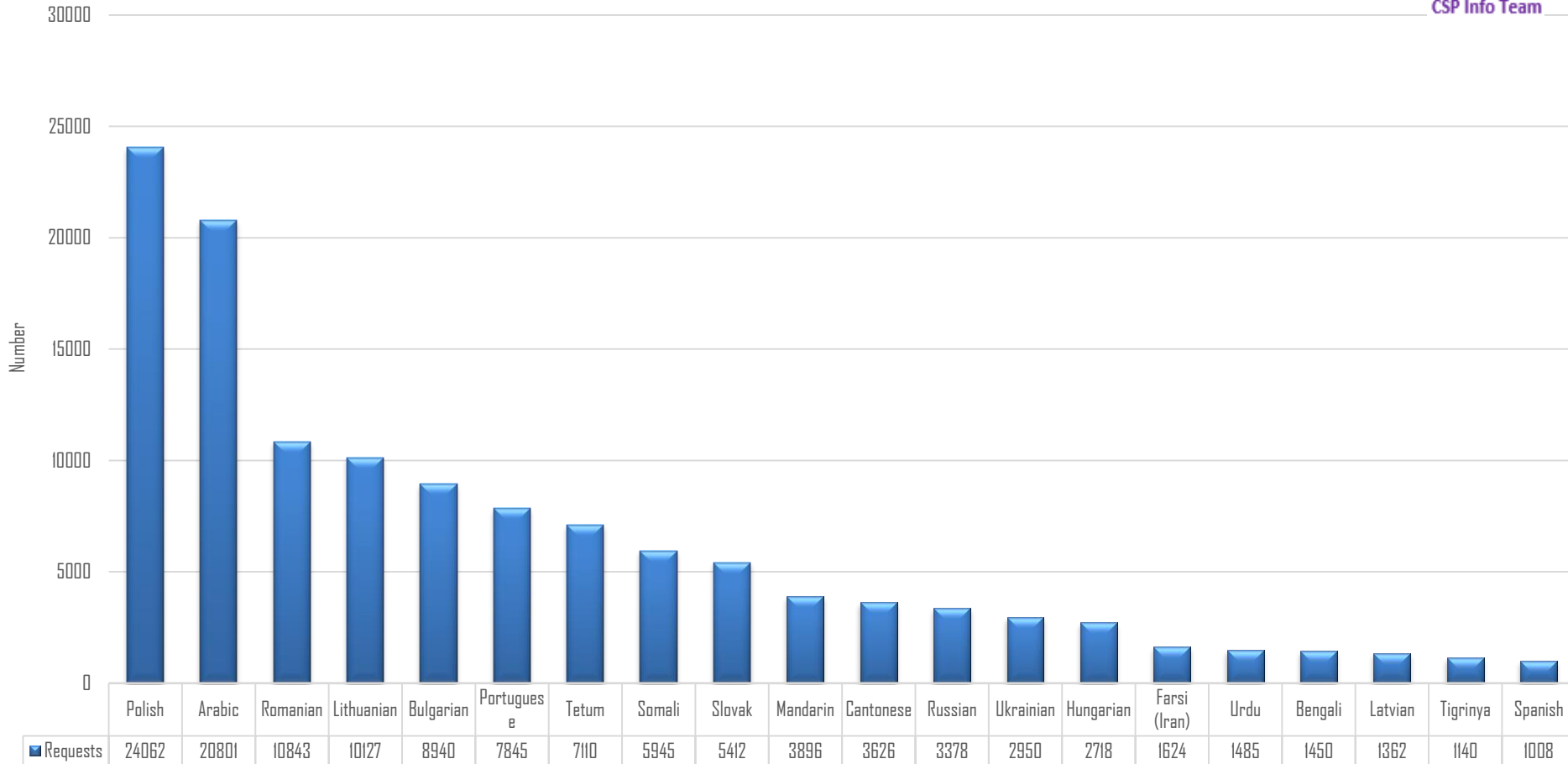


# Interpreters Requested by Language 1 April – Mar 26

Data Source: BSO Interpreting Service

## Demography

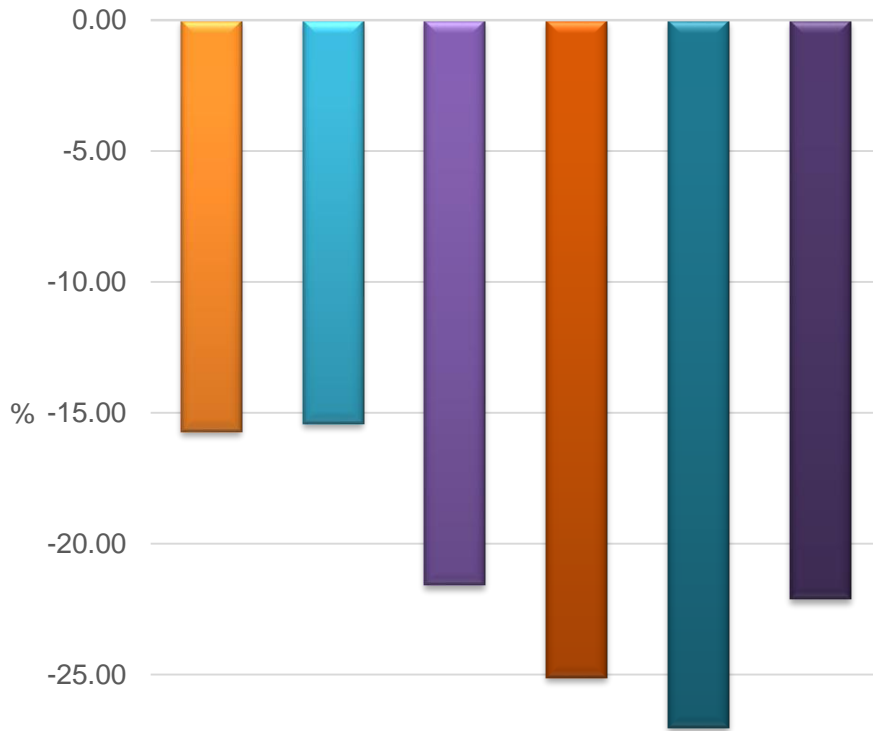
### Top 20 Languages Requested



The top 2 languages requested by the HSCTs was Polish followed by Arabic in 2025/26.



### Percentage Change in Birthing Trends (Live) by Residency from March 2018 to March 2025



	Belfast Trust	South Eastern Trust	Northern Trust	Southern Trust	Western Trust	Northern Ireland
%	-15.74	-15.43	-21.60	-25.13	-27.04	-22.14

CSP Info Team	Number of Live Births Mar 2018	Number of Live Births Mar 2025	Percentage Change in Live Births Between 2018 and 2025
Belfast Area	4,339	3,656	-18.68%
South Eastern Area	3,943	3,416	-15.43%
Northern Area	5,471	4,499	-21.60%
Southern Area	5,418	4,330	-25.13%
Western Area	3,895	3,066	-27.04%
Northern Ireland	23,066	18,967	-22.14%

The graph and table shows there has been a downward trend in the numbers of live births in all areas. The Western Area has the largest percentage drop in births between 2018 and 2025.



- ❑ The size of the Northern Ireland resident population on 30 June 2024 was **1,927,900** and increase of 7,500(0.4% growth) from 30 June 2023.
- ❑ There were **19,416** births registered in 2024, a decrease of **546** on the 2023 figure (19,962).
- ❑ In 2024 the percentage of maternities resulting in a multiple birth was **1.6** per cent. There were **298** sets of twins and **2** sets of triplets born.
- ❑ In 2024, **46.0** per cent of births occurred outside of marriage/civil partnership. A trend that has been gradually increasing compared with 22.1 per cent three decades ago.
- ❑ The proportion of births to mothers under 20 years of age (teenage mothers) reduced slightly in the last year 2.1% 426 in 2023 to **2.0% (380)** in 2024. This is the lowest proportion of teenage mothers on record and is noticeably lower than a decade ago at 3.4%.
- ❑ Over recent years, the number of births to mothers born outside the UK and Ireland has increased significantly. In 2024 **12.8%** of births were to mothers who were born outside the UK and Ireland, compared to 5.0% 20 years ago.
- ❑ There were **88** infant deaths (i.e. deaths in the first year of life) registered, representing an increase of **10.0%** on the previous year (80). This equates to 4.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.
- ❑ **36.3%** of infant deaths occurred during the first day of life and two thirds (**56.3%**) occurred in the first week of life.
- ❑ **60** stillbirths (33 males and 27 females) were registered in 2024. This equates to a rate of **3.1%** per 1000 total births which is a decrease from 3.3% in 2023.



## What we want to achieve for all children and young people:-

- Reduced inequalities in health and access to health services;
- Improved mental and emotional well-being by strengthening services and promoting positive attitudes;
- Improved physical and sexual health;
- Young people supported to make healthy lifestyle choices;
- Parents provided with assistance from an early stage to ensure children have a good start in life and are supported into adulthood.

## The following indicators are included in this chapter to measure the health of all our children and young people:-

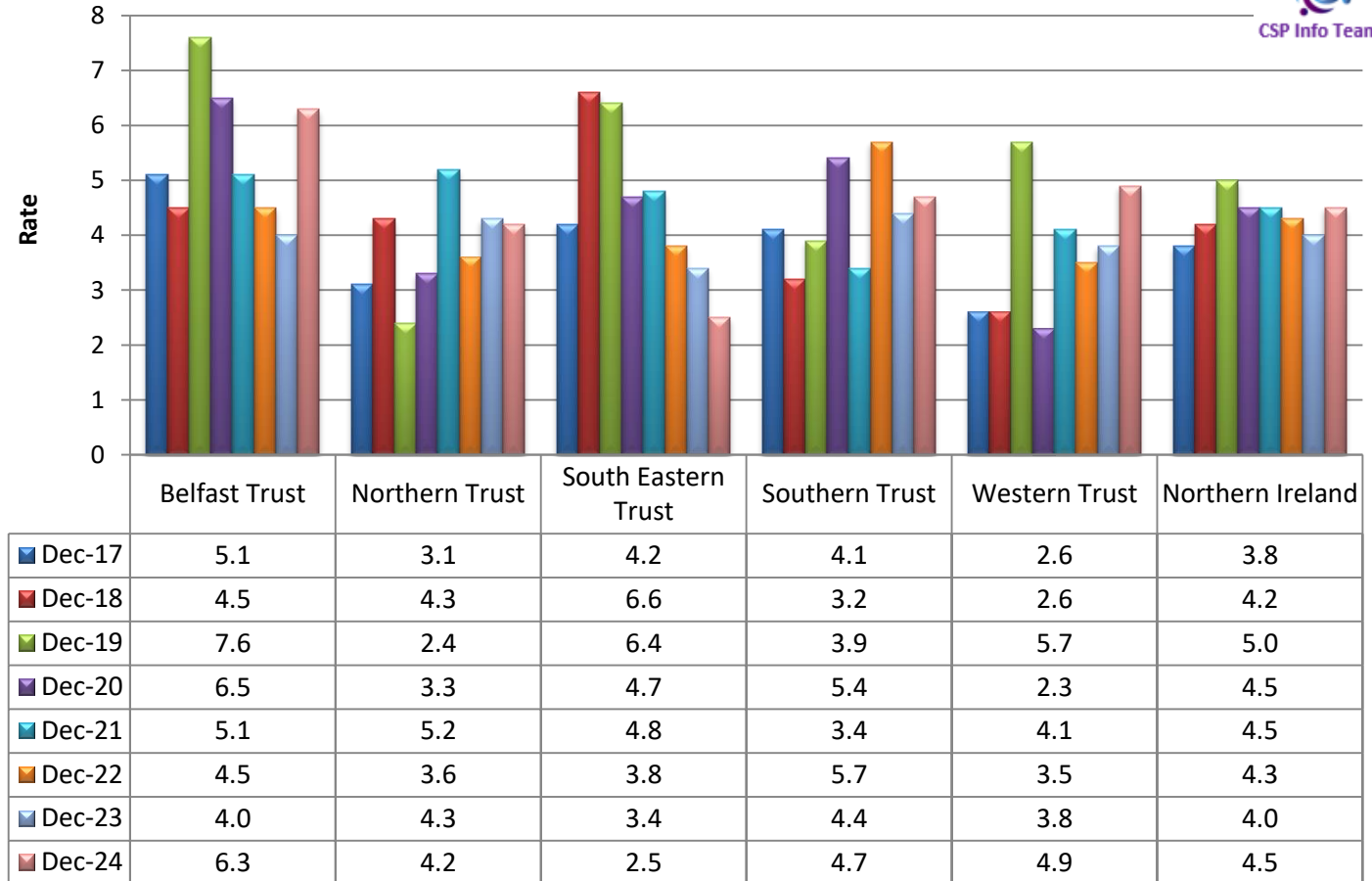
- Infant Mortality Rates
- Low Birth Weight Rates
- % Mums Smoking During Pregnancy
- % Immunisation Uptake for MMR at 24 months
- % Mothers Breastfeeding at Discharge
- % Births to Mothers U20 Years of Age
- Rate of Births to Mothers U20 Years of Age
- % Births to Mothers aged 13 to 17 Years
- % Population with 'Bad or very bad' General Health by Age Band
- % Population with 'Bad or very bad' General Health by LGD
- Limiting Long-term health problems or Disability by Age Band
- % Population with Long-term Health Problems or Disability which Limits Activities a lot by LGD
- Age-specific % of Population with Long-term Health Conditions
- Number of New Autism Diagnosis for Children by Trusts
- CAMHS Total Waits for Assessment by HSCT
- Mental Illness Inpatients Resident
- % of Population Providing Unpaid Care by Age Band
- Provision of Unpaid Care by Age Band
- % of Population Aged 5 or more Providing Unpaid Care by LGD
- Life Expectancy from Birth
- % Dental Registrations Children Aged 0-2 yrs and 3-5 yrs
- Children with a Disability in receipt of DLA
- Sexually Transmitted Infections U16
- Sexually Transmitted Infections 16-19
- Sexual Experience and Knowledge
- Children who are Overweight or Obese
- 0-17 year olds Admitted to HSC Hospitals with Self Harm Related Diagnoses
- 0-17 year olds Admitted to HSC Hospitals with Alcohol Related Diagnoses
- Child Deaths by Suicide by HSC Trust
- Child Deaths by Suicide in NI by Gender
- Suicide in the 15-34 Age Group by HSC Trust
- Suicide in the 15-34 Age Group in NI by Gender
- Child Deaths by Accidents
- Cigarette Usage Amongst Young People
- Alcohol and Drug Usage Amongst Young People
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Mental and Emotional Health



### Why is it Important?

Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is defined as the number of deaths of infants, one year of age and younger, per 1000 live births. The infant mortality rate is an important measure of the well-being of infants, children, and pregnant women because it is associated with a variety of factors, such as maternal health, quality and access to medical care, socio-economic conditions, and public health practices. (Reidpath, Allotey) (1)

### Infant Mortality Rates (per 1,000 Live Births)



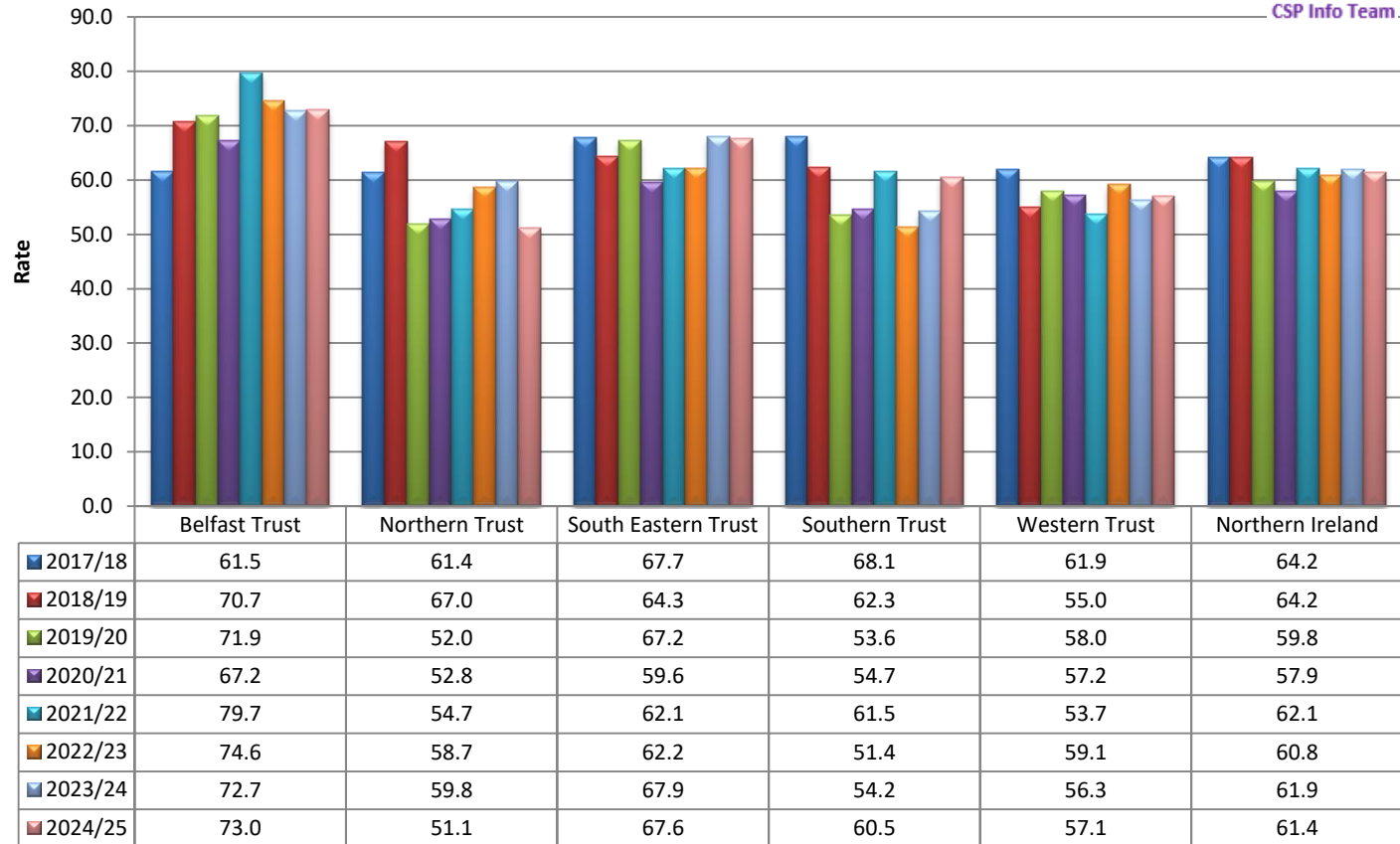
**The Story behind the Trends** – The majority of Trust areas have seen an increase in the rates of infant mortality in 2024, except Northern and South Eastern Trust. The NI rate has increased to **4.5** with **88** infant deaths, 8 more than in 2023. In 2024 the District Council areas with the highest Infant Mortality Rates were: Derry & Strabane with 7.1, Belfast 6.0, Mid Ulster 5.8, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon 5.1 and Antrim & Newtownabbey 5.0.



## Why is it Important?

Low birth weight has been defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as weight at birth less than 2,500 grams (5.5 lbs). Low birth weight is a major determinant of mortality, morbidity and disability in infancy and childhood and has a long-term impact on health outcomes in adult life. Low birth weight results in substantial costs to the health sector and imposes a significant burden on society as a whole. (WHO)(2).

### Low Birth Weight Rates (Less than 2500gms Per 1,000 Live Births)



**The Story Behind the Trends** - Possible causes of low birth weight in babies include multiple births who are at increased risk of low birth weight due to prematurity, teen mums (especially those younger than 15 yrs old) also, mums who are exposed to illicit drugs, alcohol and cigarettes are more likely to have low birth weight babies. Since 2017/18 all Trust areas have fluctuated in the rate per 1000 low birth weights with Belfast Trust constantly higher than the NI average of 61.4 in 2024/25.



# Percentage Mums Smoking During Pregnancy

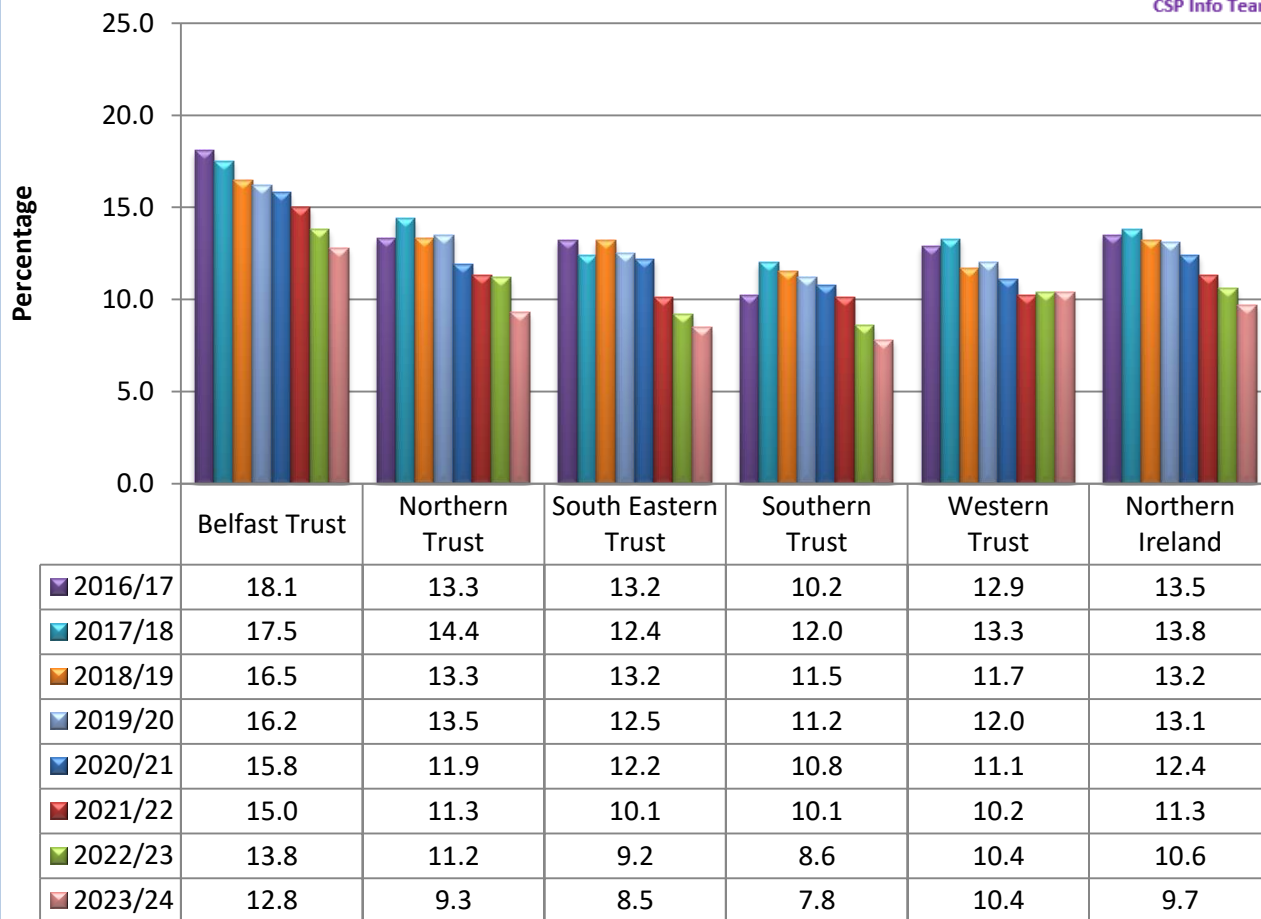
Data Source: PHA Statistical Profile of Children’s Health 2024

[UNCRC Articles: 6, 27](#) (click link to view articles)



**Why is it Important?** In addition to increasing the mother’s risk of potentially serious complications, smoking during pregnancy is the largest preventable cause of ill health and death in young babies and infants. Smoking cuts down the amount of oxygen and nutrients that get to the baby through the placenta. A baby needs these to grow and develop, so babies of women who smoke tend to be smaller than they ought to be. It is linked to pregnancy complications, premature delivery, low birth weight babies – a leading cause of infant death, stillbirth, miscarriage, sudden infant death syndrome (SID), also known as cot death (PHA Stop Smoking, helping you to quit) (18).

### Percentage Mums Smoking During Pregnancy



**The Story Behind the Trends** – The majority of areas have decreased, except the Western Trust which has stayed the same, in the percentage of mums smoking during pregnancy in 2023/24. Belfast and the Western Trust are higher and the other areas lower than the NI percentage of **9.7%**. Note: (Figures for Mums smoking during pregnancy are no longer available from CHS, but sourced from NI Maternity System (NIMATS))



# Percentage Immunisation Uptake for MMR at 24 Months

Data Source: Child Health System

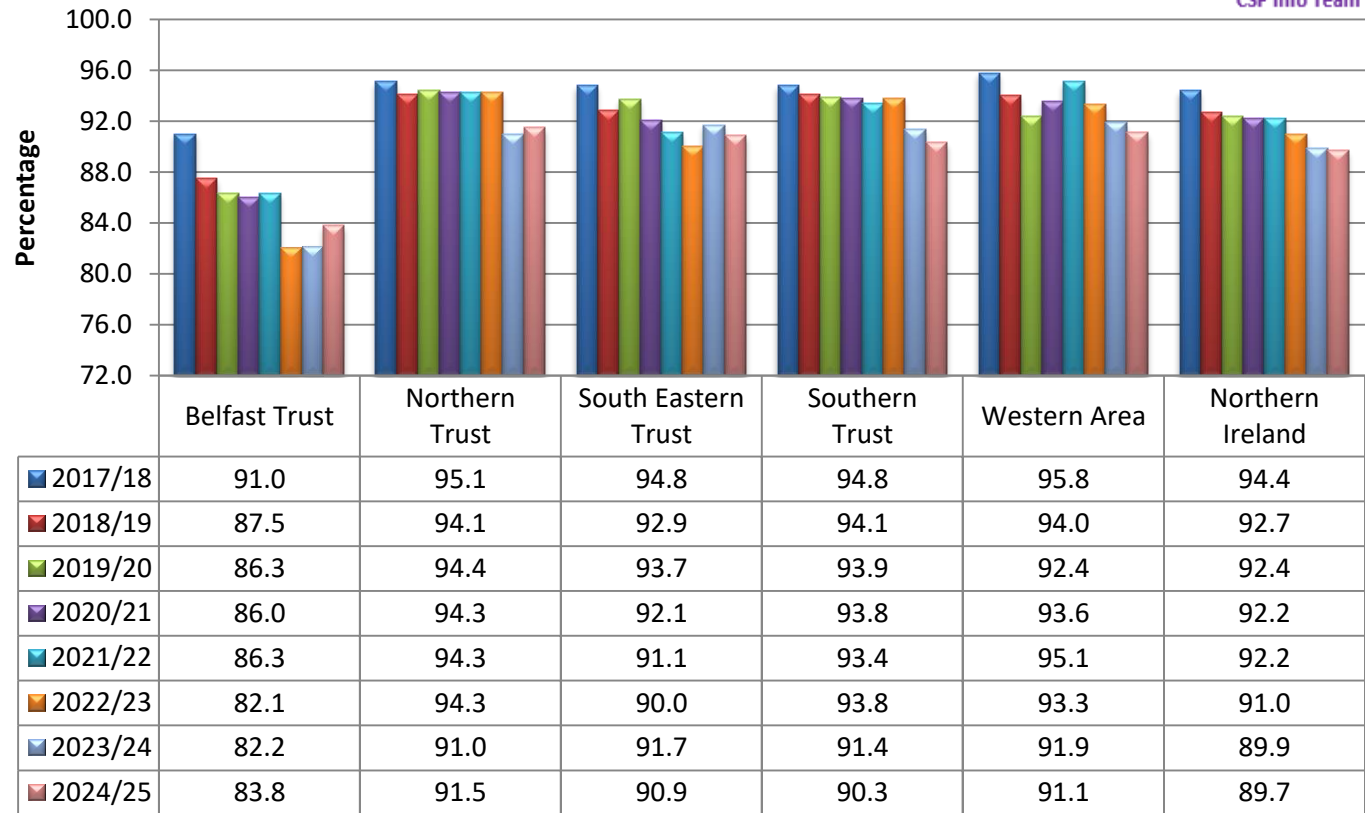
[UNCRC Articles: 6, 24](#) (click link to view articles)

Healthy



**Why is it Important?** It is important for children to have this immunisation - when 'herd immunity', or the overall number of children immunised drops there is a real risk of these diseases, such as smallpox and polio circulating again. MMR vaccine protects children against measles, mumps and rubella (German measles). Since MMR was introduced in Northern Ireland in 1988 the number of children catching these diseases has fallen to an all time low. (PHA Immunisation for babies just after their first birthday)(3).

### Percentage Immunisation Uptake of MMR at 24 Months



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Over the period Belfast Trust has consistently had the lowest percentage uptake of the MMR at 24 months. All other areas are higher than the NI uptake of **89.7** in 2024/25, with the Northern Trust the highest. World Health Organisation (WHO) **target = 95%** *These are very worrying statistics as low percentages affect herd immunity and overall protection for our Children and Young People.*



# Percentage Mothers Breastfeeding at Discharge

Data Source: Child Health System

[UNCRC Articles: 6, 27](#) (click link to view articles)

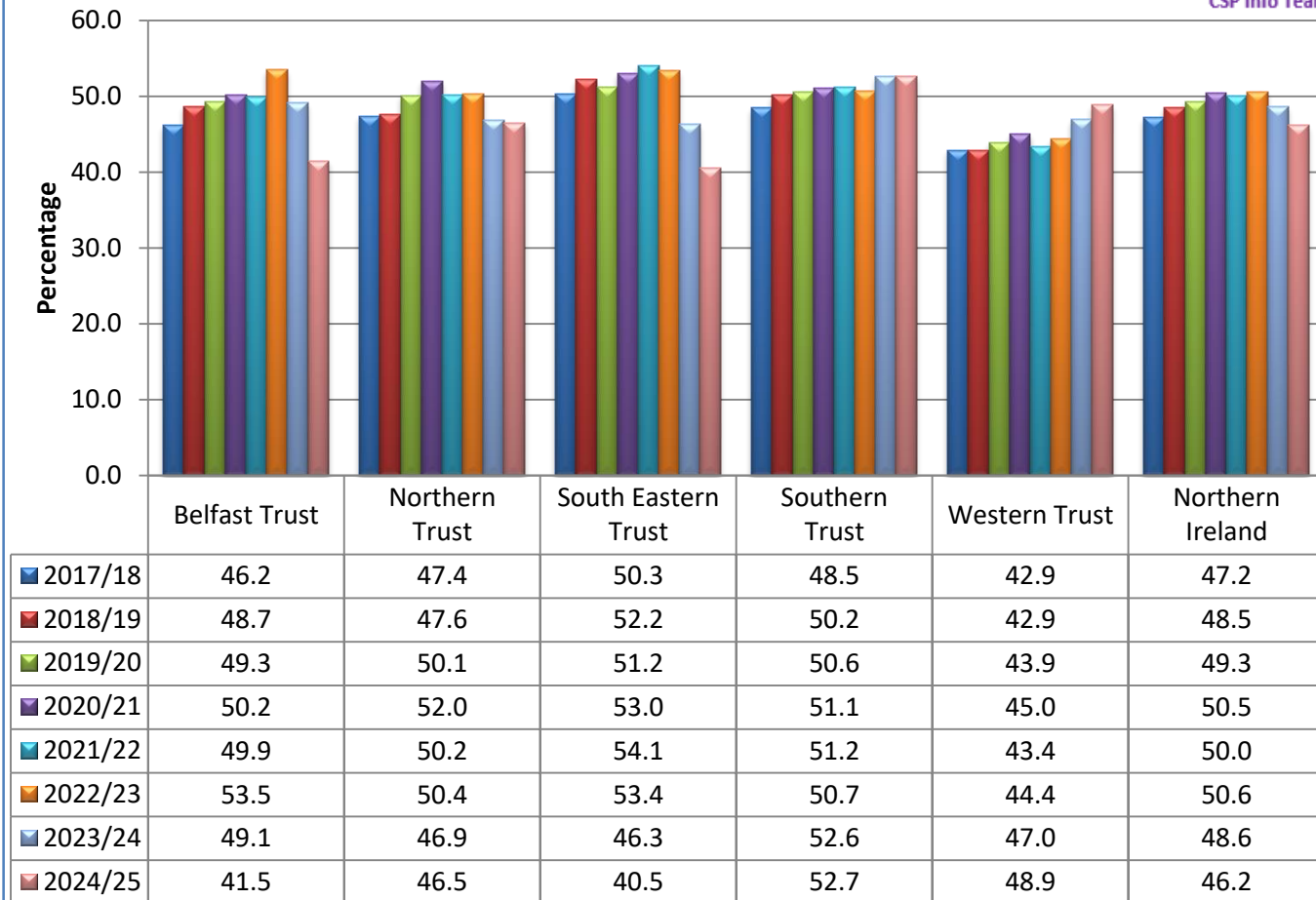
Healthy



## Why is it Important?

There has been significant reliable evidence produced to show that breastfeeding has important advantages for both infant and mother (UNICEF, Baby Friendly Initiative). (4) Breastfeeding has been widely acknowledged as the best means of giving infants a healthy start to life. Breast milk is age specific and is produced at the correct temperature and without any need for preparation. It not only provides the correct amount and balance of nutrients for optimal growth and development; it also protects against illness. (Breastfeeding– A Great Start A Strategy for NI 2013-2024)(5)

### Percentage Mothers Breastfeeding at Discharge



**The Story Behind the Trends** – In 2024/25, the majority of areas have seen a slight decrease in the percentage of mothers breastfeeding at discharge, except Southern and Western Trust. The NI percentage of **46.2%** is at its lowest in 8 years.



# Percentage Births to Mothers under 20 Years of Age

Data Source: Child Health System

[UNCRC Articles: 6,18,24,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

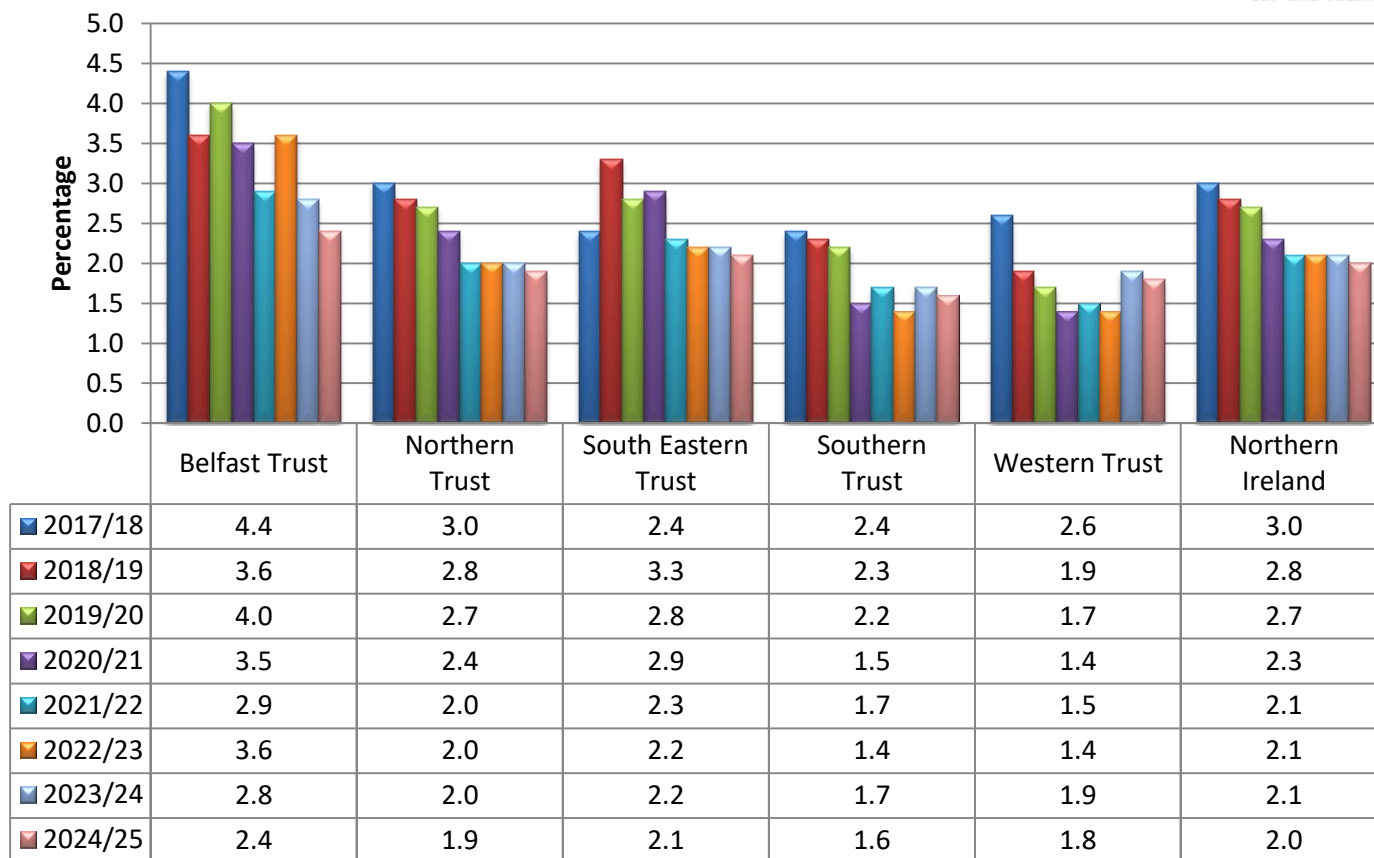
Healthy



## Why is it Important?

Rates are highest in areas of greatest social and economic deprivation. While some older teenagers may choose to become pregnant, the majority do not. Unplanned pregnancy represents a traumatic interruption to the lifestyles of young parents – they are suddenly forced into the realities and decisions of adulthood, with which they are ill-equipped to cope. (Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy and Action Plan 2002-2007)(6). There is no new NI Strategy however NI Teenage births continue to decrease.

### Percentage Births to Mothers Under 20 Years of Age



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Overall in Northern Ireland the percentage of births to mothers Under 20 years of age has decreased from 3.0% in 2017/18 to **2.0%** in 2024/25, the lowest % in eight years. Notably the percentage of births to mothers under 20 years of age in the Belfast Trust has been consistently higher than that for all of Northern Ireland. The total births across NI to mothers under 20 years was **373**.



# Rate of Births to Mothers Under 20 Years of Age

Data Source: Child Health System and NISRA

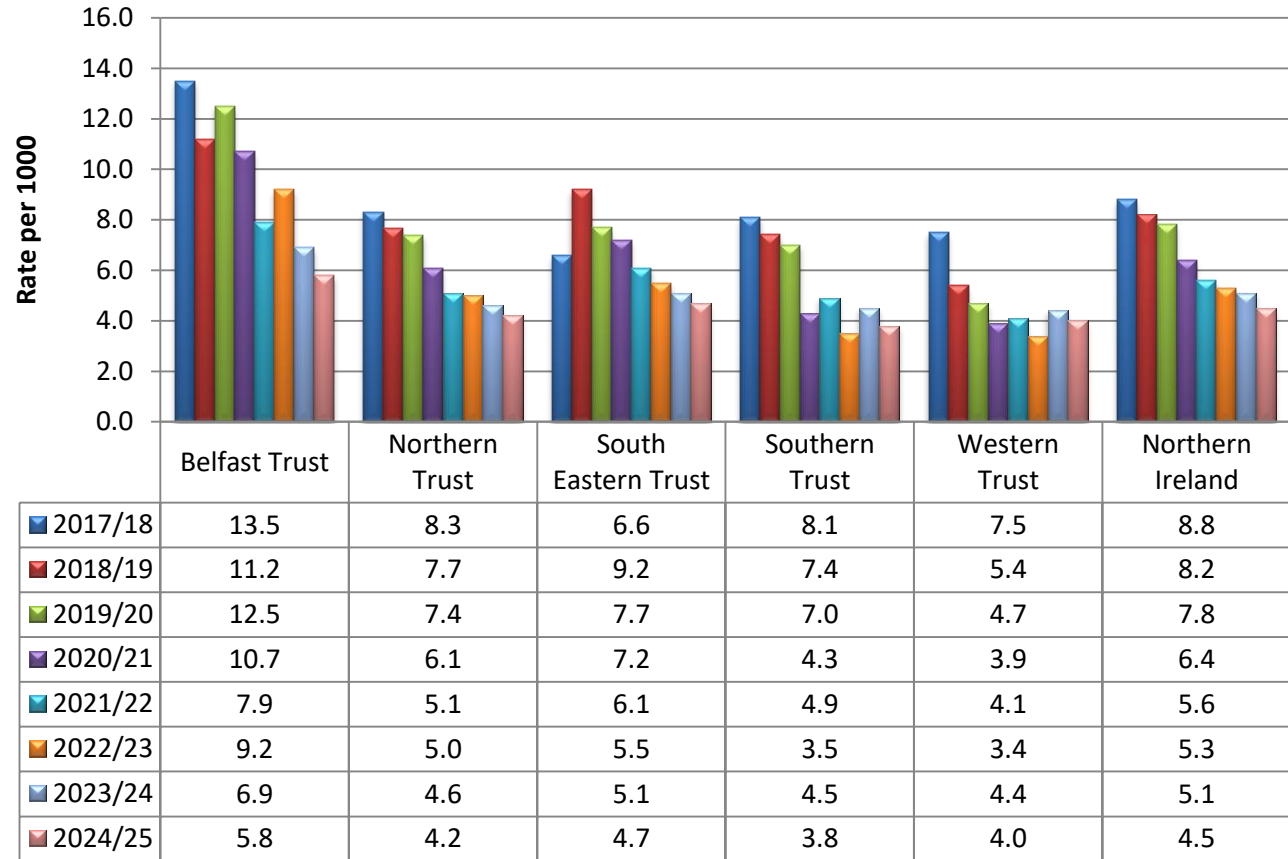
[UNCRC Articles: 6,18,24,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

Healthy



**Why is it Important?** Many young people are successful in adapting to the role of parenthood and have happy healthy children. For too many, however, unplanned teenage pregnancy and early parenthood is associated with poor educational achievement, poor physical and mental health, social isolate and poverty. Efforts to reduce rates of teenage pregnancy must focus on raising the expectations among young people and on equipping them with the confidence and skills to manage relationships. (The Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy and Action Plan 2002-2007) (6).

### Births to Mothers Under 20 as a Rate per 1000 of the 13-19 year old Female Population



**The Story Behind the Trends** – The above graph shows that the Belfast Trust has had the highest rate of births to mothers under 20 over the eight year period and above the NI rate. All Trusts have seen a decrease in births measured against the female population aged 13-19 in 2024/25, in line with the NI rate at **4.5%**, except Southern and Western Trust (This is the lowest number on record).



# Percentage Births to Mothers 13 to 17 Years of Age

Data Source: Child Health System

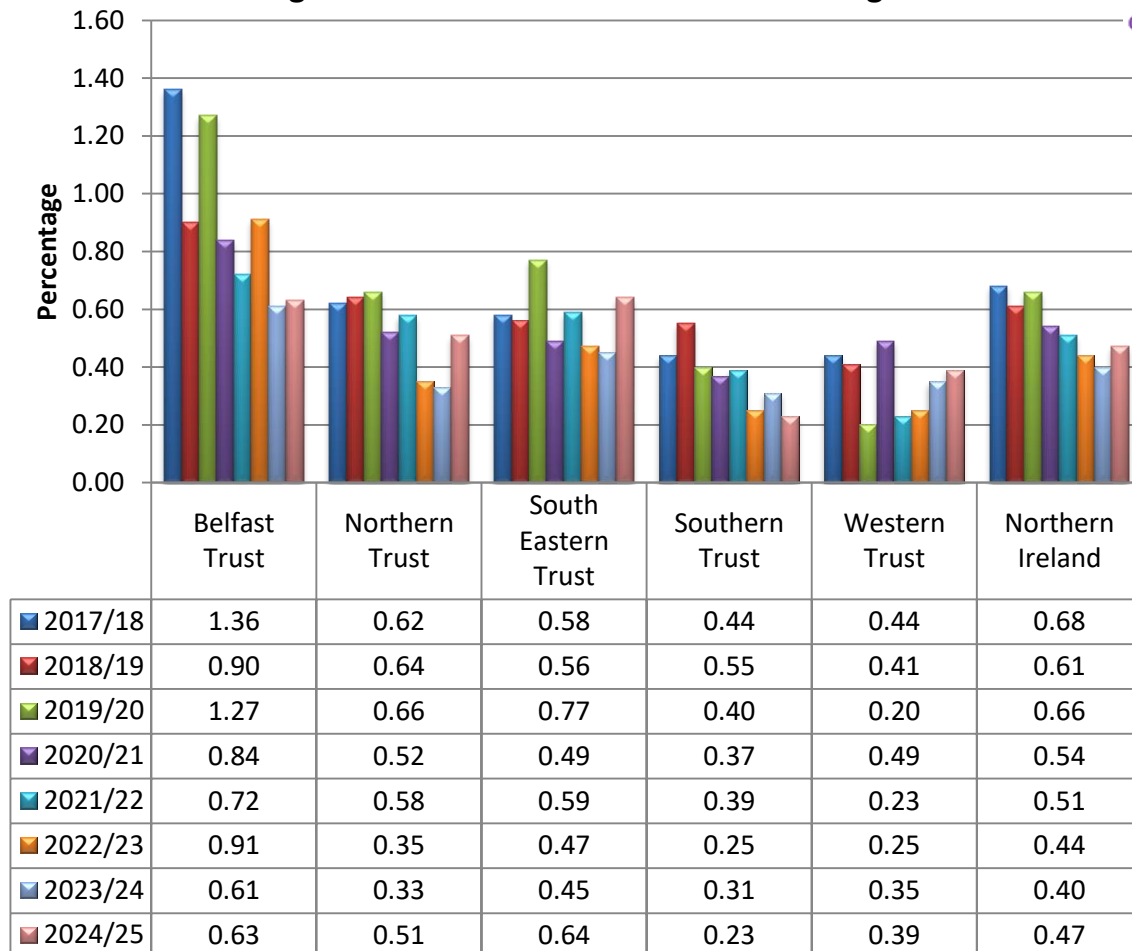
[UNCRC Articles: 6,18,24,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

Healthy



**Why is it Important?** There is growing concern among Statutory, Voluntary and Community organisations about the impact of teenage parenthood on the life chances of the young mother and her baby and agreement that concerted action is needed to address the issues around the problem. It is increasingly clear that socio-economic disadvantage can be both a cause and a consequence of teenage parenthood. Socio-economic disadvantaged young people are those most likely to become teenage parents. They then face limited prospects in the areas of education, training and eventually employment. The Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy(6).

### Percentage Births to Mothers 13 to 17 Years of Age



**The Story Behind the Trends** – The majority of areas with births to mothers 13 to 17 years old has seen a decrease over the eight year period in line with the NI percentage, until 2024/25 with all Trusts above the NI percentage of **0.47** except Southern and Western. The total number of births to mothers 13 to 17 years across NI was **90**.

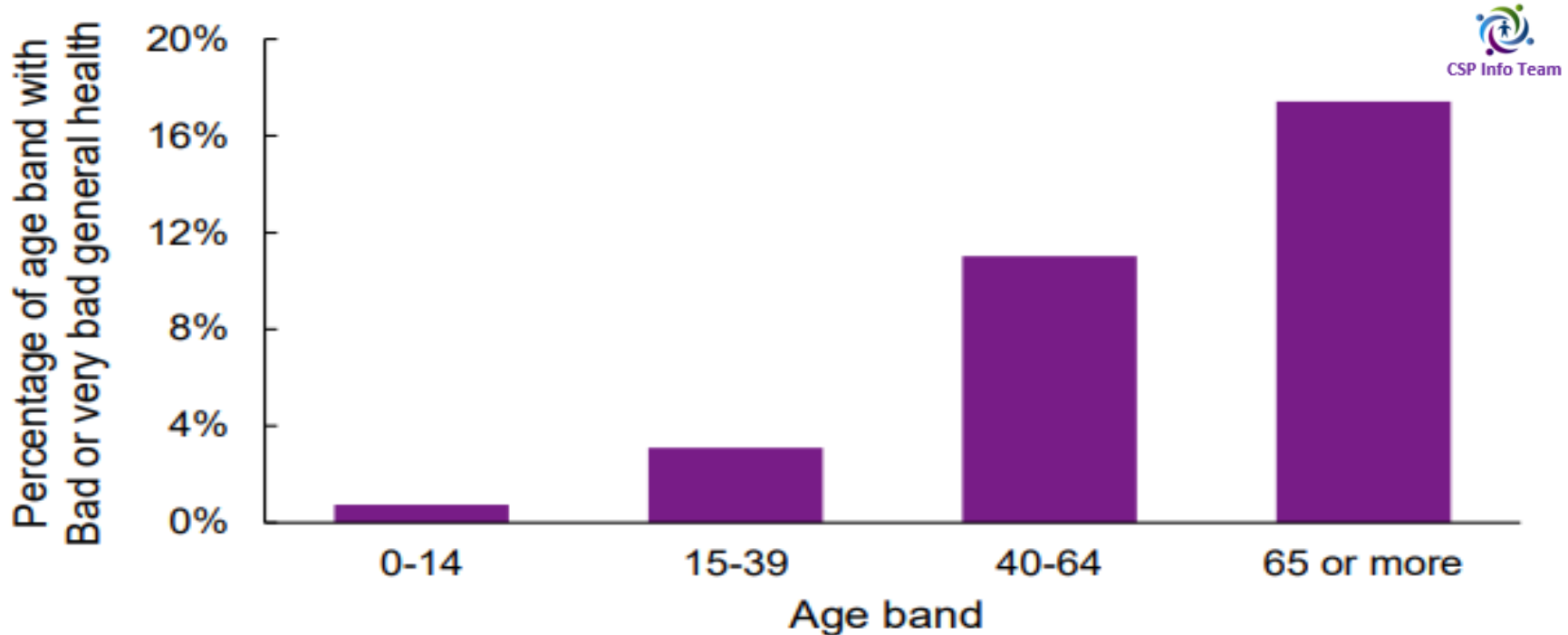


# Percentage Population with 'Bad or very bad' General Health by Age Band

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

Healthy

### Percentage with 'Bad or very bad' general health by age band (Census 2021)



The graph shows a marked age gradient for general health with older people tending to have less good health than younger people. The percentage of the population with 'Bad or very bad' general health rises from 0.7% in those aged 0 to 14 years to 17.4% among those aged 65 or more.

**NOTE: For more information on General Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing visit [Health Survey NI 2024/25](#) (20)**

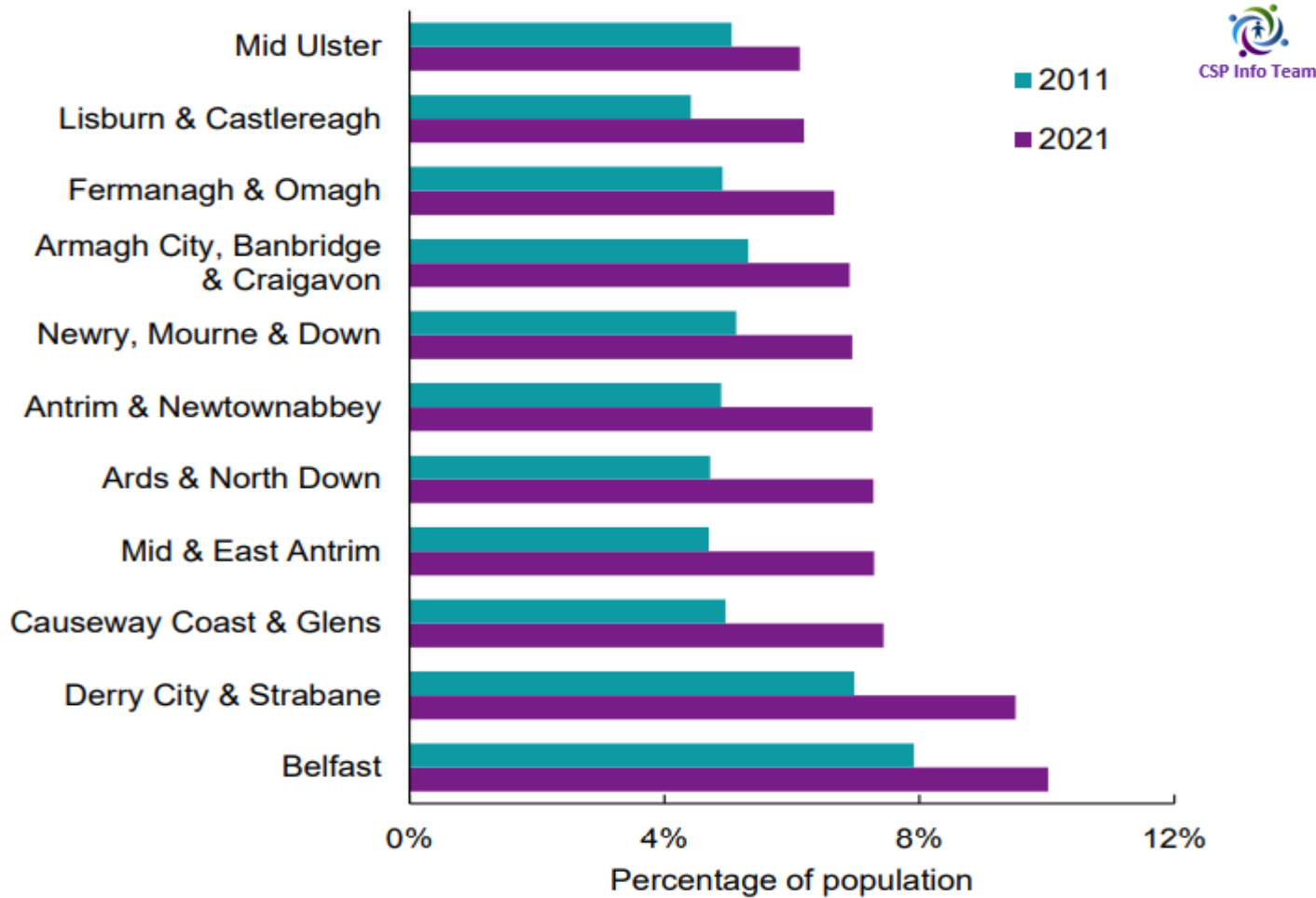


# Percentage Population with 'Bad or very bad' General Health by LGD

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

Healthy

### Percentage of population with 'Bad or very bad' general health by LGD (2011 and 2021 Censuses)



The graph shows that every LGD has seen a rise over the decade in the percentage of their population reporting 'Bad or very bad' general health. Derry City & Strabane and Belfast remain the two areas with markedly higher levels of 'Bad or very bad' general health.

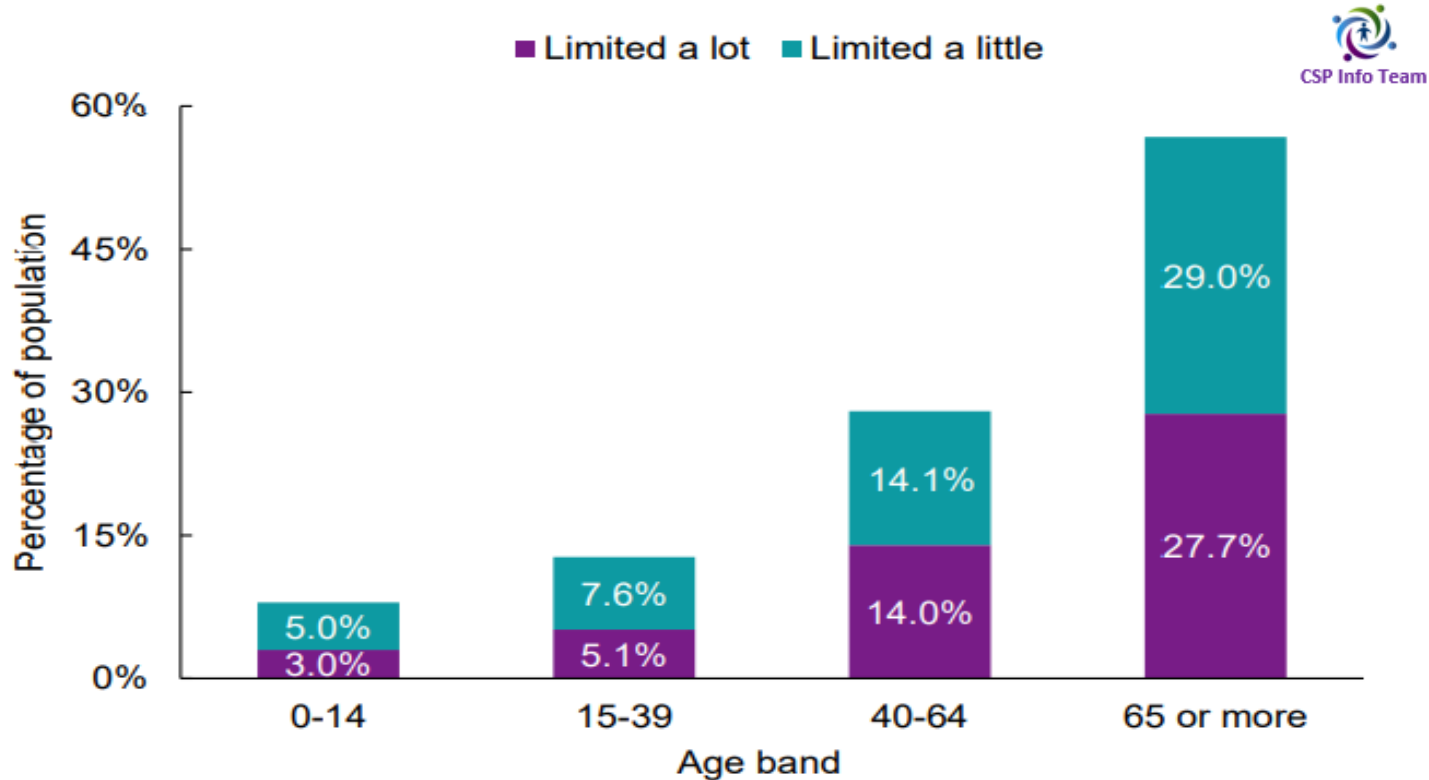


# Limiting Long-term Health Problem or Disability by Age Band

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

[UNCRC Articles: 6,18, 23, 24,27](#) (click link to view articles)

### Limiting long-term health problem or disability by age band and level of limitation (Census 2021)



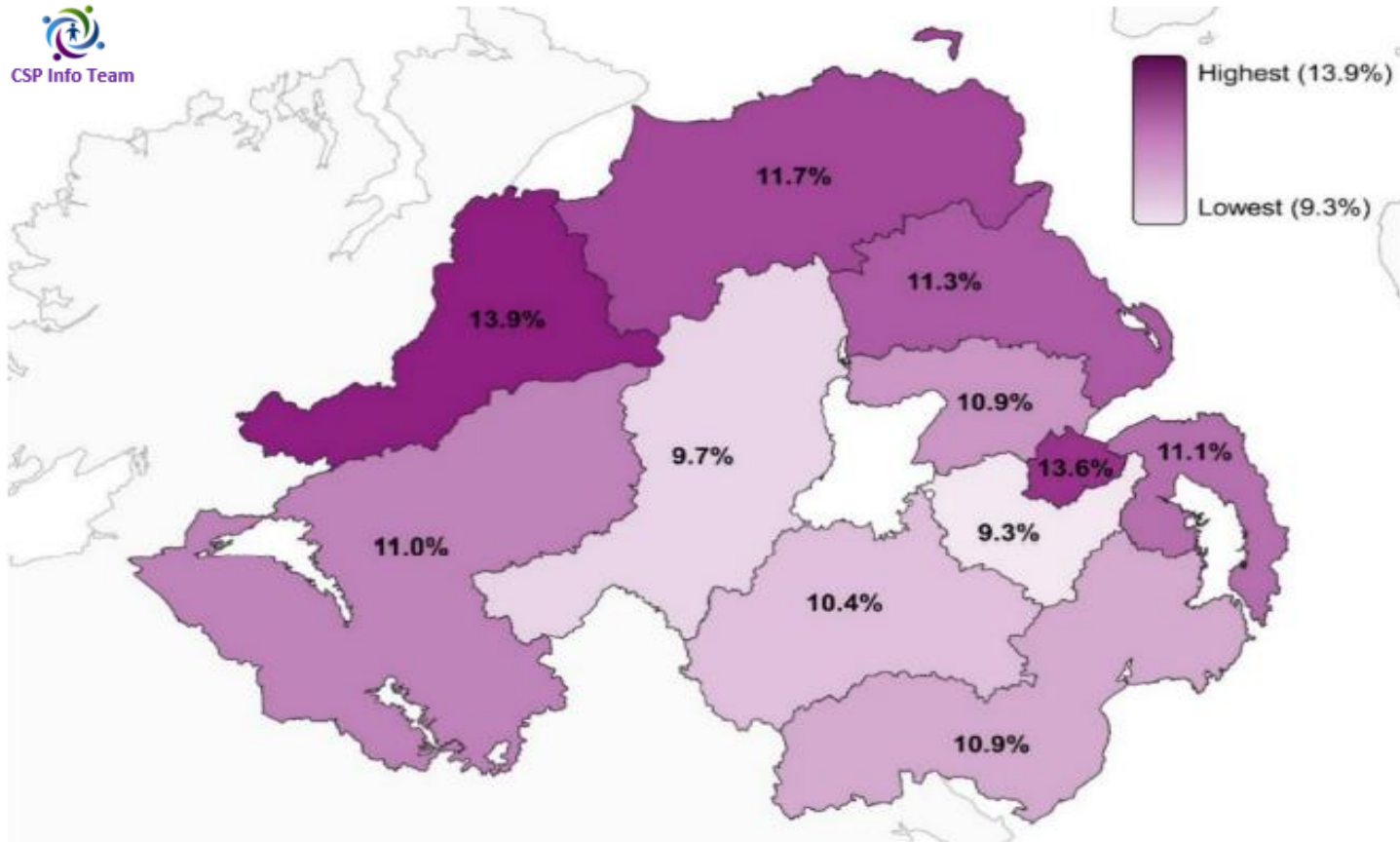
Limiting long-term health problem or disability by age band and level of limitation (Census 2021) shows a clear age gradient for both types of limitation. The percentage of people whose day-to-day activities were limited a lot rose from 3.0% of those aged 0 to 14 years to **27.7%** of those aged 65 years or more, while the percentage of people whose day-to-day activities were limited a little rose from 5.0% to **29.0%**.



# Percentage of Population with Long-term Health Problems or Disability which Limits Activities a lot by LGD

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

Percentage of population with long-term health problems or disability which limits activities a lot by LGD (Census 2021)



The map above shows that the two urban LGDs, Derry City & Strabane and Belfast, reported the highest incidence of long-term health problems or disability which limits activities a lot at **13.9%** and **13.6%** of their populations. In contrast, Lisburn & Castlereagh and Mid Ulster had the lowest levels at **9.3%** and **9.7%** of their populations.



## Age-specific percentage of population with long-term health condition (Census 2021)



Type of long-term health condition	Aged 0-14	Aged 15-39	Aged 40-64	Aged 65 or more	All ages
Long-term pain or discomfort	0.6%	4.4%	16.7%	27.3%	11.6%
Mobility or dexterity difficulty that limits basic physical activities	2.0%	3.6%	13.4%	29.4%	10.9%
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing	4.7%	7.1%	11.9%	19.2%	10.3%
Emotional, psychological or mental health	1.2%	9.5%	13.1%	7.1%	8.7%
Deafness or partial hearing loss	0.5%	1.1%	4.9%	21.7%	5.8%
Learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia)	4.4%	5.0%	1.9%	0.8%	3.1%
Frequent periods of confusion or memory loss	0.1%	0.5%	1.8%	7.3%	2.0%
Autism or Asperger syndrome	5.3%	2.3%	0.3%	0.1%	1.9%
Blindness or partial sight loss	0.4%	0.6%	1.4%	6.2%	1.8%
Mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair	0.3%	0.4%	1.2%	5.2%	1.5%
Intellectual or learning disability (for example, Down syndrome)	1.4%	1.1%	0.7%	0.4%	0.9%

Purple text is the largest age band specific prevalence

Most conditions show a standard age-gradient, however those reporting 'Autism or Asperger syndrome' tend to be younger in age (higher prevalence at age 0 to 14). Also those reporting 'Emotional, psychological or mental health' conditions tend to be middle aged (higher prevalence at age 40 to 64). It is important to remember that the statistics presented here relate to self-reported health conditions.

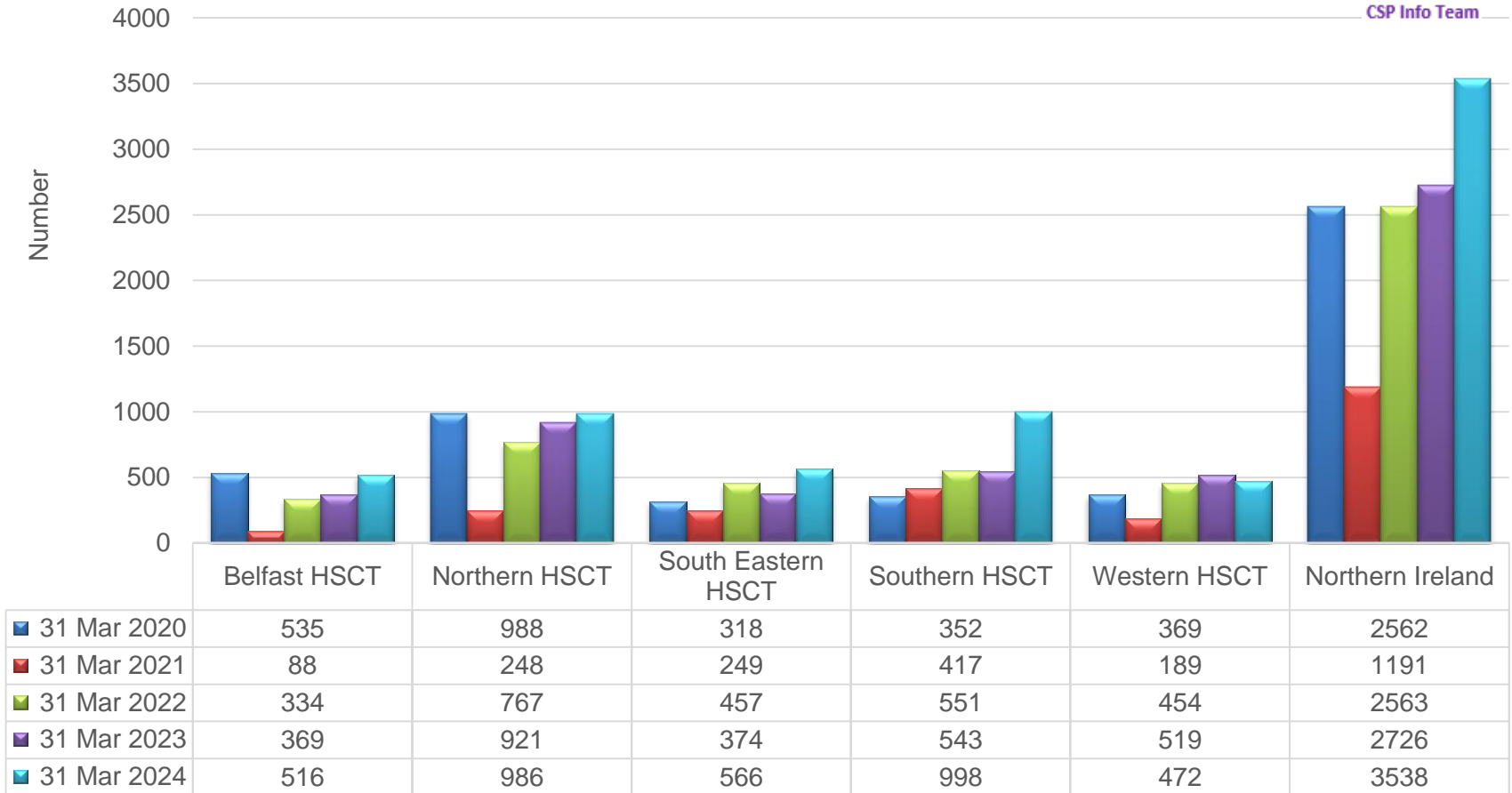


# Number of New Autism Diagnosis for Children by Trusts

Data Source: DoH

[UNCRC Articles: 18, 23, 24,26](#) (click link to view articles)

### Number of New Autism diagnosis for Children by Trusts



The number of new autism diagnosis for children by Trusts have fluctuated over the past 5 years with the NI figure at **3,538** at March 2024. *Note: data unavailable Qtr2 (2020) for BHSCT. Figures for 2025 are delayed due to roll out of Encompass.*

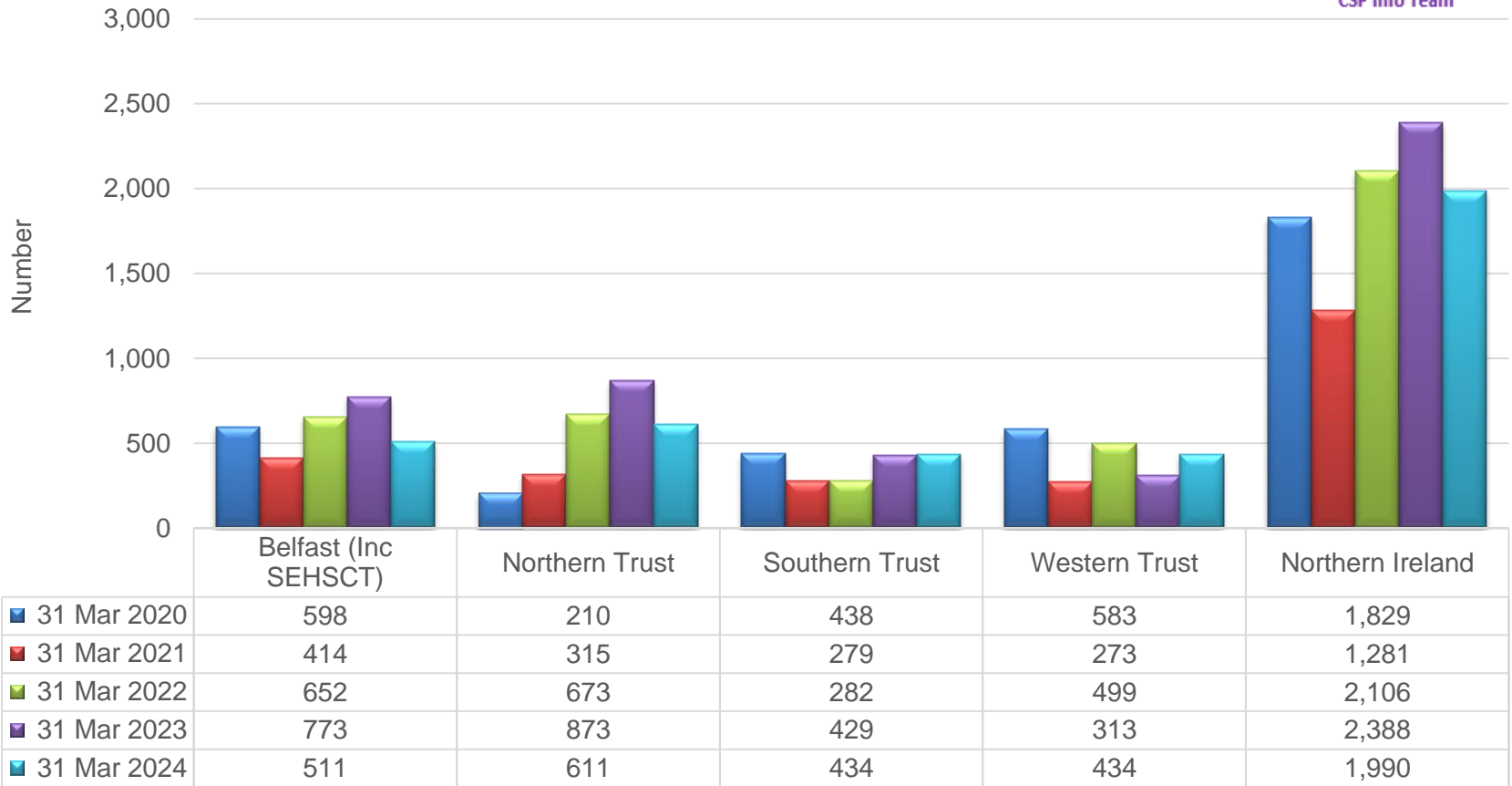


# CAMHS Total Waits for Assessment by HSCT

Data Source: DoH

[UNCRC Articles: 18, 23, 24](#) (click link to view articles)

### CAMHS Total Waits for Assessment by HSCT at Qtr 4 each year



The figures have fluctuated in the Trusts in the past 5 years with the Northern Trust the highest waits in March 2024. (Mar 25 not available)



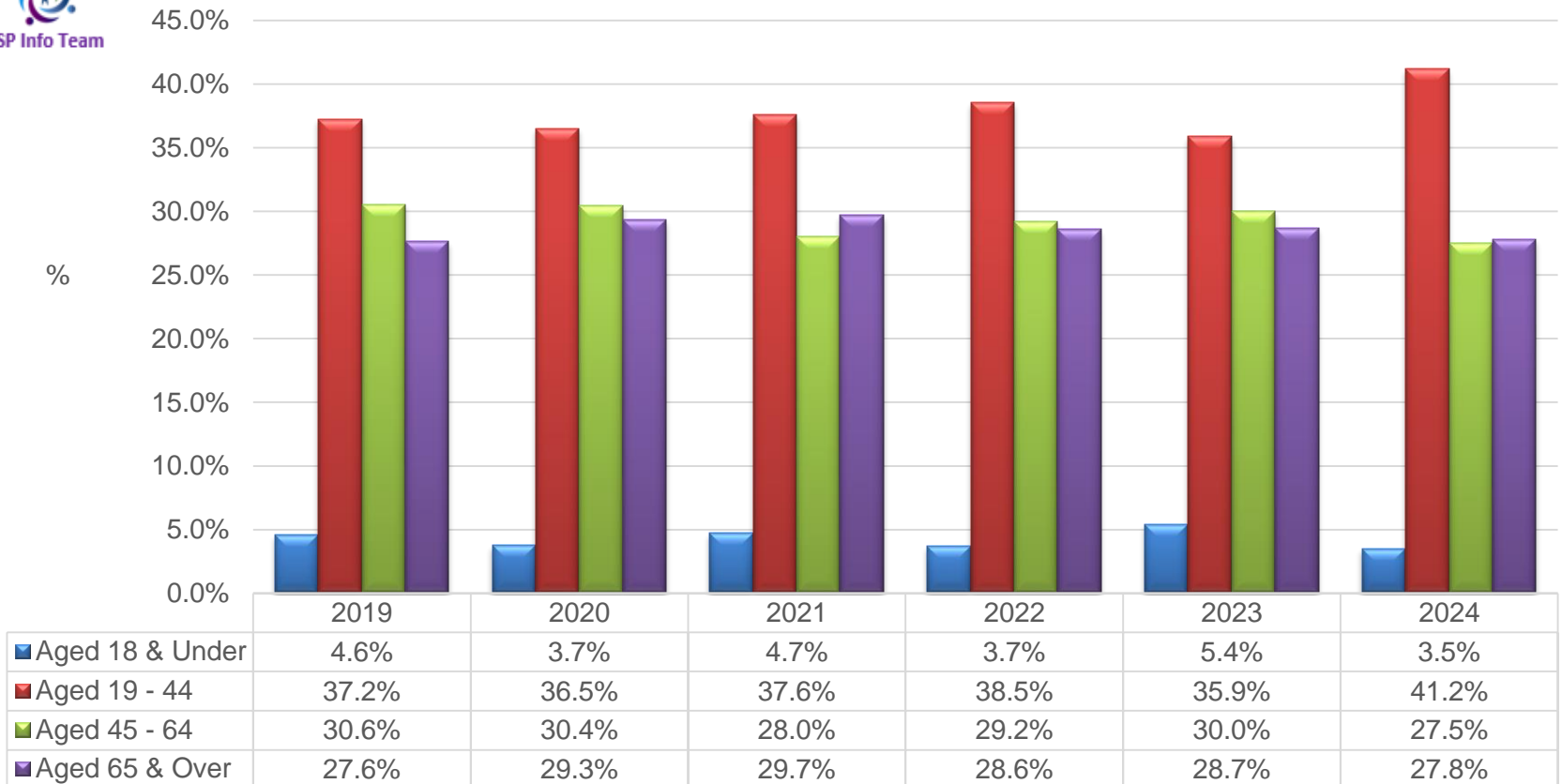
# Mental Illness Inpatients Resident (including patients on Home Leave)

Data Source: DoH annual Hospital Statistics

[UNCRC Articles: 20, 23, 24](#) (click link to view articles)



## Mental Illness Inpatients Resident (including patients on Home Leave)



The Aged 18 & under has decreased in 2024 to **3.5%** (the lowest in 6 years), along with the other age groups except 19-44 age. 2025 data not available.

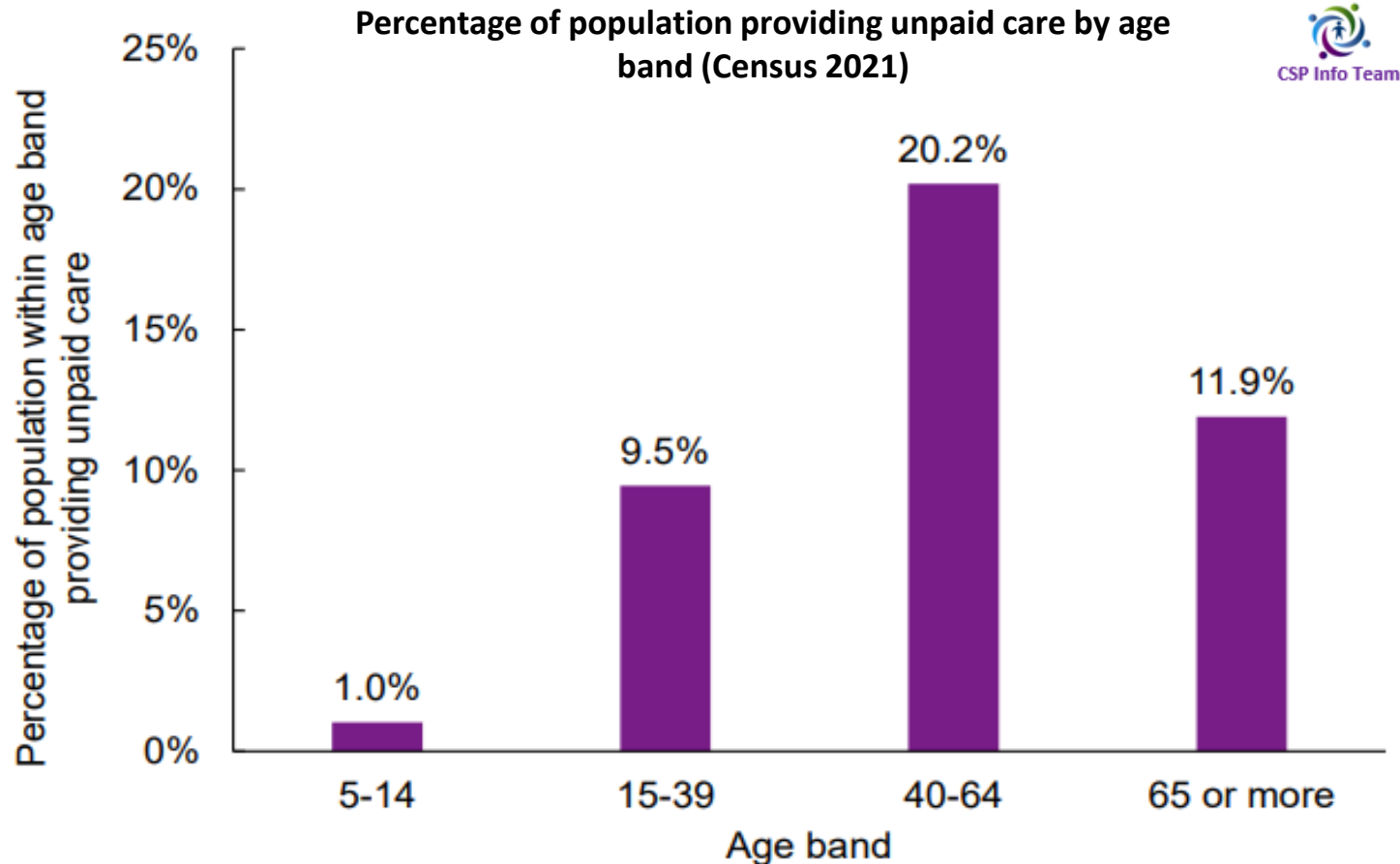


# Percentage of Population Providing Unpaid Care by Age Band

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

[UNCRC Articles: 18, 26](#) (click link to view articles)

Healthy



As noted initially, one person in eight of our population aged 5 or more (or 222,200 people) provided unpaid care. The graph above shows this percentage broken down across four age bands. Those aged 40 to 64 provided the highest level of unpaid care. In total around 20%, or one person in five, of those aged 40 to 64 provided unpaid care. The census does not ask about who the respondent provides care for, however this demographic (those aged 40 to 64) are likely to be providing care for older parents/relatives and/or children/siblings with long-term illnesses.



# Provision of Unpaid Care by Age Band

Data Source: NISRA Census 2021

[UNCRC Articles: 18, 26](#) (click link to view articles)

Provision of unpaid care by age band (Census 2021)

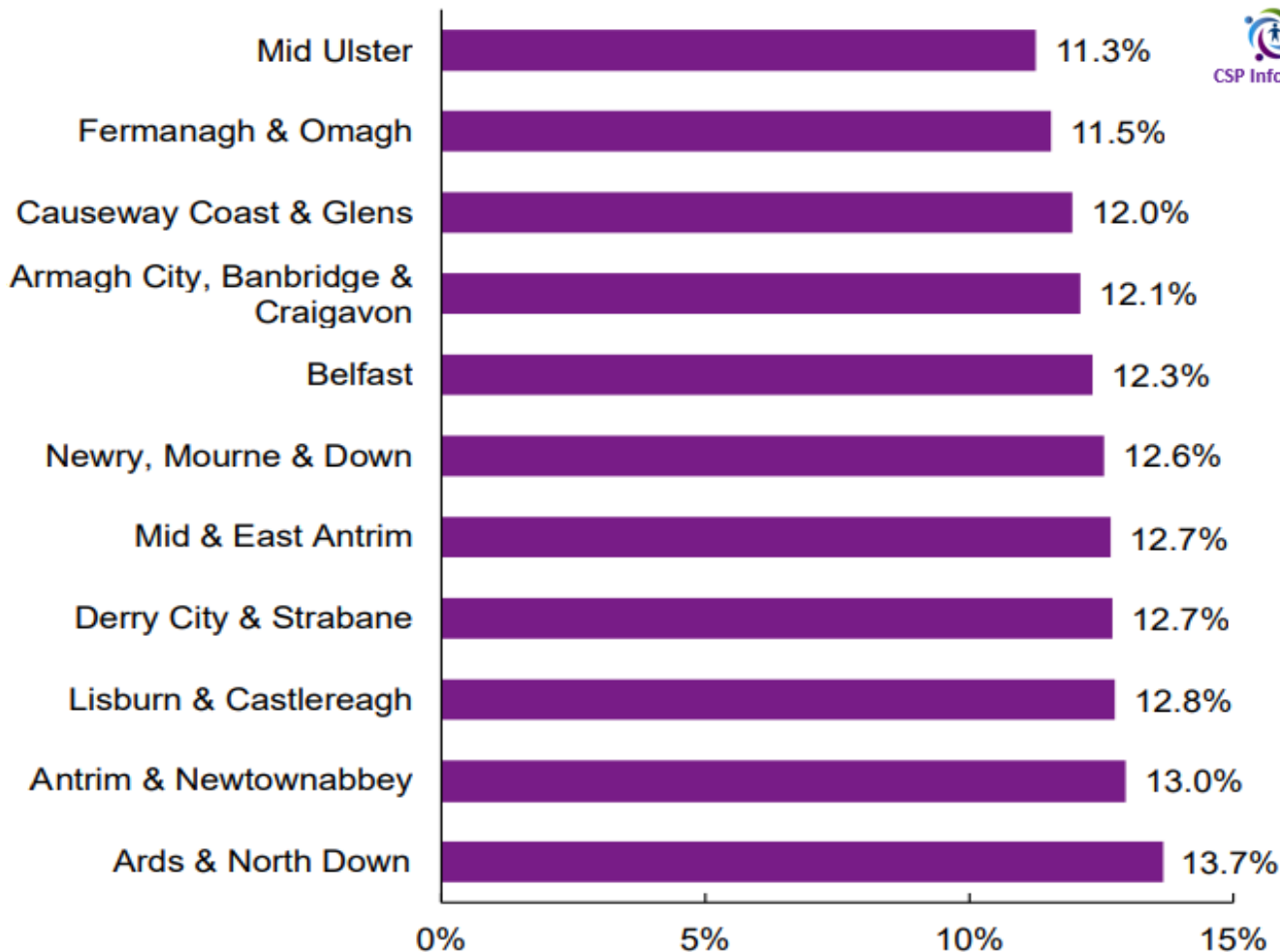


Age band	Provides unpaid care	Percentage of overall total
5-14	2,600	1.2%
15-39	56,200	25.3%
40-64	124,600	56.1%
65 or more	38,900	17.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

One important point the table above draws out is that **2,600** children aged 5 to 14 in Northern Ireland provide unpaid care. This situation of young carers is a further important point for policymakers to consider.



### Percentage of population aged 5 or more providing unpaid care by LGD (Census 2021)



Ards & North Down LGD had the highest percentage of people who provide unpaid care (**13.7%**), while Mid Ulster had the lowest (**11.3%**). The graph shows that there are broadly similar levels of the provision of unpaid care across the LGDs.



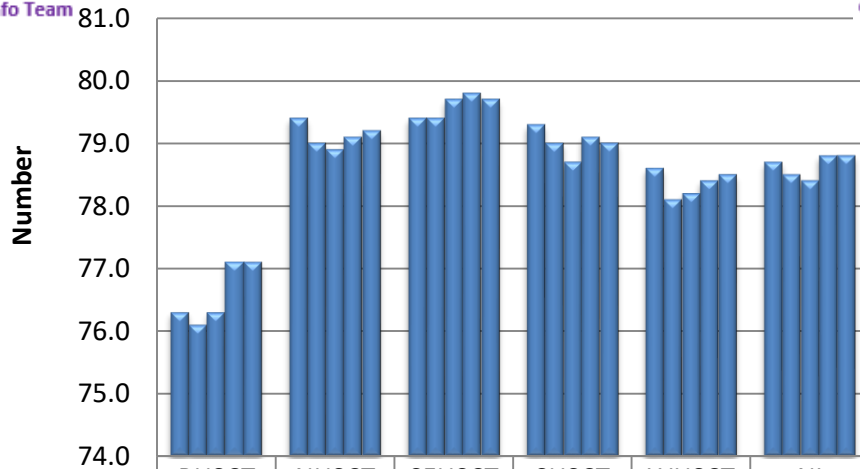
# Life Expectancy from Birth

Data Source: DoH Life Expectancy in NI 2022-24

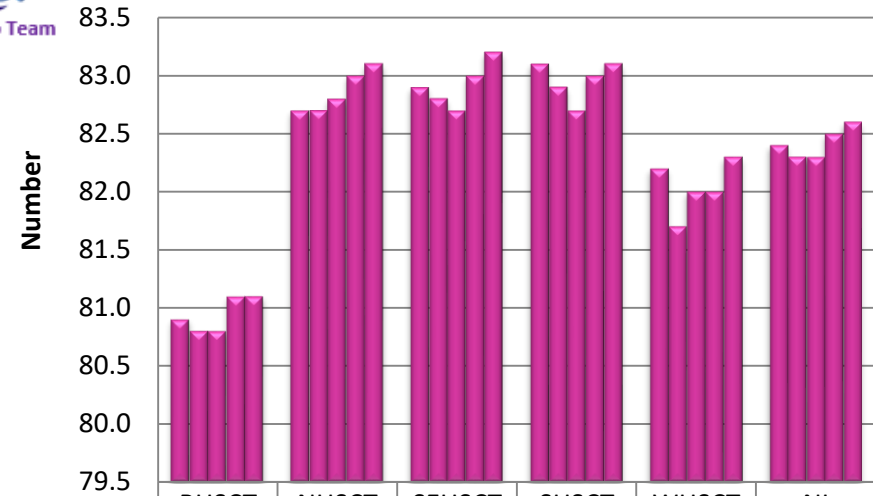
[UNCRC Articles: 6](#) (click link to view articles)

**Why is it Important?** - Life expectancy from birth is a frequently utilized and analyzed component of demographic data for the countries of the world. It represents the average life span of a newborn and is an indicator of the overall health of a country. Life expectancy can fall due to problems like famine, war, disease and poor health. Improvements in health and welfare increase life expectancy as is evident in the deprivation gap with males and females living less in the 20% most deprived areas of NI. (Life Expectancy in NI 2021-23) (7)

### Life Expectancy from Birth in Males



### Life Expectancy from Birth in Females



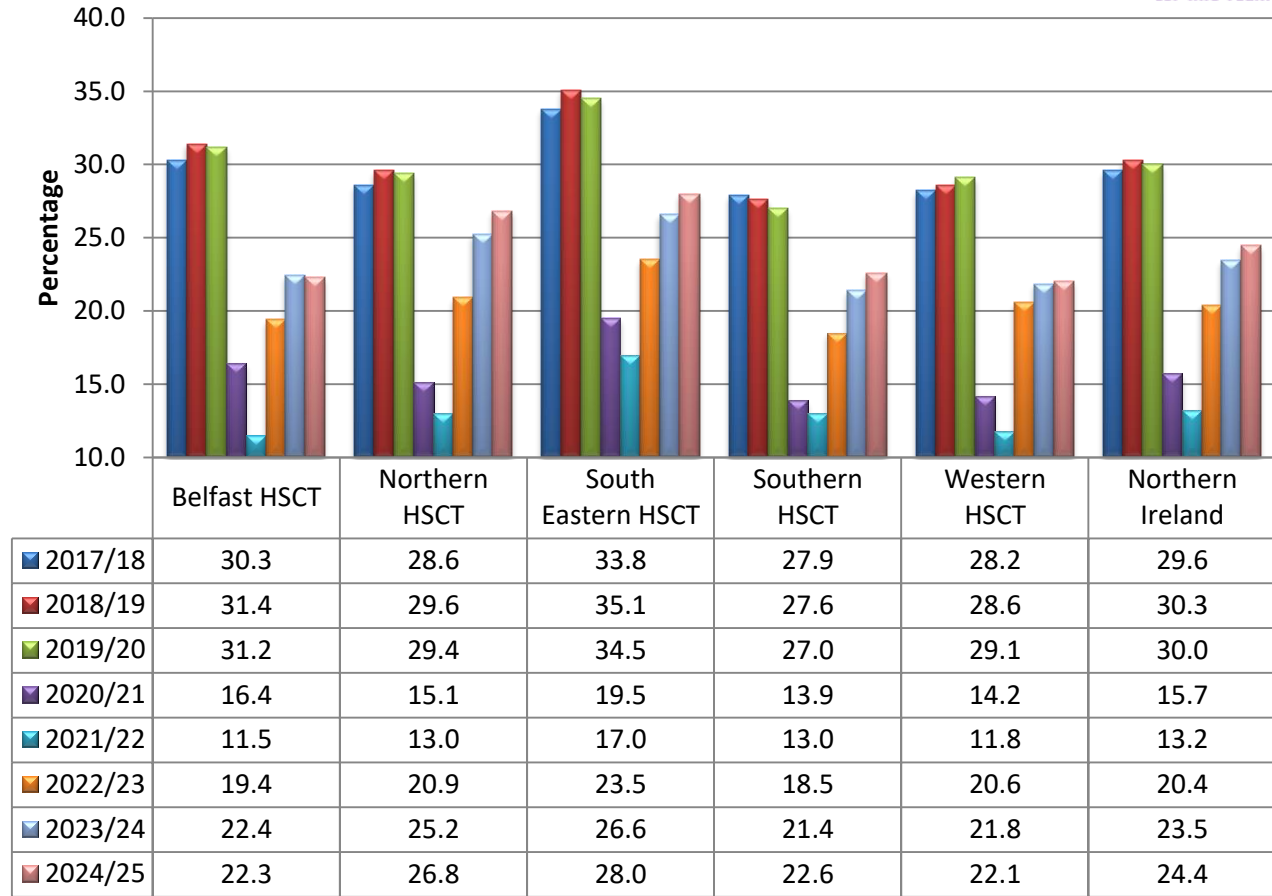
	BHSCT	NHSCT	SEHSCT	SHSCT	WHSCT	NI
2018-20	80.9	82.7	82.9	83.1	82.2	82.4
2019-21	80.8	82.7	82.8	82.9	81.7	82.3
2020-22	80.8	82.8	82.7	82.7	82.0	82.3
2021-23	81.1	83.0	83.0	83.0	82.0	82.5
2022-24	81.1	83.1	83.2	83.1	82.3	82.6

**The Story Behind the Trends** – Overall life expectancy has mainly stayed the same or slight increase for both males and females across all areas in 2022-24 with females expected to live 3.8 years longer than males. Belfast area has the lowest life expectancy for both males and females, with the South Eastern area having the highest in Males and Females.



**Why is it Important?** Northern Ireland has some of the worst children’s dental health outcomes in the United Kingdom. According to the most recent Children’s Dental Health Survey: 42 per cent of 5-year-olds and 57 per cent of 8-year-olds showed signs of clinical decay in primary teeth. With respect to permanent teeth, almost a quarter (24 per cent) of 8-year-olds, 60 per cent of 12-year-olds and 75 per cent of 15-year-olds showed signs of clinical decay; 19 per cent of children aged 5 showed signs of severe or extensive tooth decay. By the age of 15 this had increased to 36 per cent. By comparison, 13 per cent of 5-year-olds in England showed signs of severe or extensive tooth decay and this rose to 14 per cent at age 15. Oral Health In Northern Ireland Parliamentary Business 2019 (17)

### Percentage Dental Registrations Children Aged 0-2 yrs



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Dental Registrations for 0-2 year olds in all areas have decreased in 2020/21 and 2021/22 due to the Covid-19 pandemic but are slowly increasing year by year to **24.4** in 2024/25 at NI level, but has not reached the pre- Covid-19 percentage of 30.0.



# Percentage Dental Registrations Children Aged 3-5 years

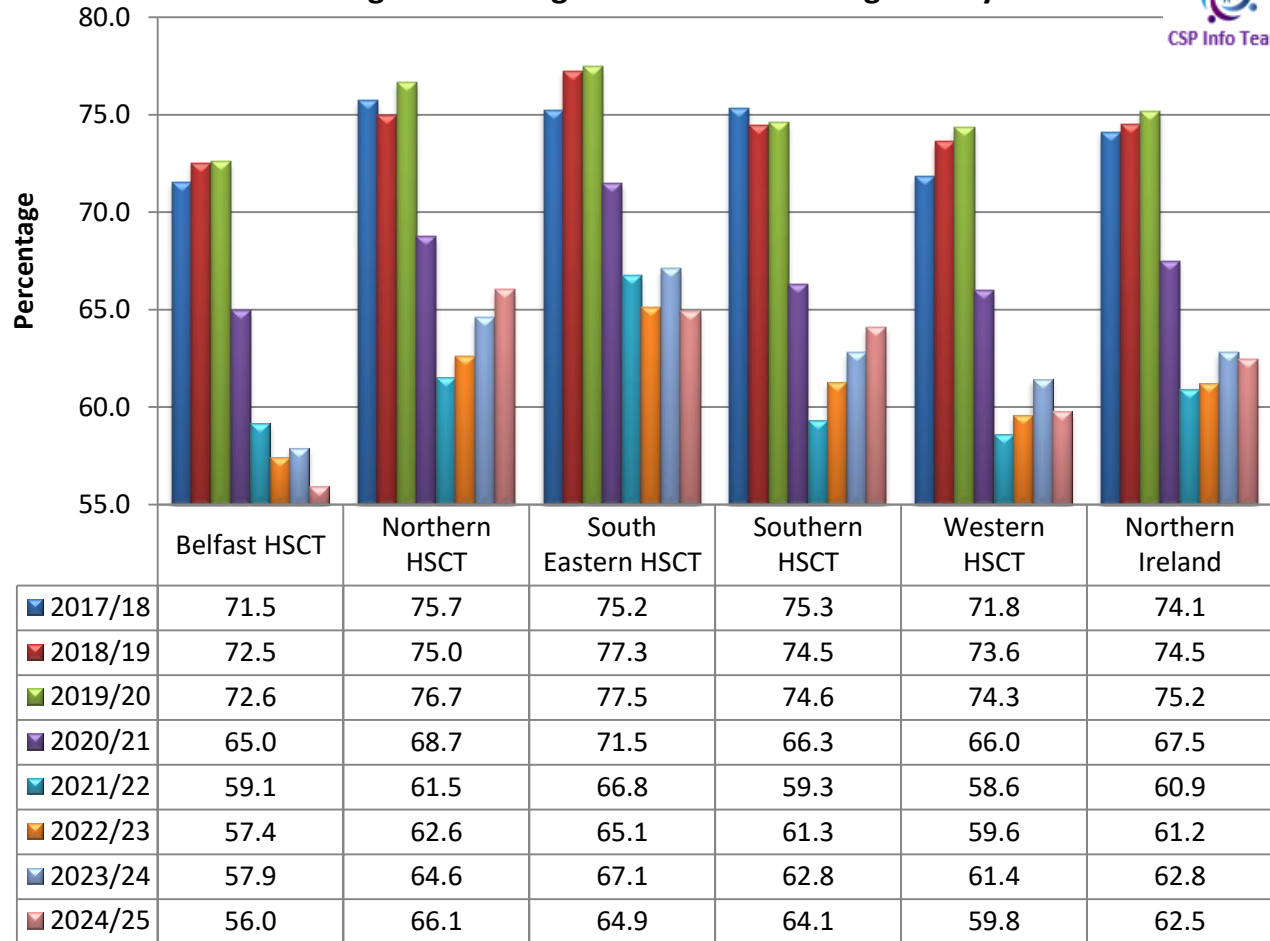
Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 18, 24](#) (click link to view articles)



**Why is it Important?** Northern Ireland has some of the worst children’s dental health outcomes in the United Kingdom. According to the most recent Children’s Dental Health Survey: 42 per cent of 5-year-olds and 57 per cent of 8-year-olds showed signs of clinical decay in primary teeth. With respect to permanent teeth, almost a quarter (24 per cent) of 8-year-olds, 60 per cent of 12-year-olds and 75 per cent of 15-year-olds showed signs of clinical decay; 19 per cent of children aged 5 showed signs of severe or extensive tooth decay. By the age of 15 this had increased to 36 per cent. By comparison, 13 per cent of 5-year-olds in England showed signs of severe or extensive tooth decay and this rose to 14 per cent at age 15. – Oral Health In Northern Ireland Parliamentary Business 2019 (17)

### Percentage Dental Registrations Children Aged 3-5 yrs

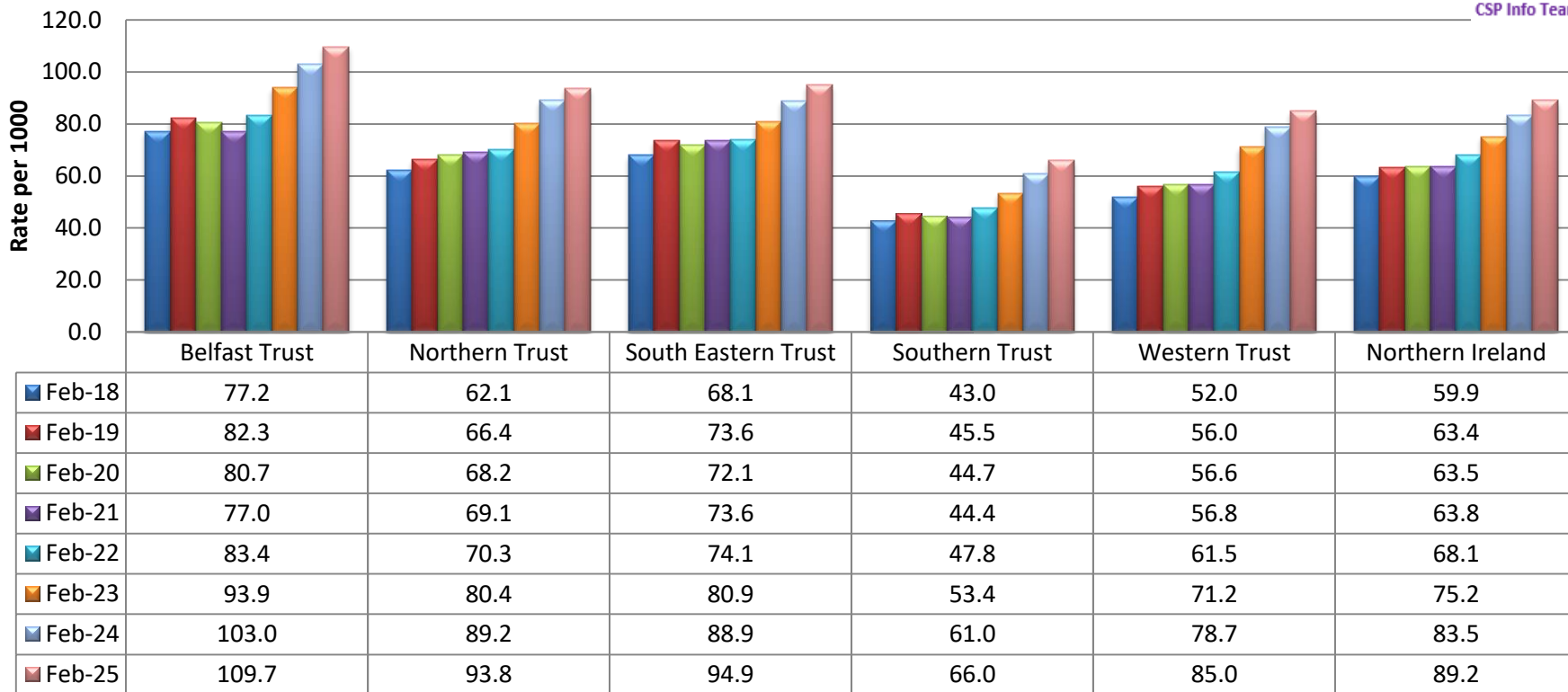


**The Story Behind the Trends** – Dental Registrations for 3-5 year olds in all areas have decreased due to the Covid-19 pandemic but are slowly increasing again to **62.5** in 2024/25 at NI level, but has not reached the 2019/20 percentage of 75.2.



**Why is it Important?** Children’s Disability Services work to provide services for children with disability and additional needs. They actively communicate and work with parents, involving and empowering them to cope with the demands of raising a disabled child, and provide a means for families to access a range of information, assessments and services.

### Children with a Disability (in receipt of DLA 0 – 15 years) Rate per 1000

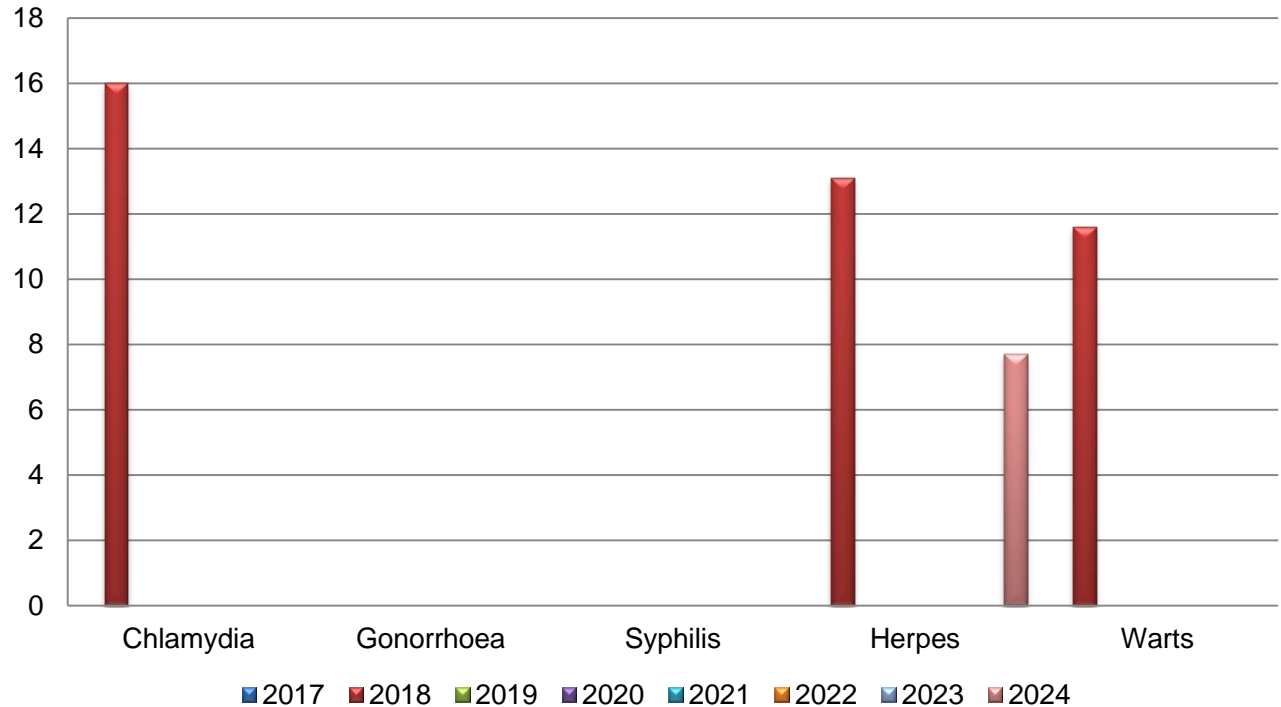


**The Story Behind the Trends** – All areas have seen an increase in the Rate per 1000 of Children with a Disability in receipt of DLA. Belfast, Northern and the South Eastern Area are all higher than the NI average at **89.2%**. Overall at February 2025 there were **34,620** Children aged 0-15 claiming DLA.



**Why is it Important?** Sexual health is an important part of physical and mental health, and contributes to emotional and social well-being. Many factors can adversely affect people’s sexual health including poverty, unemployment, poor education, substance misuse and social exclusion. Young people are the group most at risk of being diagnosed with a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI). Interventions to promote sexual health among young people and the delivery of high quality, relationship and sexual health education is recommended by the Public Health Agency, Don’t Gamble with Your Sexual Health (2018) (8) and Sexual Health NI website (9).

### STI Rates for the Under 16 Population per 100,000 in Northern Ireland



**The Story Behind the Trends** - The graph for the under 16 population from 2017 to 2024 shows an increase in Herpes during 2024 with anonymised numbers recorded for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea and 0 recorded for Syphilis and Warts. *Please note: It is important to note firstly that these are rates of new episodes treated at the Trusts Genito-urinary Medicine (GUM) clinics in Northern Ireland and secondly while it is usual practise for GPs to refer patients to the GUM clinics, some may treat the patient directly and are therefore not accounted for here.*



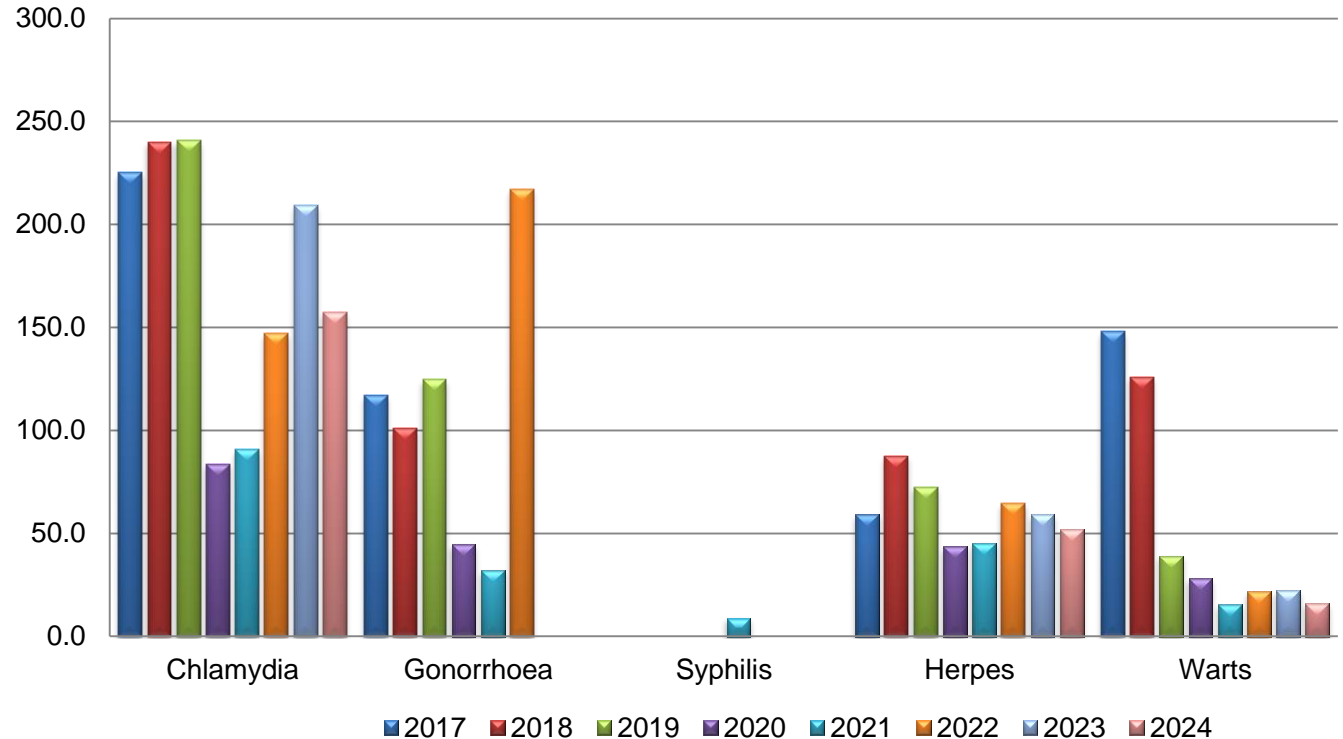
# Sexually Transmitted Infections 16-19 years

Data Source: Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre NI

[UNCRC Articles: 24](#) (click link to view articles)

**Why is it Important?** Sexual health is an important part of physical and mental health, and contributes to emotional and social well-being. Many factors can adversely affect people’s sexual health including poverty, unemployment, poor education, substance misuse and social exclusion. Young people are the group most at risk of being diagnosed with a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI). Interventions to promote sexual health among young people and the delivery of high quality, relationship and sexual health education is recommended by the Public Health Agency, Don’t Gamble with Your Sexual Health (2018)(8) and Sexual Health NI (9).

### STI Rates for the 16-19 year old Population per 100,000 in Northern Ireland



**The Story Behind the Trends** - The graph shows that the rate of 16-19 year olds with STIs has decreased in 2024, with a small number recorded for Gonorrhoea and Syphilis but these were anonymised. *It is important to note firstly that these are rates of new episodes treated at the Trust GUM clinics in Northern Ireland, and secondly while it is usual practise for GPs to refer patients to the GUM clinics, some may treat the patient directly and are therefore not accounted for here.*



**Why is it Important?** Young people's sexual experience and knowledge is important as it relates to teenage pregnancy and STI rates. With proper information and knowledge people are more likely to avoid risky behaviour, use contraception, know what local services are available and be more likely to use them. (Sexual Health NI) (9)

### Key Findings From the Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2022-23



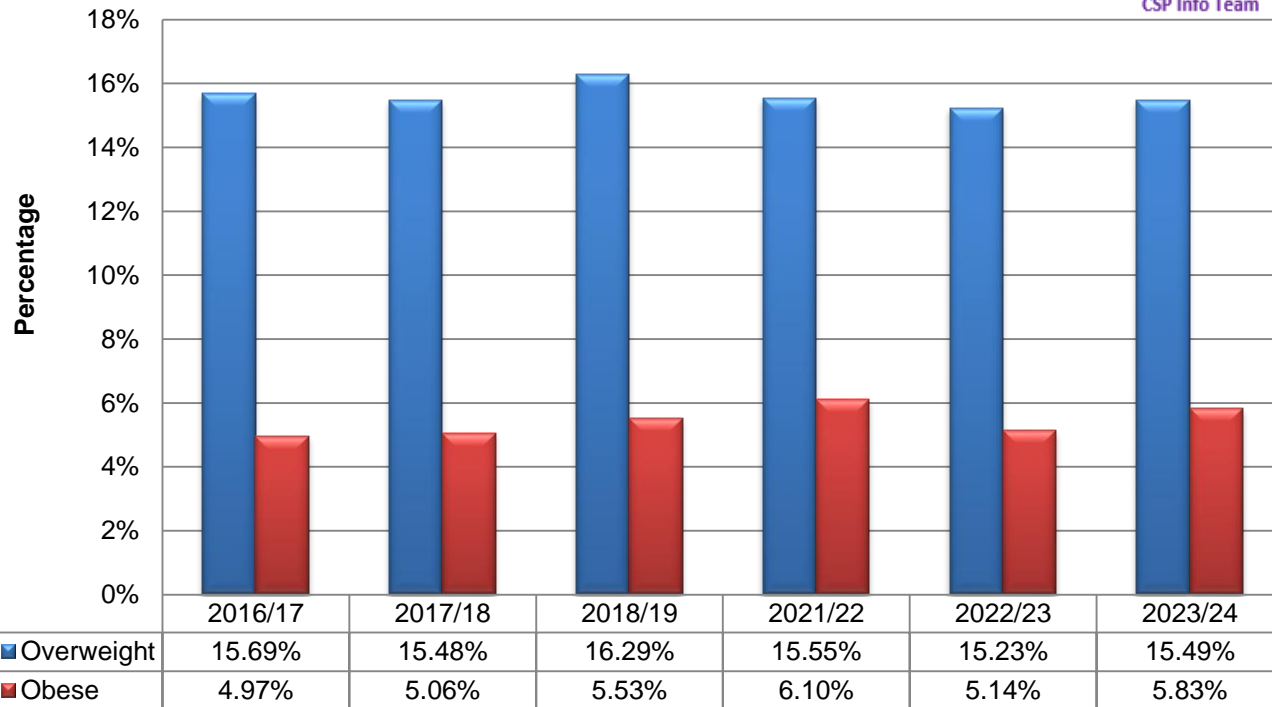
Sample: **7498** pupils aged 11-16 (Year 8 to Year 12) were selected at random across Northern Ireland and collected in the period September 2022 – March 2023

- In 2022, **49%** of the young people surveyed had a boyfriend or girlfriend, compared to **46%** in 2019, **49%** in 2016 and **67%** in 2013.
- In 2022, **4%** of pupils have had sexual intercourse, compared to **3%** in 2019, **4%** in 2016 and **10%** in 2013.
- In 2022, **64%** of the sample had no sexual experience at all, which was the same in 2019 (**64%**), compared to **56%** in 2016 and **35%** in 2013.
- The most common sources stated by the young people in 2022 where they learnt about sexual matters and relationships were lessons at school (**57%**), followed by their Mother/Female Guardian or carer (**46%**), their friends (**45%**) and visitors at school (**30%**).



**Why is it Important?** The prevalence of overweight and obesity is assessed by using Body Mass Index (BMI). Many young children are not as physically active as they should be, nor do they have a healthy, balanced diet, both these issues contribute to levels of obesity. The growth of sedentary leisure activities, the ‘car culture’, time and financial constraints on busy working parents and our increasing fears about letting young children run around outdoors without adult supervision, have all contributed to the problem. Obesity in childhood can be linked to factors including social and psychological bullying, low self-esteem and depression and significant impact upon their future health and wellbeing, especially in relation to mental health. (Physical activity for early years) (11)

### P1 Children in NI who are Overweight or Obese

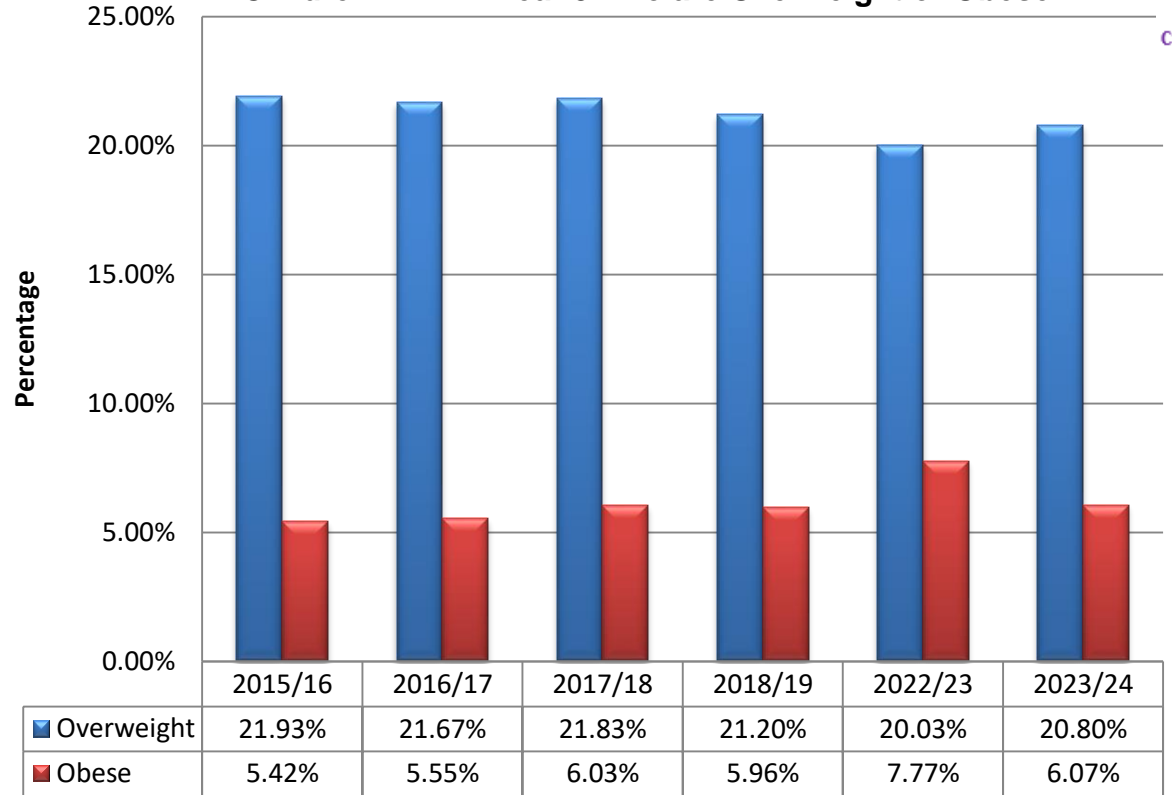


**The Story Behind the Trends** – In NI at March 2024 **15.49%** of P1 (4½-5½ year old) children were overweight, a slight rise on 2022/23. In NI **5.83%** of P1 children were obese, a slight rise since 2022/23. **Please note:** Data for 2019/20 and 2020/21 is not available due to impact of COVID-19 pandemic on data collection. Although data for 2021/22 is provided, the coverage is lower than in previous years and so caution is advised when interpreting data. “The above PHA data has been categorised using International Obesity Task Force (IOTF) measures. Data is also available using British 1990 Growth Reference (UK90) classification on request.”



**Why is it Important?** The prevalence of overweight and obesity is assessed by using Body Mass Index (BMI). Many young children are not as physically active as they should be, nor do they have a healthy, balanced diet, both these issues contribute to levels of obesity. The growth of sedentary leisure activities, the ‘car culture’, time and financial constraints on busy working parents and our increasing fears about letting young children run around outdoors without adult supervision, have all contributed to the problem. Obesity in childhood can be linked to factors including social and psychological bullying, low self-esteem and depression and significant impact upon their future health and wellbeing, especially in relation to mental health. (A Fitter Future for All) (12)

### Children in NI in Year 8 who are Overweight or Obese



**The Story Behind the Trends** – In NI at March 2024 **20.8%** of children in Year 8 (11½-12½ years) were overweight, which is a slight rise in the past year. **6.07%** of Year 8 children were obese, which has been a slight decrease in the past year.

**Please note:** Data for 2019/20,2020/21 and 2021/22 is not available due to impact of COVID-19 pandemic on data collection. “The Health Survey data has been categorised using International Obesity Task Force (IOTF) measures – cut-off points of the BMI percentiles for children.



# 0 – 17 year olds Admitted to HSC Hospitals with Self Harm Related Diagnoses

UNCRC Articles: [3,6,24](#) (click link to view articles)

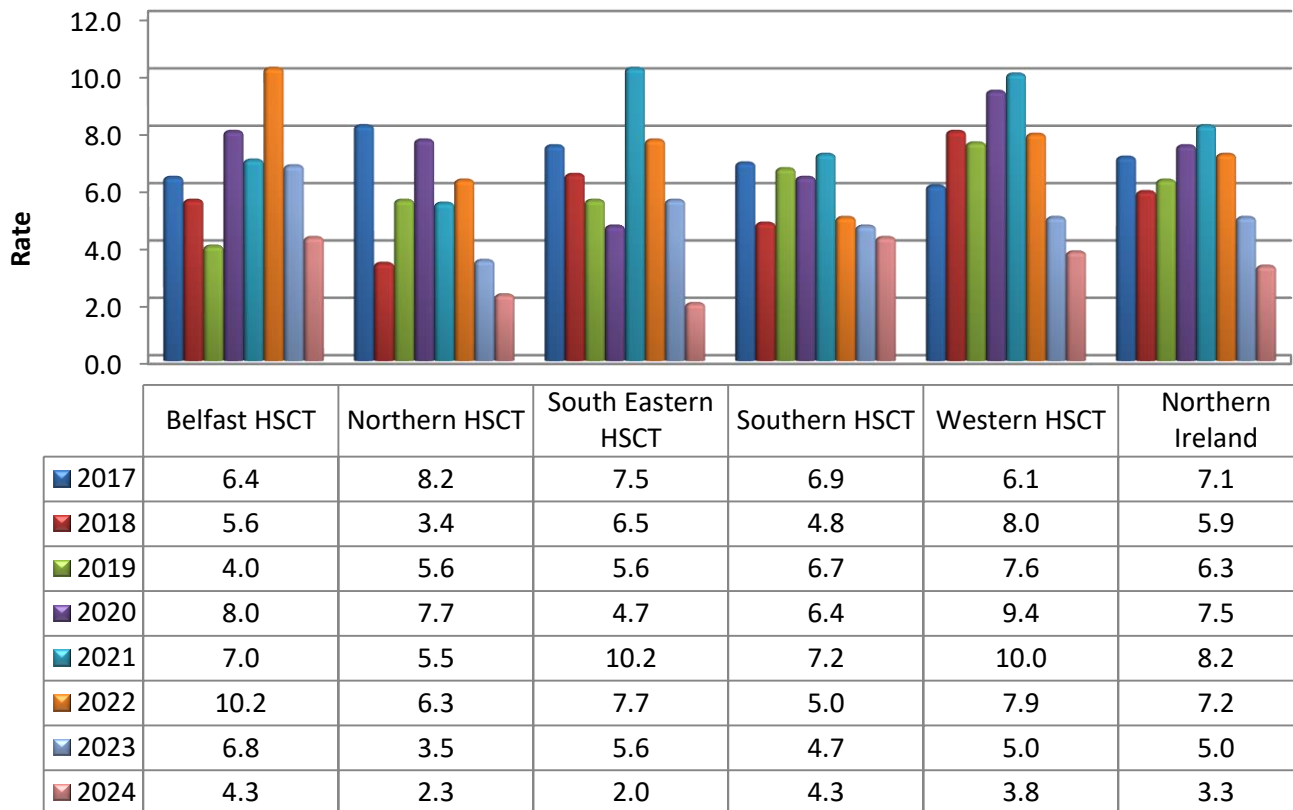
Data Source: DoH

Healthy

## Why is it Important?

There are many reasons why you might self-harm. It is usually a symptom that something stressful or upsetting is going on in your life that is difficult to deal with. Things can happen in life that can leave us feeling overwhelmed, angry and hurt. Instead of finding ways to express those feelings to the world, we start to take this pain and anger out on ourselves. We might self-harm because we are angry and upset about being treated badly. If we are treated in a way that makes us feel invisible, unimportant or unloved, it can make us feel like there is something wrong with us. [Young Minds Website](#)

Rate /10,000 0 -17 year olds admitted to hospital with Self Harm diagnoses



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Overall in the last year a total of **144** children and young people under 18 in Northern Ireland were admitted to HSC hospitals with self harm diagnoses. There has been significant decreases in the majority of Trust areas with Belfast, Southern and Western Trust above the NI rate of **3.3**.



# 0 – 17 year olds Admitted to HSC Hospitals with Alcohol Related Diagnoses

[UNCRC Articles: 3,6,24](#) (click link to view articles)

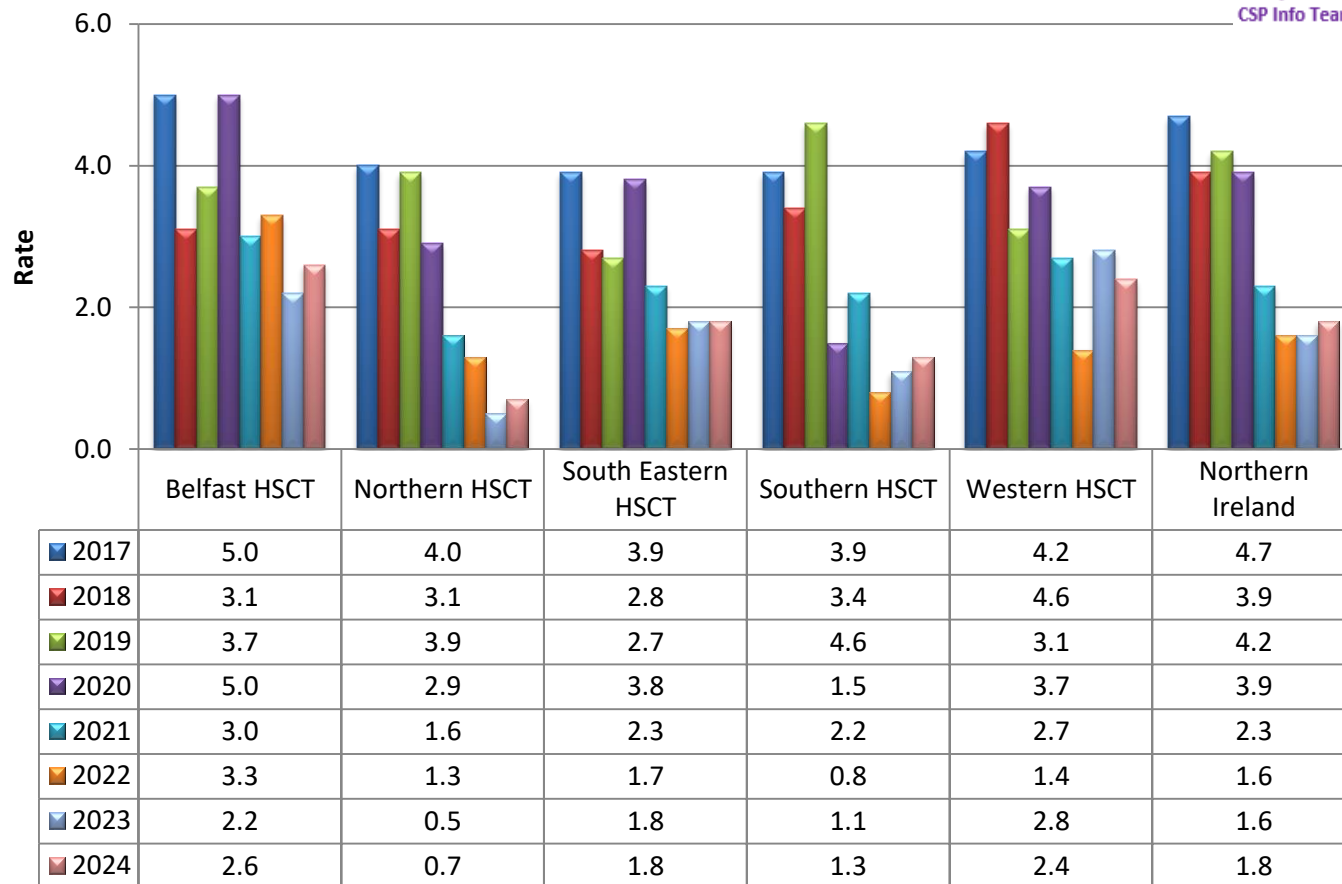
Data Source: DoH

Healthy



**Why is it Important?** Alcohol consumption during any stage of childhood can have a harmful effect on a child's development. Alcohol use during the teenage years is related to a wide range of health and social problems, and young people who begin drinking before the age of 15 are more likely to experience problems related to their alcohol use, including alcohol-related injuries, involvement in violence, suicidal thoughts and attempts, having more sexual partners, pregnancy, using drugs, employment problems, adverse effects on brain function, on liver, bone, growth and endocrine development. ["Guidance on consumption of alcohol by children & young people."](#) (Department of Health, UK).

Rate /10,000 0 -17 year olds admitted to hospital with Alcohol related diagnoses

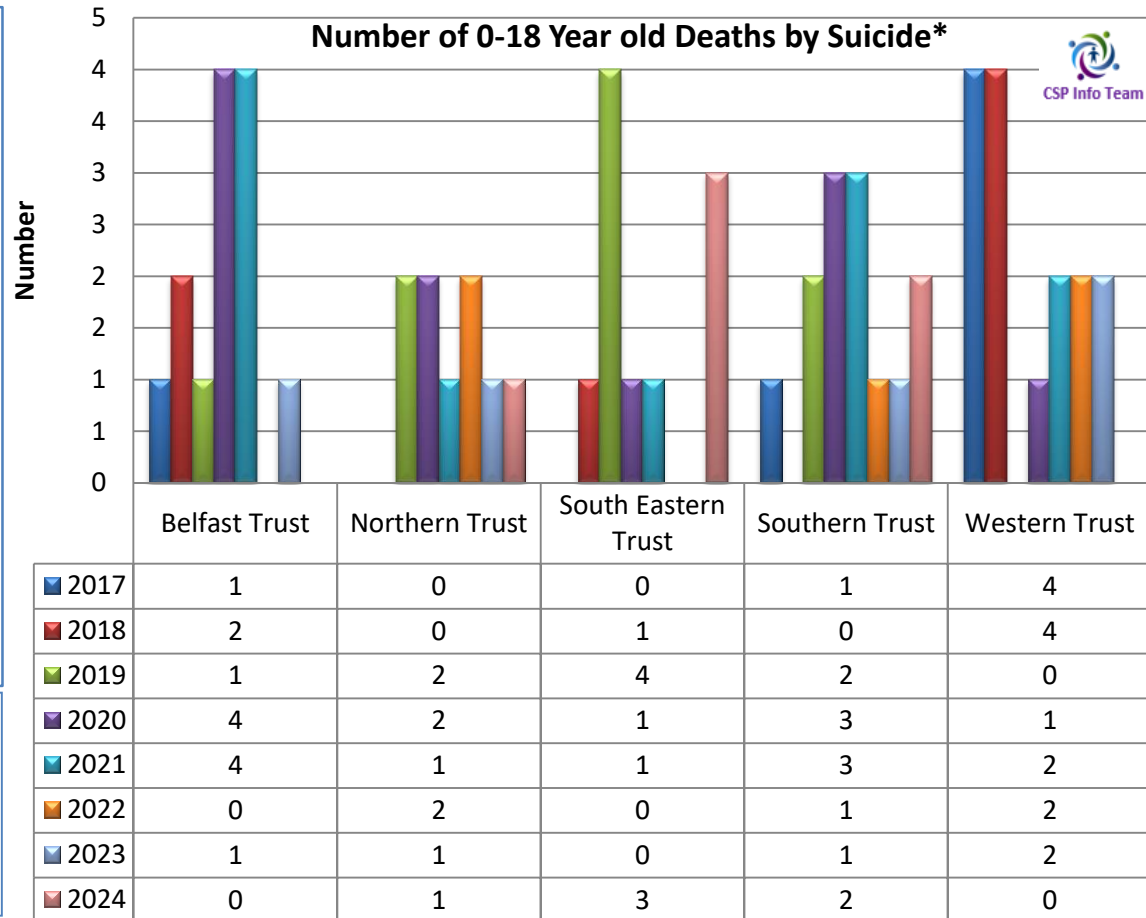


**The Story Behind the Trends** – Over the last year there was a total of **77** children and young people under 18 from Northern Ireland admitted to hospital with an alcohol related diagnoses. All areas have stayed the same or fluctuated in 2024, with Belfast and Western areas above the NI rate of **1.8**.



**Why is it Important?** There is little evidence as to why people take their own lives. Risk factors for suicide include depression, personality disorder, hopelessness, low self-esteem, bereavement, break-up of a relationship, social isolation, alcohol and drug misuse (DHSSPS, 2012). **(14)** Suicide is preventable, it is not inevitable yet almost every day in Northern Ireland a person takes their own life. Every life lost to suicide represents someone's partner, relative, child, friend or colleague. Each of these deaths is an individual tragedy and a life changing experience for those who were close to the person. It is important that we acknowledge that suicide is a major problem in our society and, also, that it is preventable. With the right help, people can get through a suicidal crisis and recover (Protect Life 2, DoH 2019-24). **(13)**.

**\*Please Note:** All deaths data supplied by Demography and Methodology Branch is based on the year of registration rather than the year of occurrence unless otherwise stated. Events such as suicide are likely to be referred to the coroner. This can take some time therefore deaths recorded each year may have occurred prior to the registration year.



**The Story Behind the Trends** – There were a total of **6** registered deaths by suicide for young people across Northern Ireland in 2024. The graph shows that over the last 6 years the highest number of suicides in the 0-18 year old age group were registered in 2020 & 2021. *Figures have been revised in light of the review of Suicide Statistics in Northern Ireland. The review can be found online at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/review-suicide-statistics-northern-ireland> The result has been a move of some child deaths from suicide to accidental, for the years 2015-2018.*





# Child Deaths By Suicide in NI by Gender

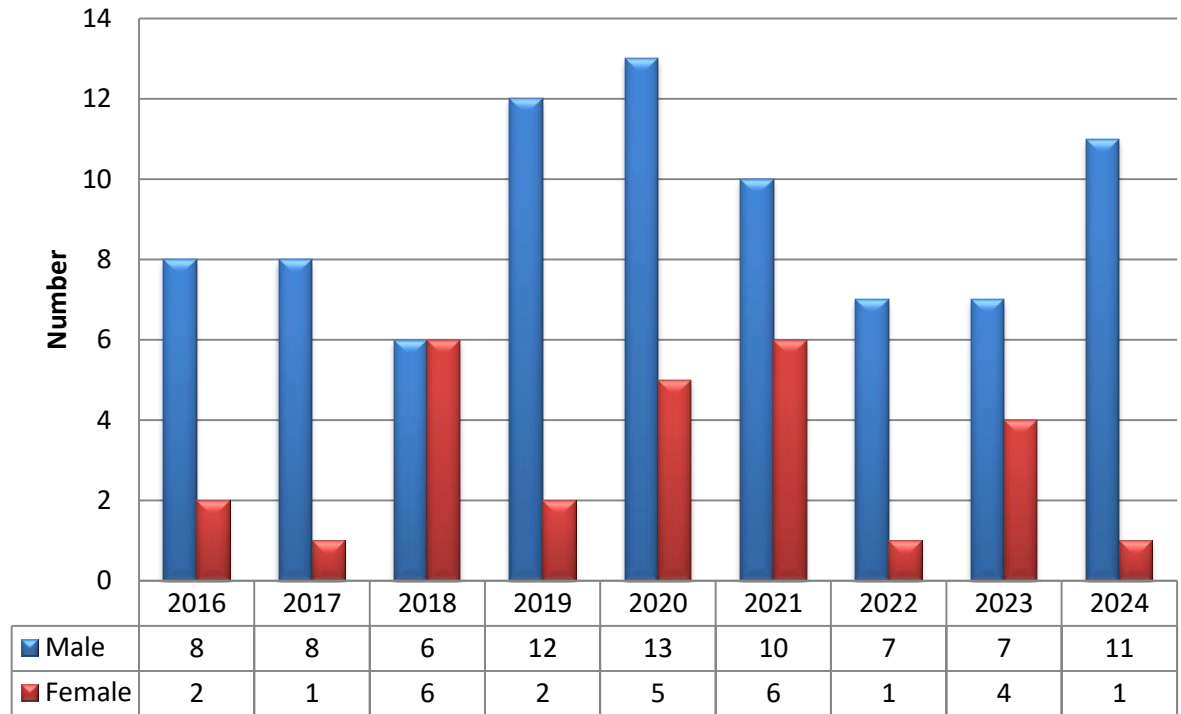
Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 6](#) (click link to view articles)



**Why is it Important?** There is little evidence as to why people take their own lives. Risk factors for suicide include depression, personality disorder, hopelessness, low self-esteem, bereavement, break-up of a relationship, social isolation, alcohol and drug misuse (DHSSPS, 2012). **(14)** Suicide is preventable, it is not inevitable yet almost every day in Northern Ireland a person takes their own life. Every life lost to suicide represents someone's partner, relative, child, friend or colleague. Each of these deaths is an individual tragedy and a life changing experience for those who were close to the person. It is important that we acknowledge that suicide is a major problem in our society and, also, that it is preventable. With the right help, people can get through a suicidal crisis and recover (Protect Life 2, DoH 2019-24). **(13)**.

### Number of 0-19 Year Old Deaths by Suicide\* in Northern Ireland



**\*Please Note:** All deaths data supplied by Demography and Methodology Branch is based on the year of registration rather than the year of occurrence unless otherwise stated. Events such as suicide are likely to be referred to the coroner. This can take some time therefore deaths recorded each year may have occurred prior to the registration year.

**The Story Behind the Trends** – The graph demonstrates that suicides have been consistently more common among males of this age group, except in 2018, but has reverted back in 2019 to 2024. Overall in 2024 there was a total of **230 males** compared to **60 females** deaths from suicide. \* In considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either ‘Suicide and self-inflicted injury’ or ‘Event of Undetermined intent’.



# Suicide in the 15-34 Age Group by HSC Trust

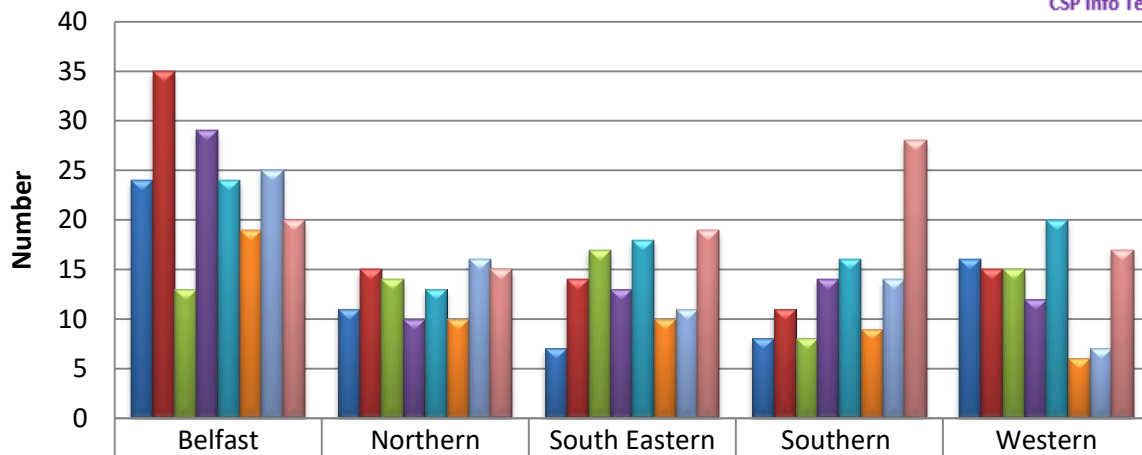
Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 6](#) (click link to view articles)

Healthy

**Why is it Important?** Those with an increased risk of suicide include broad groups of the population such as: working-age men; those who identify as LGBT; ethnic minorities; those who are care experienced; people who have experienced trauma and conflict; those with a family history of suicide; people with mental health problems; and people in contact with the criminal justice system. (Protect Life 2 DoH 2019-24) (13)

### Number of 15-34 year old deaths by Suicide\*



**\*Please Note:** All deaths data supplied by Demography and Methodology Branch is based on the year of registration rather than the year of occurrence unless otherwise stated. Events such as suicide are likely to be referred to the coroner. This can take some time therefore deaths recorded each year may have occurred prior to the registration year.

**The Story Behind the Trends –** The graph shows the number of suicides within the 15 to 34 year old age group in NI was **99** in 2024, the highest age group for suicides. The Southern Area experienced the highest number of suicides in this age group in 2024 at **28**.

*(It is important to note that the coroners office indicates that the number of suicides recorded is likely to be inaccurate, as in some cases coroners are unwilling to register "death by suicide," primarily due to respect for the wishes of the family.)*

Year	Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
2017	24	11	7	8	16
2018	35	15	14	11	15
2019	13	14	17	8	15
2020	29	10	13	14	12
2021	24	13	18	16	20
2022	19	10	10	9	6
2023	25	16	11	14	7
2024	20	15	19	28	17



# Suicide in the 15-34 Age Group in NI by Gender

Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 6](#) (click link to view articles)

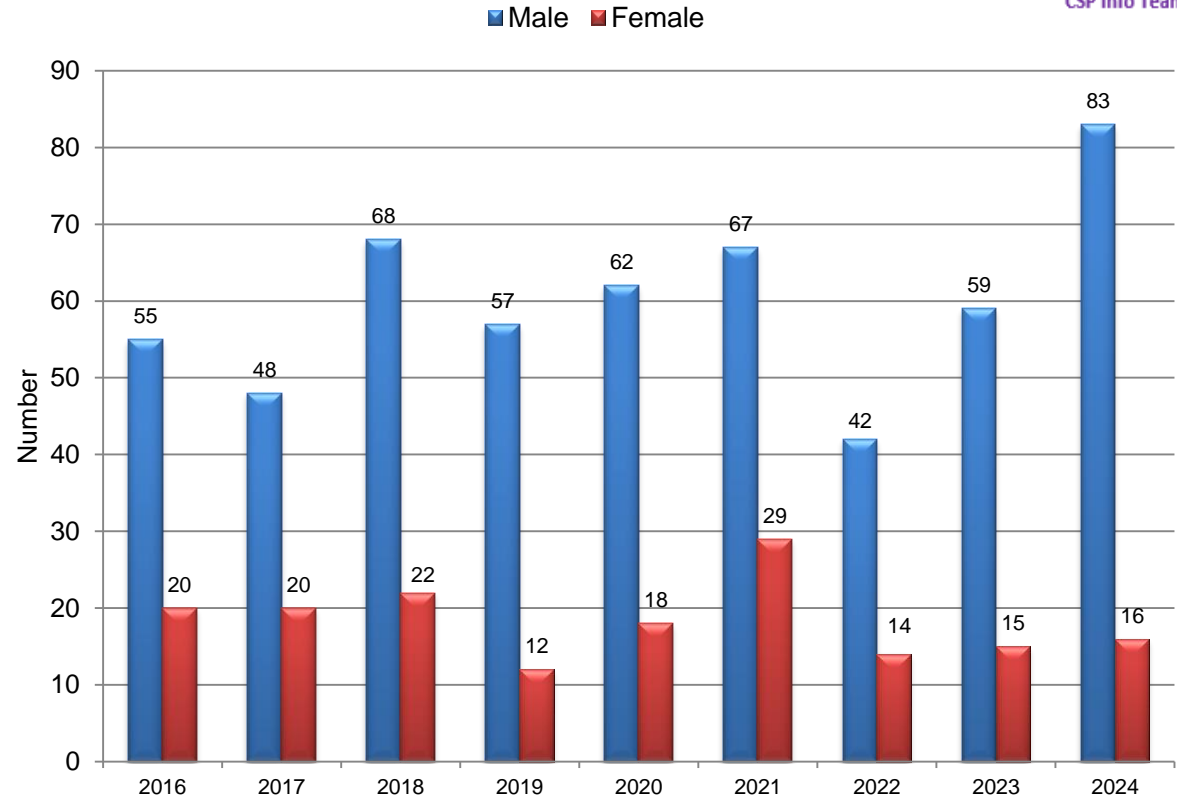
Healthy



**Why is it Important?** Those with an increased risk of suicide include broad groups of the population such as: working-age men; those who identify as LGBT; ethnic minorities; those who are care experienced; people who have experienced trauma and conflict; those with a family history of suicide; people with mental health problems; and people in contact with the criminal justice system.(Protect Life 2 DoH 2019-24) (13)

**\*Please Note:** All deaths data supplied by Demography and Methodology Branch is based on the year of registration rather than the year of occurrence unless otherwise stated. Events such as suicide are likely to be referred to the coroner. This can take some time therefore deaths recorded each year may have occurred prior to the registration year.

Number of 15-34 Year old Deaths by Suicide\* in Northern Ireland



**The Story Behind the Trends** - The above graph shows the number of suicides within the 15 to 34 year old age group across Northern Ireland broken down by gender. The figures show there has been an increase in the number of suicides in males in 2024 and females have stayed relatively the same. *It is important to note that the coroners office indicates that the number of suicides recorded is likely to be inaccurate, as in some cases coroners are unwilling to register "death by suicide," primarily due to respect for the wishes of the family.*

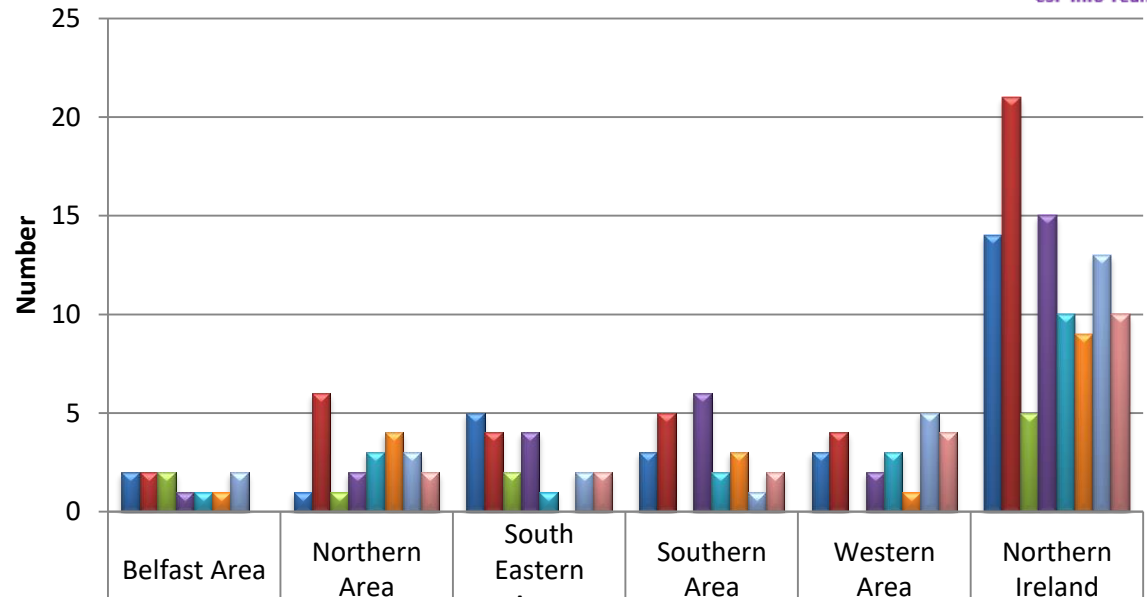


## Why is it Important?

Accidents are the main cause of death for children post-infancy, with many occurring in the home. In Northern Ireland in a typical week, two people die as a result of home accidents. In addition to these deaths, there are approximately 17,000 admissions to hospital each year as a result of unintentional injuries. Home Accident Prevention Strategy 2015-2025 (14)

**The Story Behind the Trends** –Overall in NI the number of child deaths by accident has fluctuated since 2017 until 2019 where there was a large decrease. In NI in 2024 there were **10** child deaths. *Figures have been revised in light of the review of Suicide Statistics in Northern Ireland. The review can be found online at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/review-suicide-statistics-northern-ireland>* The result has been a move of some child deaths from suicide to accidental, for the years 2015-2018.

### Number of 0-18 Year old Child Deaths by Accident



	Belfast Area	Northern Area	South Eastern Area	Southern Area	Western Area	Northern Ireland
2017	2	1	5	3	3	14
2018	2	6	4	5	4	21
2019	2	1	2	0	0	5
2020	1	2	4	6	2	15
2021	1	3	1	2	3	10
2022	1	4	0	3	1	9
2023	2	3	2	1	5	13
2024	0	2	2	2	4	10



# Cigarette Usage Amongst Young People

Data Source: Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey, 2022  
(collected 3 yearly) (10)

[UNCRC Articles: 6, 18,24](#) (click link to view articles)

61

HEALTHY

**Why is it Important?** One of the most common risk taking behaviours among young people is smoking. Every young person who takes up smoking is a potential cancer patient. Stop Smoking (15) Reducing smoking in young people is a priority in the whole of the UK. Minister Swann said: "Nicotine is highly addictive and according to the World Health Organisation, exposure to nicotine whilst still in adolescence can lead to long-term consequences for brain development. In addition to the potential long-term health implications of e-cigarette used by teenagers, there are also concerns that they may act as a gateway into smoking.(Oct 21) (16).

## **Key Findings from the Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2022**

Sample: 7498 pupils aged 11-16 (Year 8 to Year 12) were selected at random across Northern Ireland and collected in the period September 2022 – March 2023.



- In 2022, approximately **8%** of the surveyed pupils have smoked tobacco, compared to 10% in 2019, 12% in 2016, 13% in 2013 and 19% in 2010.
- In 2022, **5%** of those surveyed pupils who smoke do so everyday, compared to 16% in 2019, 19% in 2016, 20% in 2013 and 25% in 2010.
- In 2022, **32%** of pupils live in a household with adults who smoke, which was the same in 2019, 36% in 2016, 38% in 2013 and 42% in 2010.
- In 2022, **21%** of pupils surveyed had used e-cigarettes, compared to 20% in 2019, 18% in 2016 and 7% using them every day.
- In 2022, **26%** said that an adult in their household uses e-cigarettes, compared to 19% in 2019.



**Why is it Important?** Young people are more vulnerable to suffering physical, emotional and social harm from their own and other people's consumption of alcohol. There are strong connections between high risk drinking and unsafe sexual behaviour, traffic and other accidents, unintended pregnancy, failure at school and mental health problems. The World Health Organisation also highlighted that many young people today have greater opportunities and more disposable income than in the past, and are more vulnerable to increasingly aggressive sales and marketing techniques.

### **Key Findings from the Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2022**

Sample: 7498 pupils aged 11-16 (Year 8 to Year 12) were selected at random across Northern Ireland  
And collected in the period September 2022 – March 2023.



Comparisons between the 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022 YPBAS show that the proportion of pupils who reported that they have consumed alcohol at some point in their lives has decreased from 46% (2010), 38% (2013), 32% (2016), 29% (2019) to **31%** in **2022**.

- In 2022, of the pupils who have ever drunk alcohol, 21% drink a few times a month, with 2% drinking a few times a week and 1.0% daily.
- In 2019, of the pupils who have ever drunk alcohol, 24% drink a few times a month, with 4% drinking a few times a week and 0.4% daily.
- In 2016, of the pupils who have ever drunk alcohol, 19% drink a few times a month, with 5% drinking a few times a week and 1% daily.
- In 2013, of the pupils who have ever drunk alcohol, 18% drink a few times a month, with 3% drinking a few times a week and less than 1% daily.
- More than three quarters of young people (**80%**) stated that an adult in their house drinks alcohol.



# Drug Usage Amongst Young People

Data Source: Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey, 2022  
(collected 3 yearly) (10)

[UNCRC Articles: 6, 18,24, 33](#) (click link to view articles)

## HEALTHY

**Why is it Important?** Young people may use drugs as a means of rebellion or to belong to an alternative culture. Factors that may raise a young person's risk for drug use include stressful early life experiences genetics, prenatal exposure to alcohol or other drugs, lack of parental supervision or monitoring and having peers and/or friends who use drugs. The World Health Organisation also highlighted that many young people today have greater opportunities and more disposable income than in the past, and are more vulnerable to increasingly aggressive sales and marketing techniques.

### **Key Findings from the Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2022**

Sample: 7498 pupils aged 11-16 (Year 8 to Year 12) were selected at random across Northern Ireland and collected in the period September 2022 – March 2023.



- In 2022, **4%** of respondents reported ever using drugs. This is a similar rate to the findings in the previous surveys of 2019 (5%) and 2016 (4%).
- Boys (**5%**) were more likely to report having used drugs than girls (**3%**).
- Cannabis was the drug most commonly offered to and used by young people, with **10%** of young people indicating they had been offered it and **3%** reporting they had ever taken it. Those in the older age-groups were more likely to indicate this with **9%** of those in Year 12 reporting they had ever used cannabis.
- **2%** said Yes to adults in their household taking drugs.



The 2025 YLT survey invited all young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between Jan - Mar 25 to take part in the survey. The survey was completed by **2,129** respondents.

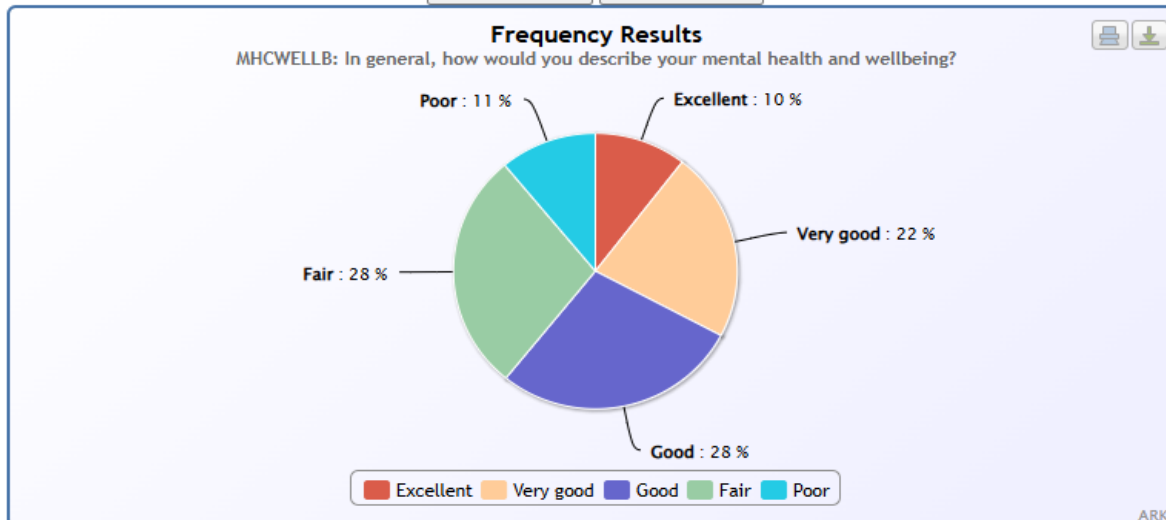
In general, how would you describe your mental health and wellbeing?

	%
Excellent	10
Very good	22
Good	28
Fair	28
Poor	11



The results show that **(60%)** reported that their mental health and wellbeing was excellent, very good or good, but concerning that 28% reported fair and 11% said poor.

[View Pie Chart](#) [Hide Pie Chart](#)





# Mental and Emotional Health

Data Source: Young Life and Times Survey, 2025 (19)

[UNCRC Articles: 12](#) (click link to view articles)

## HEALTHY

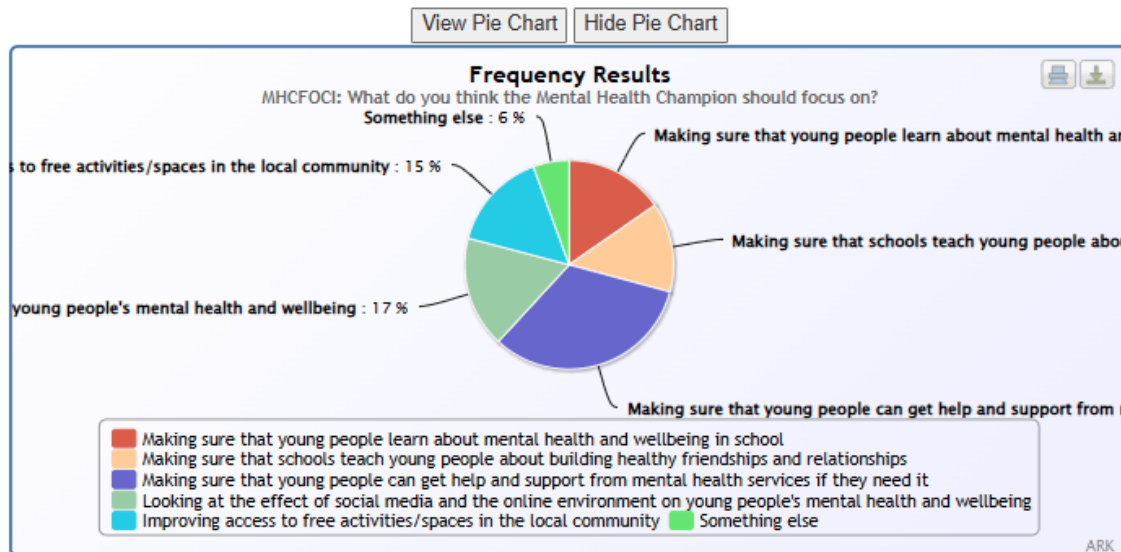
Northern Ireland has a Mental Health Champion and part of her job is to help improve the wellbeing of children and young people. Which of the following do you think the Mental Health Champion should focus on?



	%
Making sure that young people learn about mental health and wellbeing in school	15
Making sure that schools teach young people about building healthy friendships and relationships	14
Making sure that young people can get help and support from mental health services if they need it	33
Looking at the effect of social media and the online environment on young people's mental health and wellbeing	17
Improving access to free activities/spaces in the local community	15
Something else	6

The 2025 YLT survey invited all young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between Jan - Mar 25 to take part in the survey. The survey was completed by **2,129** respondents.

Results show that the majority (**33%**) of the young people surveyed reported that they would like the Mental Health Champion to focus on making sure young people get help and support from mental health services if they need it.





## What we want to achieve for all children and young people:-

- Increased access to quality early years services particularly in rural areas;
- Improved outcomes for children who are not at school or are not reaching target attendance rates;
- Strengthened services at transition stages from home/preschool/primary/post primary/employment;
- Access to quality play and leisure facilities;
- Parents and carers supported to encourage children to enjoy, learn and achieve.

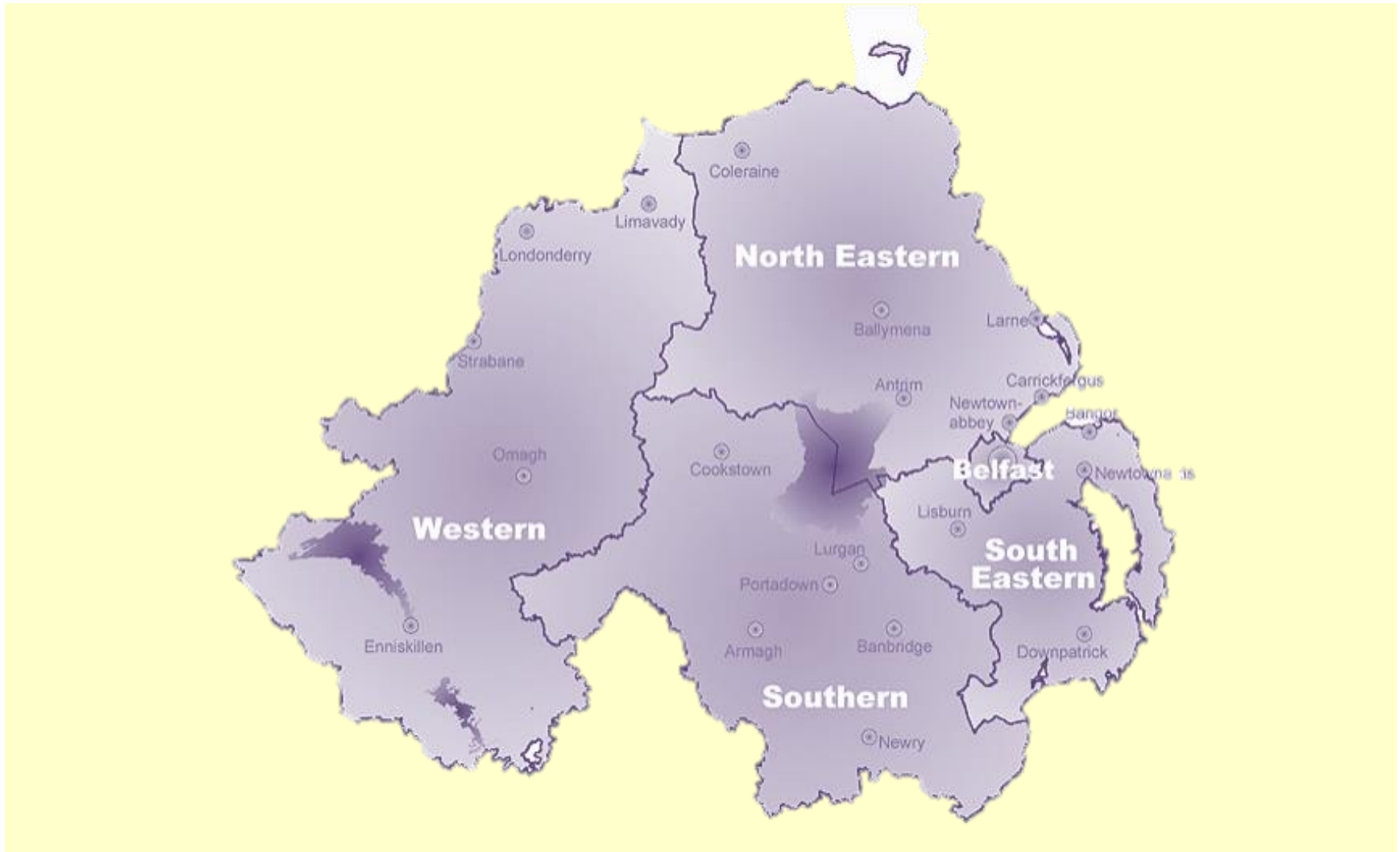
## The following indicators are included in this chapter to measure enjoying, learning and achieving of all our children and young people:-

- Geographical view of Northern Ireland Education Authority Regions
- Primary and Post-Primary School Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need
- Children Aged 4-16 years Suspended from School
- Children Aged 4-16 years Expelled from School
- Primary and Post - Primary School Children with Less than 85% Attendance
- Primary and Post - Primary School Children with English as Additional Language (Newcomers)
- Percentage of Young People gaining 3A levels at grades (A\*-C)
- Percentage of Young People gaining 2A levels at grades (A\*-E)
- Percentage of Young People gaining 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) or above
- Percentage of Young People gaining 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) or above including English & Maths
- Percentage of Young People Leaving School with No GCSEs
- Percentage of Young People Aged 16-24 years on NEETS
- Percentage Uptake of Children in Nursery and Reception Classes in Primary Schools, Nursery Schools and PEAGs



# Geographical view of Northern Ireland Education Authority Regions

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving





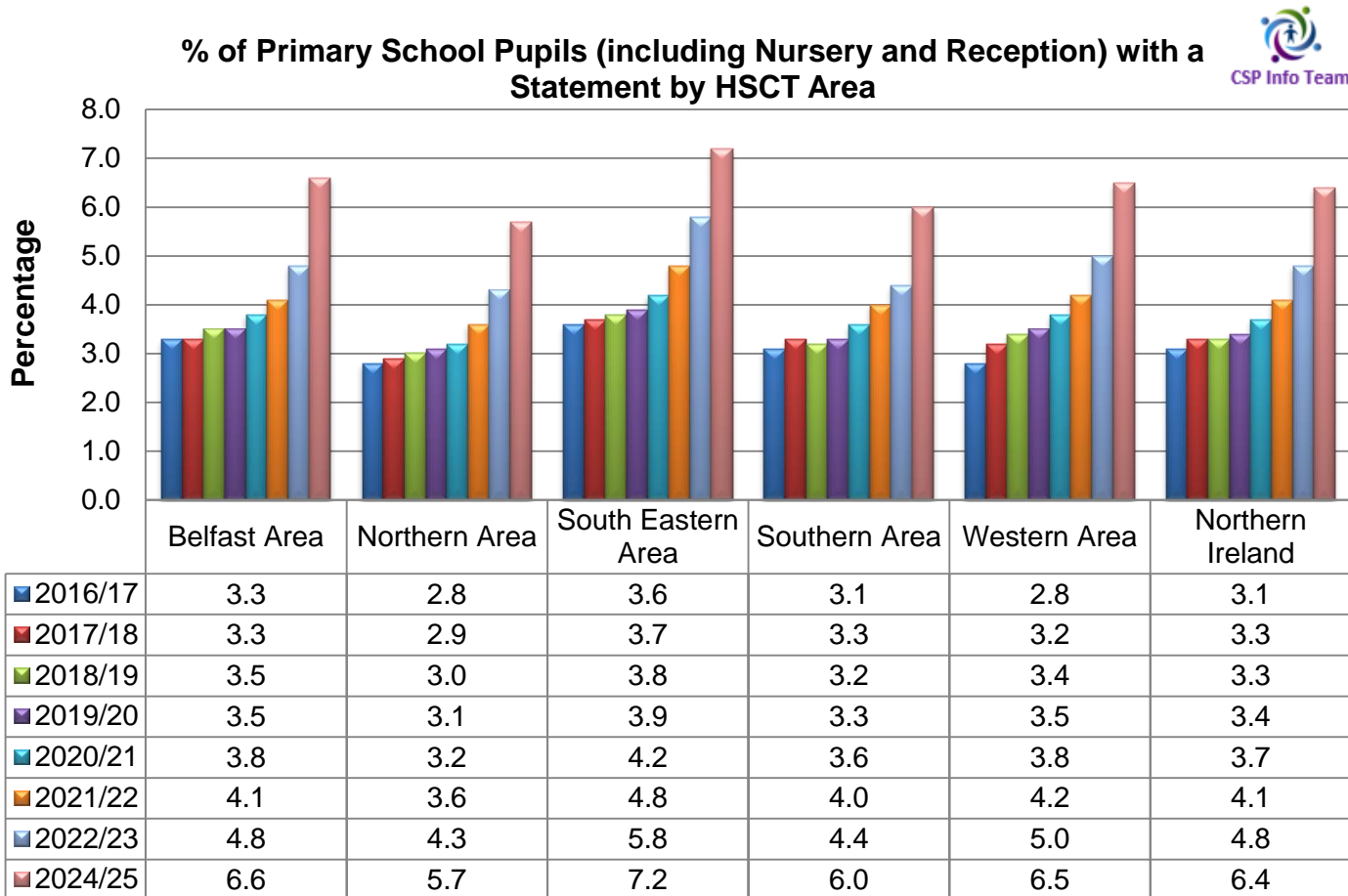
# Primary School Pupils (All) with a Statement of Special Educational Need

Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 28,29](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

**Why is it Important?** A Statement of Special Educational Need is a legal term. It describes the needs of a child who has a difficulty or disability which makes learning harder for them than for other children their age. (DE)



## The Story Behind the Trends

The percentage of primary school children (including nursery and reception) with a full Statement of Special Educational Need has increased in NI in the academic year of 2024/25 to **6.4%**. The Northern and the Southern Areas are below the NI percentage and all other areas are above.

**Please Note:** For the 2023/24 academic year, the school census exercise has been impacted by industrial action, due to ongoing Action Short of Strike (ASOS)



# Post-Primary School Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need

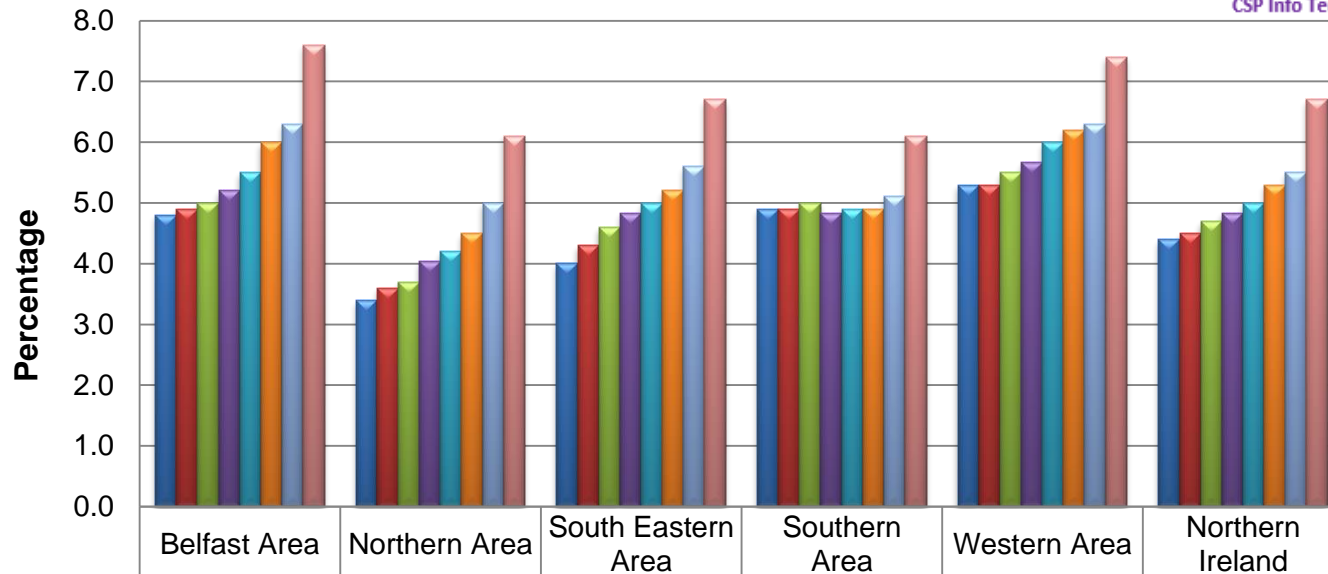
Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 28,29](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

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**% of Post Primary School Pupils with a Statement by HSCT Area**



## **The Story Behind the Trends**

The percentage of post primary school children with a full Statement of Special Educational Need has been rising slightly over the past few years. Belfast, South Eastern & Western Trust are the same or higher than the Northern Ireland percentage of **6.7%** in 2024/25.

**Please Note:** For the 2023/24 academic year, the school census exercise has been impacted by industrial action, due to ongoing Action Short of Strike (ASOS)



# Children Aged 4-16 years Suspended from School

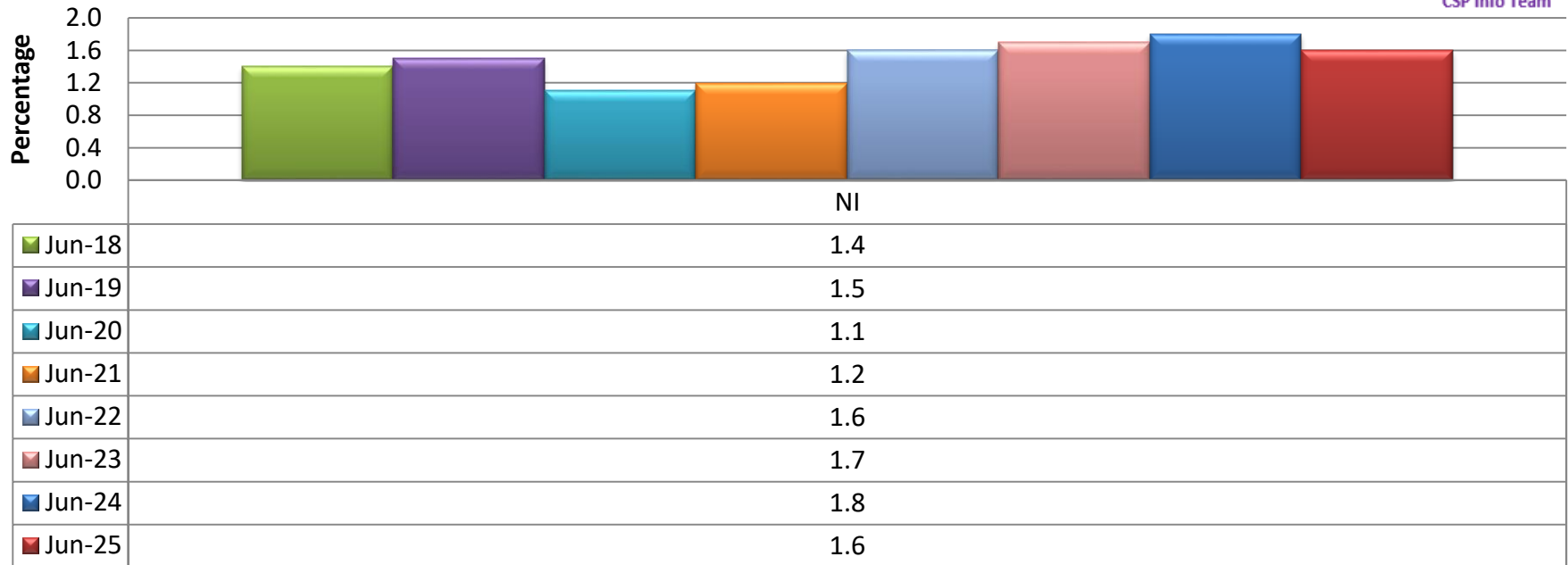
Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCRC Article: 28](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

**Why is it Important?** Reducing truancy and exclusions levels are an important part of Government social inclusion policy. Young people who attend school regularly are more likely to get the most they can out of their time at school, and therefore more likely to achieve their potential, and less likely to take part in anti-social or criminal behaviour (EA, EWS – Suspensions & Expulsions). (1)

### % of Children aged 4-16 years suspended from School



**The Story Behind the Trends** - The percentage of pupils suspended in Northern Ireland has decreased in the last year from 1.8% to **1.6** in June 2025. The total number of pupils suspended in Northern Ireland in the year ending June 2025 was **4,756** with breakdown by gender showing that Males have a higher percentage of suspensions (2.4%) than Females (0.8%). *Please note: Figures by Trusts are not available, due to the changes which came into operation in April 2015. Due to school closures both in 2019/20 and 2020/21 comparisons to previous years should be treated with caution.*



**Why is it Important?** Reducing truancy and exclusions levels are an important part of Government social inclusion policy. Young people who attend school regularly are more likely to get the most they can out of their time at school, and therefore more likely to achieve their potential, and less likely to take part in anti-social or criminal behaviour (E, EWS – Suspensions & Expulsions). (1)

**The Story Behind the Trends** - Numbers of pupils expelled from schools are very low across each education region. The overall Northern Ireland totals have increased from 28 pupils in 2023/24 school year to **35 pupils in 2024/25**.

All of expelled pupils in **2024/25** were attending post primary schools and the majority were males. **Twenty-one expelled pupils (60%) had SEN** and 14 (40%) did not have SEN.

The most common reason for expulsion was 'Persistent infringements of school rules' representing 20% (**7**) of all expelled pupils and 17.1% (**6**) were expelled due to 'Physical Attack on Another Pupil' and (**6**) 17.1% were expelled for verbal abuse of staff.



(Source: Department of Education)



# Primary School Pupils with less than 85% Attendance

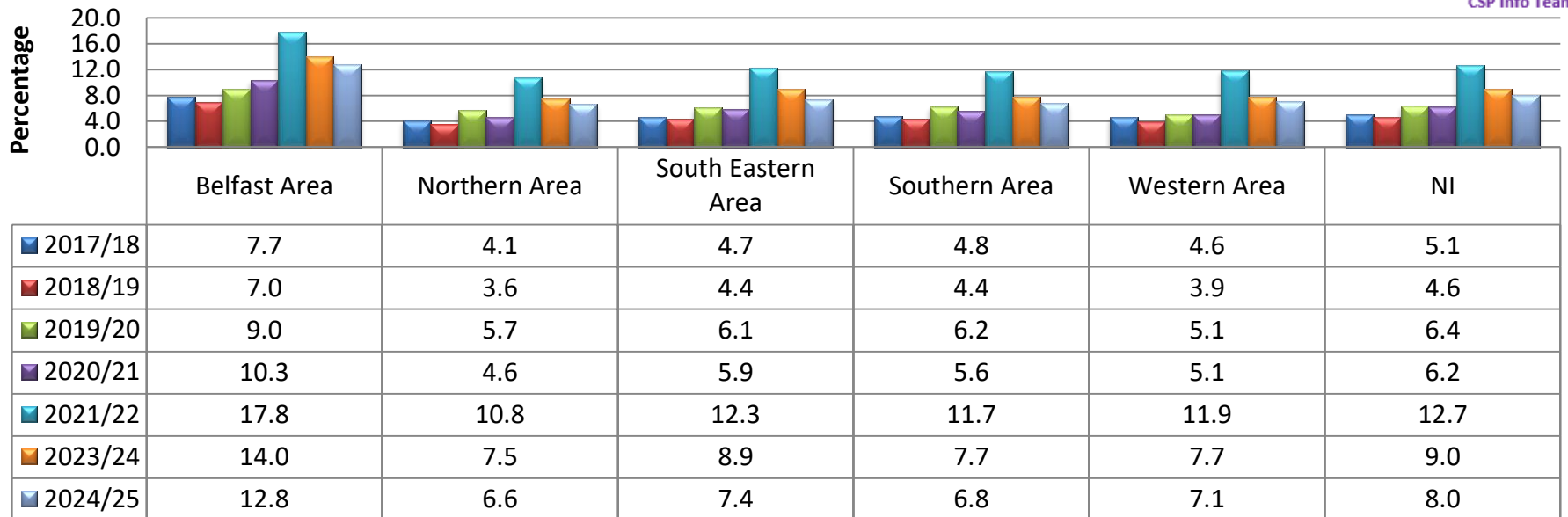
Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCRC Article: 28](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

**Why is it Important?** Attendance rate is important because students are more likely to succeed in learning and achieving when they attend school consistently. It's difficult for the teacher and the class to build their skills and progress if a large number of students are frequently absent. In addition to falling behind in academics, students who are not in school on a regular basis are more likely to get into trouble with the law and cause problems in their communities. (School Attendance Matters – A Parent’s Guide) (2)

### Primary School Pupils (Year1-7) with less than 85% attendance by Area



**The Story Behind the Trends** – All areas have seen a significant decrease over the last year in the percentage of primary school children with less than 85% attendance. Belfast Area consistently has the highest pupils absent from school, higher than the NI percentage of **8.0**. (Please Note: Due to school closures both in 2019/20 and 2020/21 comparisons to previous years should be treated with caution. Pupils residence has been used for this analysis; therefore the Area refers to where the pupil lives rather than to where the school is located.) (Note 22/23 data not available due to Industrial Action)



# Post Primary School Pupils with less than 85% Attendance

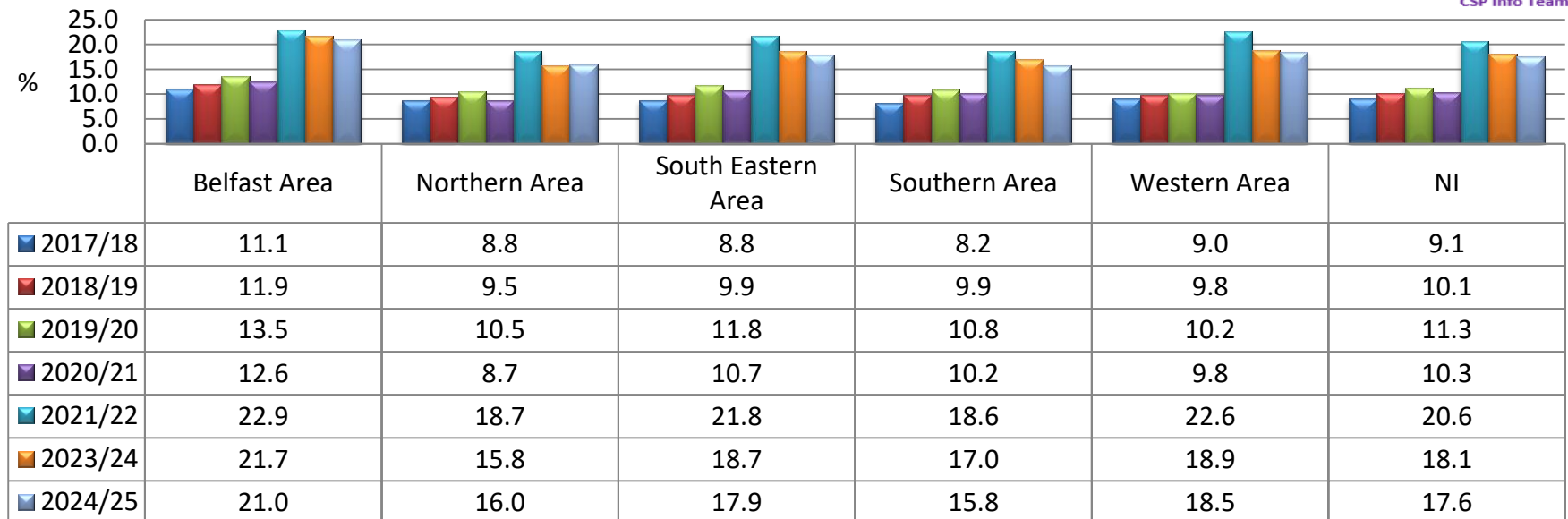
Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCRC Article: 28](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

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Post Primary School Pupils with less than 85% attendance by Area



**The Story Behind the Trends** - All areas have seen a slight decrease over the last year in the percentage of post-primary school children with less than 85% attendance. Belfast, South Eastern and Western Area are all higher than the NI percentage of **17.6**. (Please Note: Due to school closures both in 2019/20 and 2020/21 comparisons to previous years should be treated with caution. Pupils residence has been used for this analysis; therefore the Area refers to where the pupil lives rather than to where the school is located.) (Note 22/23 data not available due to Industrial Action)



# Primary School Pupils with English as Additional Language (Newcomers)

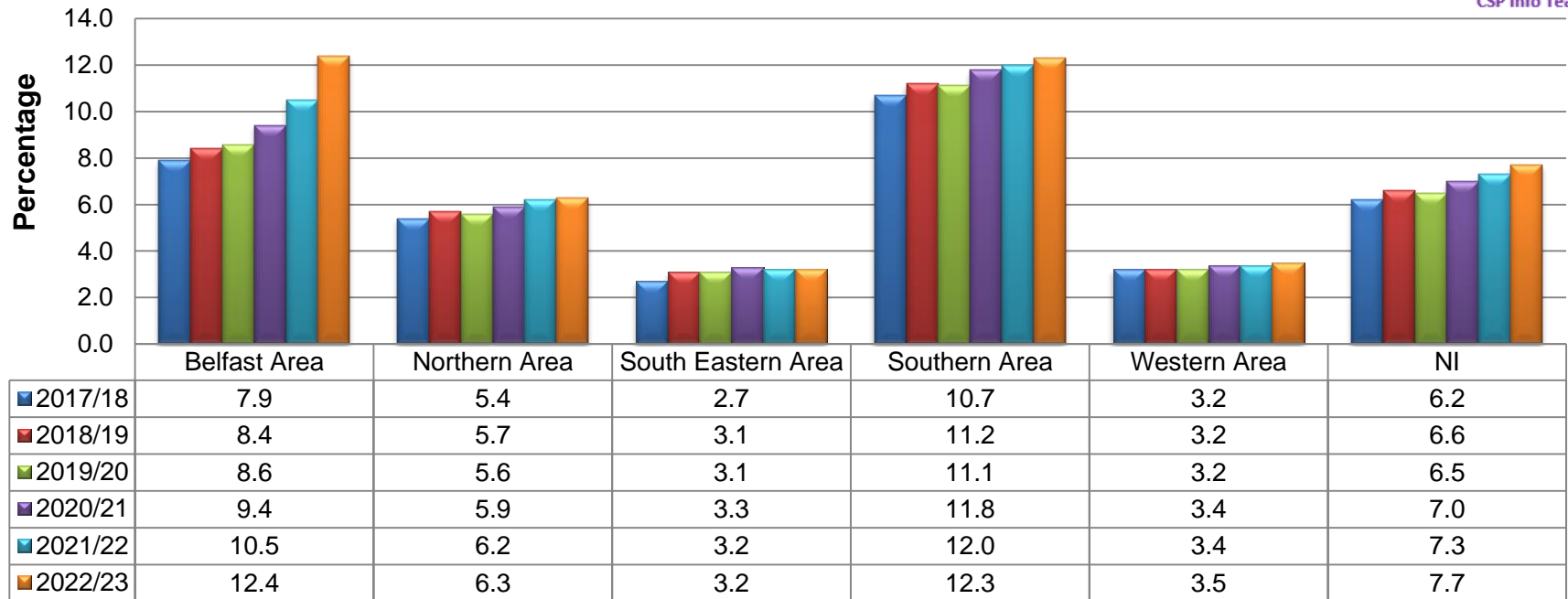
Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCRC Article:28,29,30,31](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

**Why is it Important?** All children and young people, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, are entitled to succeed. Providing an effective education for children and young people who have English as an additional language not only contributes to the educational achievement of pupils, it also contributes to their personal development and that of the economy and society. (EANI – IES Newcomer Support June 2022) (6).

**Primary School Pupils (Year 1-7) with English as Additional Language (Newcomers) by Area**



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Belfast has seen an increase in the percentage of primary school children with English as an additional language, with Southern HSCT slightly behind. Overall in Northern Ireland for 2022/23 there were **13,868** primary pupils with English as an additional language (Newcomers). (Please Note: 2022/23 figures includes nursery, reception and Year 1-7 classes.)



# Post-Primary School Pupils with English as Additional Language (Newcomers)

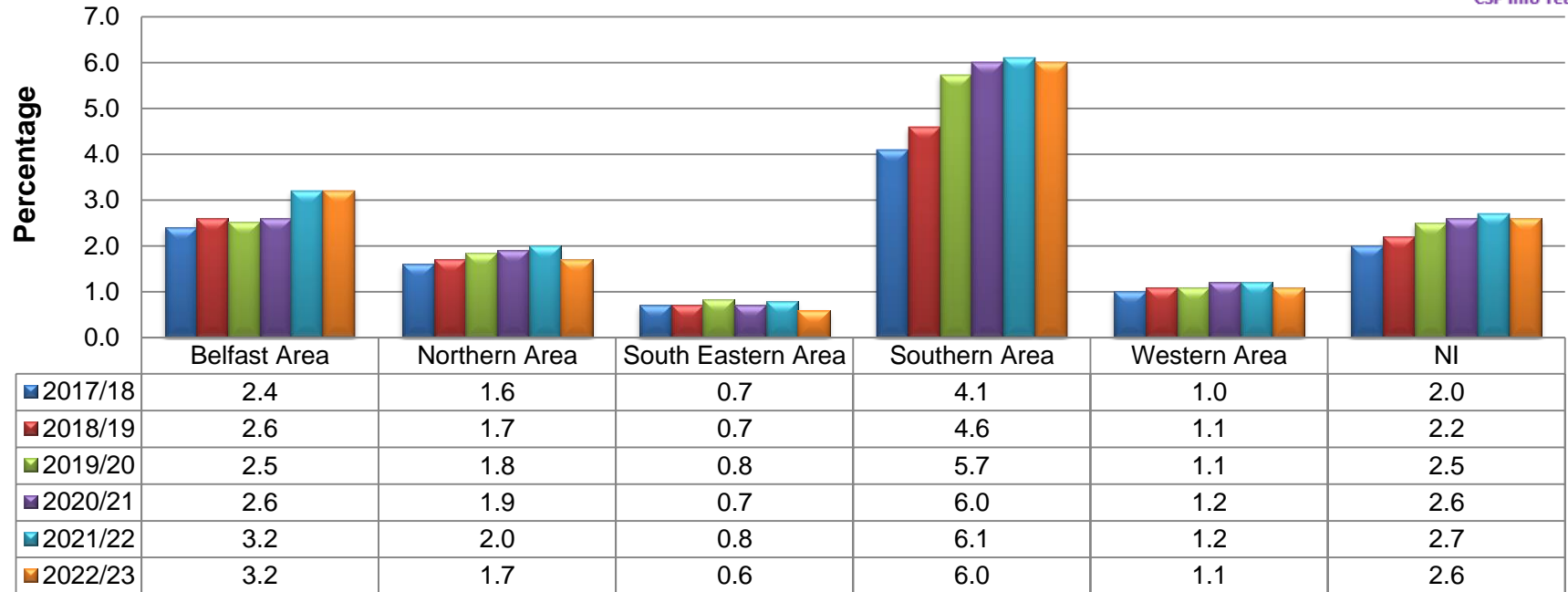
Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCRC Article:28,29,30,31](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

**Why is it Important?** All children and young people, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, are entitled to succeed. Providing an effective education for children and young people who have English as an additional language not only contributes to the educational achievement of pupils, it also contributes to their personal development and that of the economy and society. (EANI – IES Newcomer Support June 2022)(6).

Post-Primary School Pupils with English as Additional Language (Newcomers) by Area



**The Story Behind the Trends** – All areas have stayed the same or a slight decrease in the percentage of post-primary pupils with English as an additional language, with Southern HSC the highest percentage of Newcomer Pupils and with Belfast HSC higher than NI percentage of **2.6%**. Overall in Northern Ireland for 2022/23 there were **4,026** post primary pupils with English as an additional language (Newcomers).



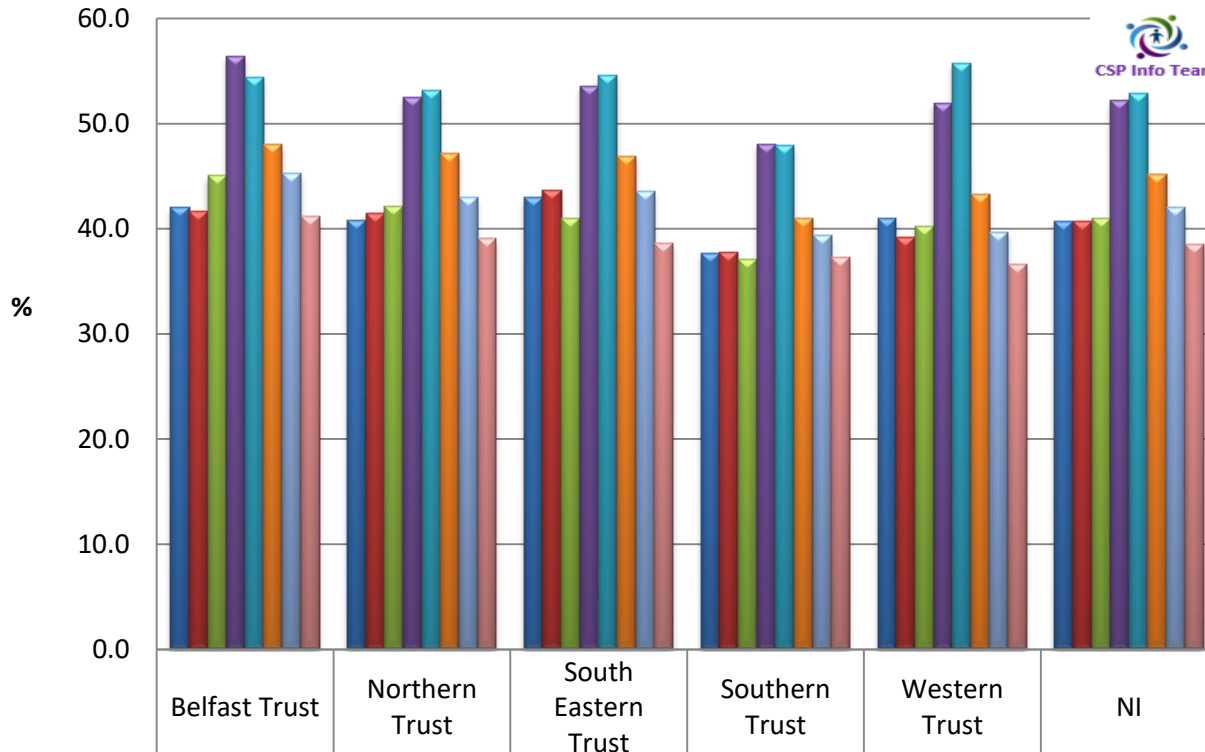
# Percentage of Young People gaining 3A levels at grades (A\*- C)

Data Source: Department of Education

UNCRC Article: 29 [\(click link to view articles\)](#)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

Percentage of Young People gaining 3A levels at grades (A\*-C) by HSCT



## Why is it Important?

A-levels are recognised qualifications that are required for entry into many university courses and professional training opportunities, giving students the UCAS points they need to study at undergraduate level. Students study A-levels between the ages of 17 and 18 after GCSE's. Most universities and colleges will ask for 5 GCSEs grades A\*-C, including English and Maths to be able to return to study A-levels.

## The Story Behind the Trends -

The % of young people gaining 3A levels at grades (A\*- C) has dropped from 40.7% in June 2016 to **38.5%** in June 24 in Northern Ireland. Due to alternative methods of awarding grades in 2019/20 and 2020/21 and the various assessment adaptations in place for 2021/22 caution should be taken when drawing any conclusions relating to the decrease in the figures.



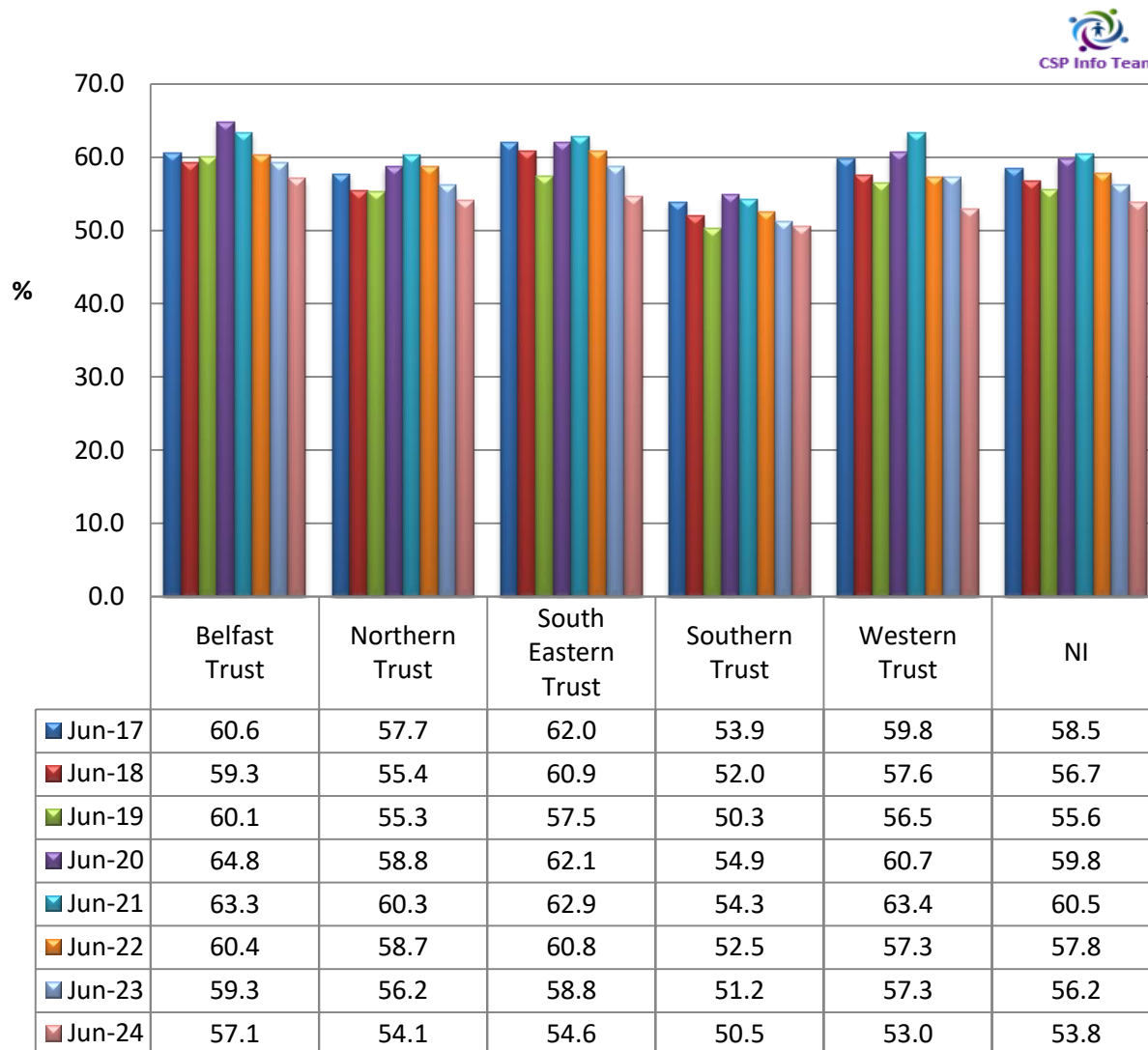
# Percentage of Young People gaining 2+A levels at grades (A\* - E)

Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCR Article: 28,29](#) (click link to view articles)

## Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

Percentage of Young People gaining 2+A levels at grades (A\* - E) by HSCT



### Why is it Important?

A-levels are recognised qualifications that are required for entry into many university courses and professional training opportunities, giving students the UCAS points they need to study at undergraduate level. Students study A-levels between the ages of 17 and 18 after GCSE's. Most universities and colleges will ask for 5 GCSEs grades A\*-C, including English and Maths to be able to return to study A-levels.

### The Story Behind the Trends -

The % of young people gaining 2+A levels at grades (A\* - E) has dropped from 58.5% in June 2017 to **53.8%** in June 24 in Northern Ireland. Due to alternative methods of awarding grades in 2019/20 and 2020/21 and the various assessment adaptations in place for 2021/22 caution should be taken when drawing any conclusions relating to the decrease in the figures.

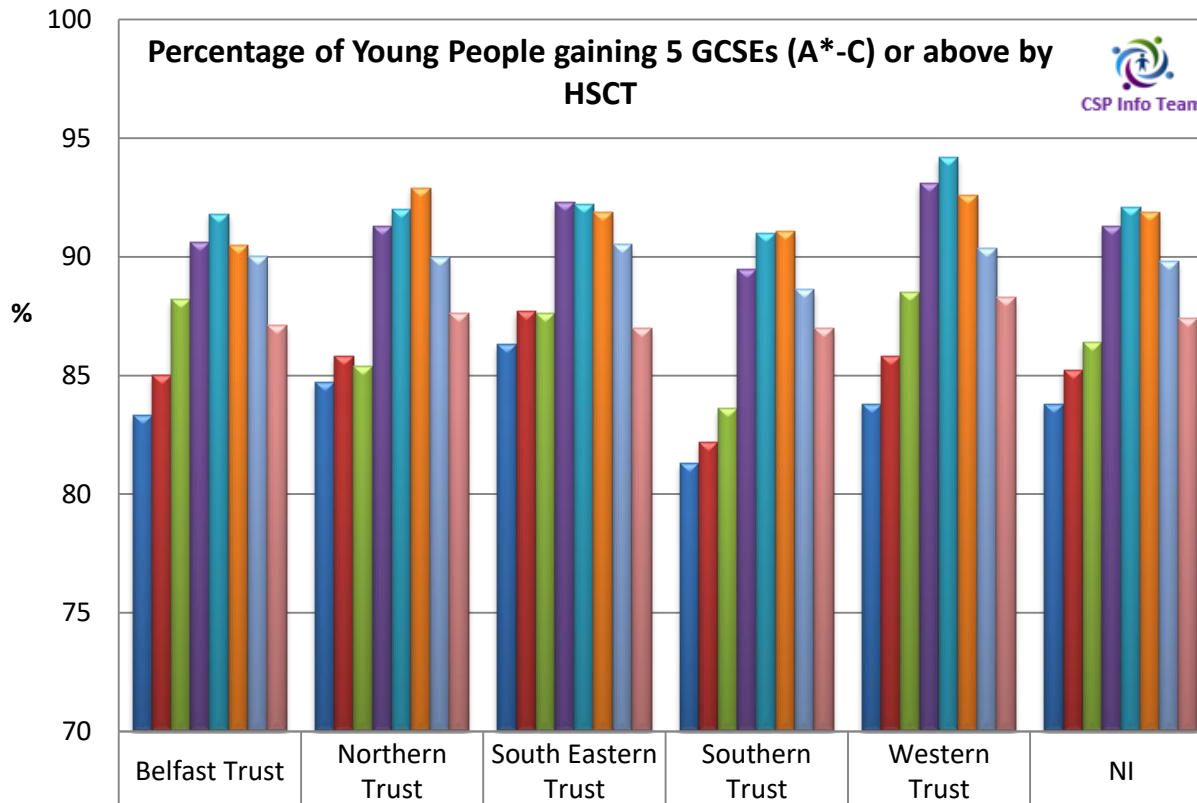


# Percentage of Young People gaining 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) or Above

Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCRC Article: 28, 29](#) (click link to view articles)

Enjoying, Learning and Achieving



**Why is it Important?** GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. GCSEs are the main qualification taken by 14-16 year olds. You can take GCSEs in a wide variety of academic and 'applied' (work related) subjects. GCSEs are highly valued by schools, colleges and employers. Obtaining GCSEs lead to a number of routes, mainly work, further study or an Apprenticeship. Most Universities will ask for 5 GCSEs grades A\*-C, including English and Maths (as well as A Levels or equivalent qualifications) (Six reasons why exams are important). (3)

**The Story Behind the Trends -** The percentage of young people gaining 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) has risen from 83.8% in June 17 to **87.4%** in June 24 in Northern Ireland. The Trusts have all decreased in the last year, with a significant drop in Belfast Trust.

	Belfast Trust	Northern Trust	South Eastern Trust	Southern Trust	Western Trust	NI
Jun-17	83.3	84.7	86.3	81.3	83.8	83.8
Jun-18	85.0	85.8	87.7	82.2	85.8	85.2
Jun-19	88.2	85.4	87.6	83.6	88.5	86.4
Jun-20	90.6	91.3	92.3	89.5	93.1	91.3
Jun-21	91.8	92.0	92.2	91.0	94.2	92.1
Jun-22	90.5	92.9	91.9	91.1	92.6	91.9
Jun-23	90.0	90.0	90.5	88.6	90.4	89.8
Jun-24	87.1	87.6	87.0	87.0	88.3	87.4



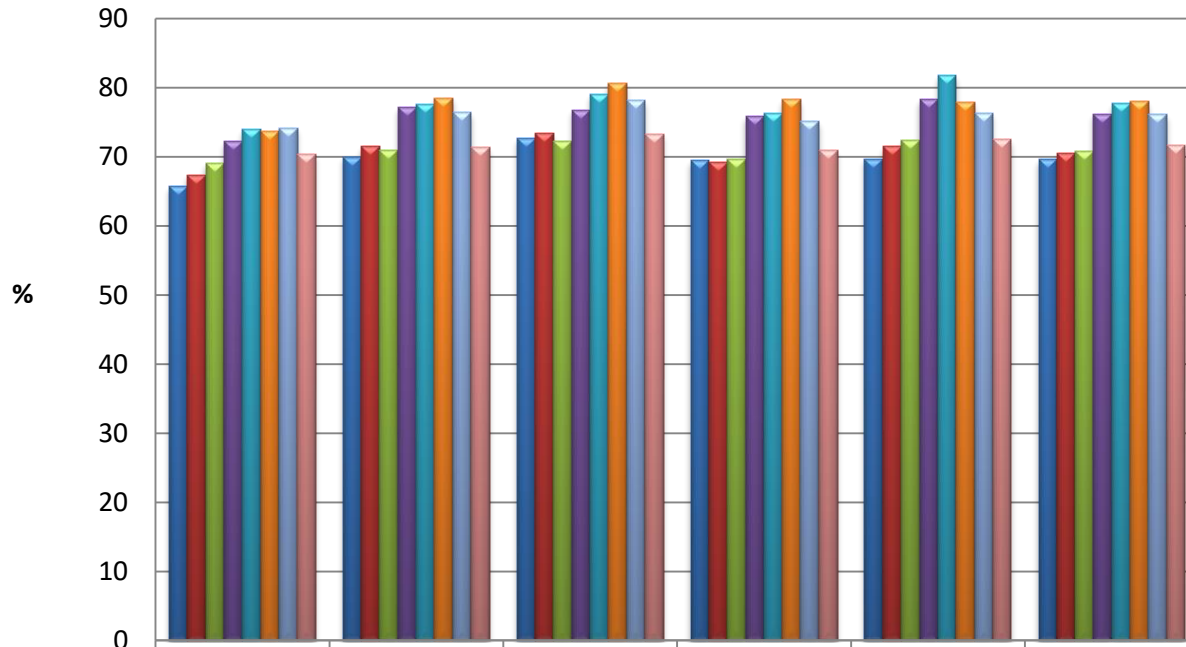
# Percentage of Young People gaining 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) or Above (including English and Maths)

Data Source: Department of Education

[UNCRC Article: 28, 29](#) (click link to view articles)

## Enjoying, Learning and Achieving

Percentage of Young People gaining 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) or above including English and Maths by HSCT



**Why is it Important?** GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. GCSEs are the main qualification taken by 14-16 year olds. You can take GCSEs in a wide variety of academic and 'applied' (work related) subjects. GCSEs are highly valued by schools, colleges and employers. Obtaining GCSEs lead to a number of routes, mainly work, further study or an Apprenticeship. Most Universities will ask for 5 GCSEs grades A\*-C, including English and Maths (as well as A Levels or equivalent qualifications) (Six reasons why exams are important). (3)

**The Story Behind the Trends** - The % of young people gaining 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) including English and Maths has risen slightly from 69.6% in June 2017 to **71.6%** in June 24 in Northern Ireland. All Trusts have decreased with Northern, South Eastern and Western Trust areas above the NI average.

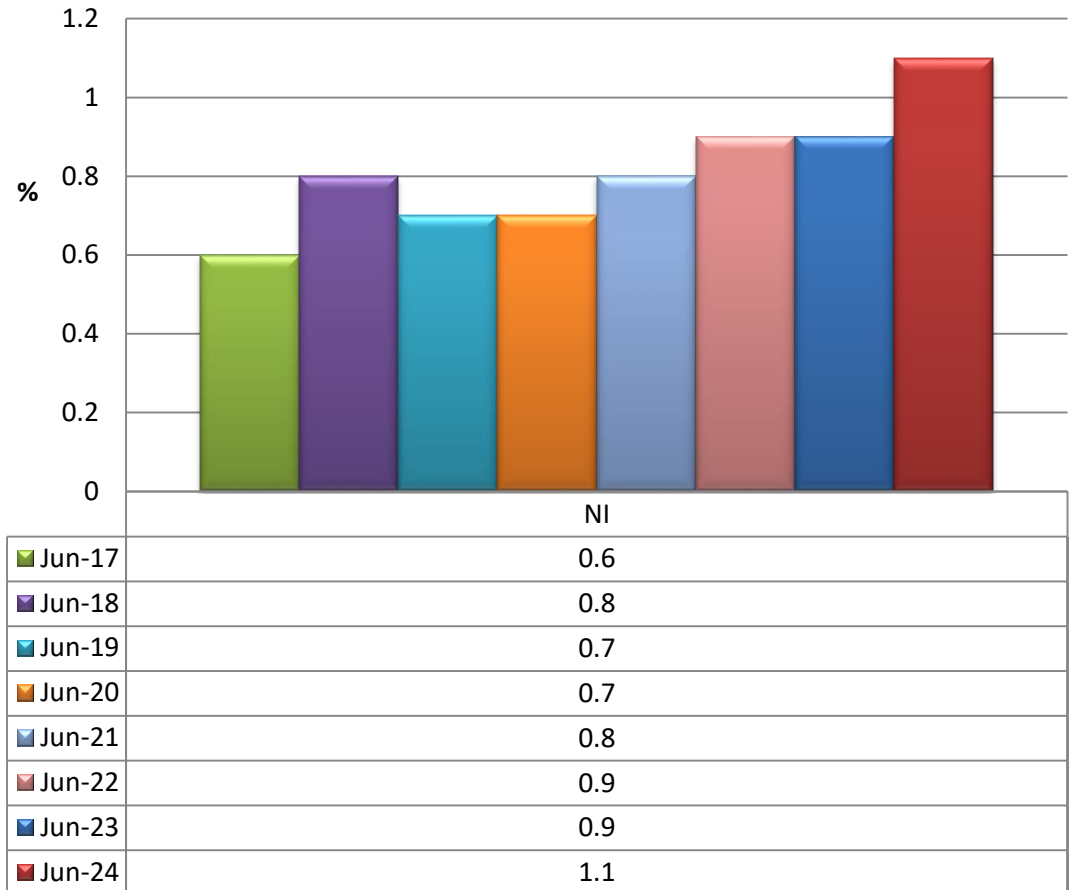
	Belfast Trust	Northern Trust	South Eastern Trust	Southern Trust	Western Trust	NI
Jun-17	65.7	70.0	72.6	69.5	69.7	69.6
Jun-18	67.4	71.5	73.4	69.2	71.5	70.6
Jun-19	69.0	70.9	72.2	69.6	72.4	70.8
Jun-20	72.2	77.1	76.8	75.8	78.3	76.2
Jun-21	74.0	77.6	79.0	76.3	81.8	77.7
Jun-22	73.7	78.5	80.6	78.3	77.9	78.0
Jun-23	74.2	76.4	78.1	75.1	76.4	76.1
Jun-24	70.4	71.3	73.3	70.9	72.5	71.6



**Why is it Important?** GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. GCSEs are the main qualification taken by 14-16 year olds. You can take GCSEs in a wide variety of academic and ‘applied’ (work related) subjects. GCSEs are highly valued by schools, colleges and employers. Obtaining GCSEs lead to a number of routes, mainly work, further study or an Apprenticeship. Most Universities will ask for 5 GCSEs grades A-C, including English and Maths (as well as A Levels or equivalent qualifications) (Six reasons why exams are important). **(3)**

**The Story Behind the Trends** - The percentage of young people leaving school with no GCSEs in NI has risen from 0.6% in June 17 to 1.1% in June 24. There were a total of **270** young people leaving school with no GCSEs in 2023/24, **146** boys and **124** girls. (No GCSEs includes those who undertook no GCSE examinations or obtained no graded results but who obtained other qualifications.)

### Percentage of Young People Leaving School with no GCSEs in NI



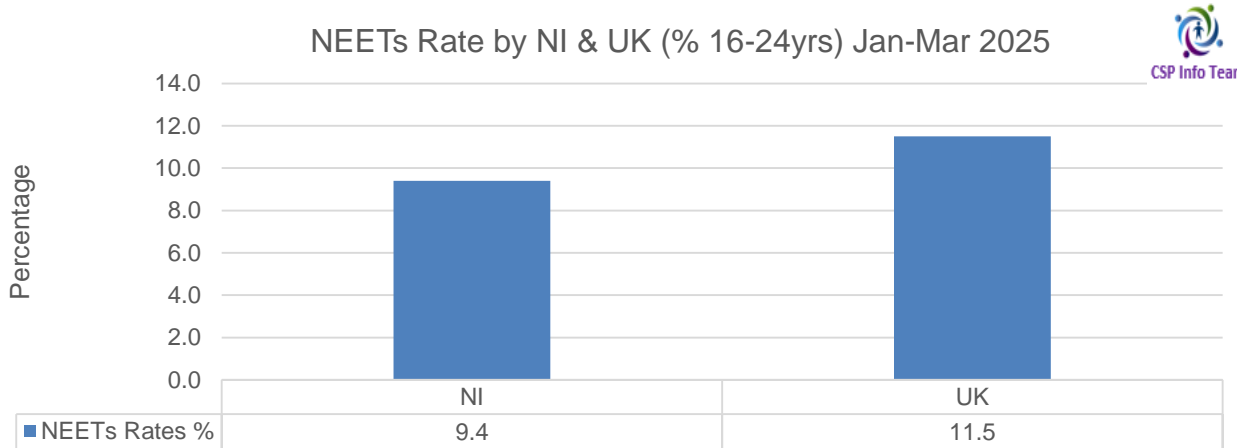


# Percentage of Young People Aged 16-24 years on NEETS

Data Source: NISRA – Labour Force Survey 2025 (5)

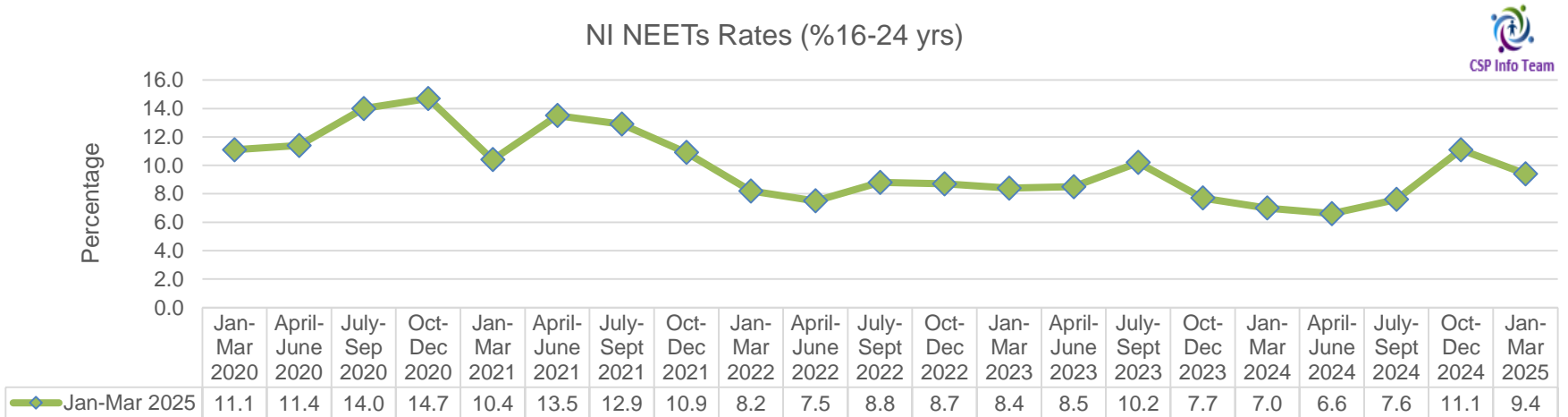
[UNCRC Articles: 27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Enjoying, Learning and Achieving



### NEETs United Kingdom Comparison

For the period Jan-Mar 2025, the NI NEETs rate for those aged 16-24 stood at **9.4%**. This is lower than the UK rate of 11.5%. The highest rate recorded for NI since 2019 was 14.7% at Oct-Dec 2020.



**The Story Behind the Trends** - The percentage of young people in Northern Ireland aged 16 – 24 years who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is lower than the UK percentage of 11.5% in Jan-Mar 2025. NEET is a person who is unemployed and not receiving an education or vocational training.



# Percentage uptake of Children in Nursery and Reception Classes in Primary Schools, Nursery Schools and Voluntary and Private Pre-School Education Centres by LGD's

[UNCRC Article: 28](#) (click link to view articles)

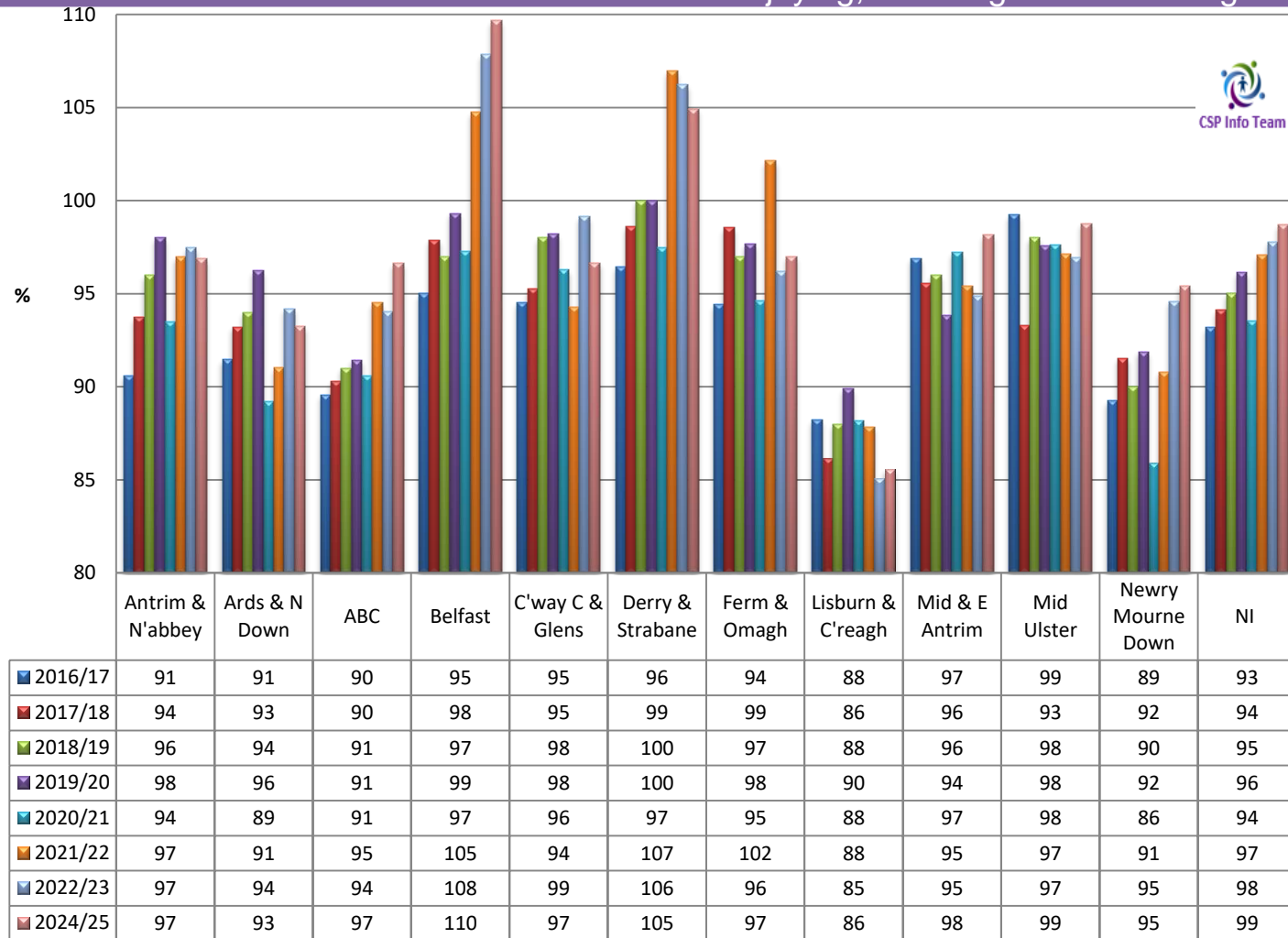
Data Source: Department of Education

## Enjoying, Learning and Achieving



**Why is it Important?** The Department of Education (DE) seeks to ensure that children get the best start in life through enabling education policies, legislation and funding which provide a range of universal and targeted services to help children achieve, develop and thrive. Early years education provision makes a distinctive contribution to helping achieve the wider aims of improving attainment and reducing underachievement, especially in literacy and numeracy. The services are designed to support children and their families by providing positive early years education and learning experiences in safe, stimulating and supportive environments (<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/node/40464>).

**(4).**



**The Story Behind the Trends** – The majority of LGD areas have fluctuated slightly in the uptake of places along with the NI percentage which is up to **99%**, with Belfast and Derry & Strabane sitting at 110 and 105% respectively. **(Please Note: The above percentages are based on mid year estimates of the averages of 3 and 4 year olds. Due to the reform of the LGDs in 2015 figures are not available by Trust Level. 2023/24 data is not available due to schools taking part in Action Short of Strike (ASOS))**



## What we want to achieve for all children and young people:-

- Children and young people to feel and be safe and secure in their homes and in their communities;
- Improved outcomes for children at risk of abuse;
- Access to family support services appropriate to age and location;
- Support for families at risk of being homeless;
- To be free from bullying.

## The following indicators are included in this chapter to measure all our children and young people living in safety and with stability:-

- Children in Need Key Findings
- Children on the Child Protection Register
- Children Re-registered to the Child Protection Register
- Looked After Children
- Children who are Victims of Domestic Violence
- Crimes Recorded with a Domestic Abuse Motivation
- Young People's Attitude to Domestic Violence
- Crimes Recorded with a Racist Motivation
- Crimes Recorded with a Homophobic Motivation
- Road Traffic Casualties on the Roads
- Children Killed, Seriously or Slightly Injured on the Roads
- Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Social Media Safety and Travelling to School

Source: [DoH Children's Social Care Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25](#) (3)



- *A Child is in Need if: (a) he or she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by an authority; (b) his or her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired; (c) or further impaired without the provision of such services, or he or she is disabled. Source: Children (NI) Order 1995.*
- At 31 March 2025, **22,243** children in Northern Ireland were known to Social Services as a Child in Need, of which **20%** were recorded as having a disability. Over half (**53%**) of these had Autism and ADHD, with (**36%**) learning disability. (Note: Due to action short of strike, Belfast HSC Trust information was not available and therefore has been excluded from this figure.)
- The number of children in need in 2024/25 has decreased by **1%** since 2023/24, with the Southern HSCT having the largest proportion (28%) of the 22,243 children in need and the highest rate of Children in Need. (618 children per 10,000 child population).
- *A referral is defined as a request for services to be provided by children's social care and is in respect of a child who is currently not assessed to be in need, which may result in an episode of care which may be an initial assessment of the child's needs, the provision of information or advice, referral to another agency or alternatively no further action.*
- *The number of children in need referrals can fluctuate substantially year on year at Trust level. In 2024/25 Belfast and Northern HSC Trusts saw decreases in referrals compared to the previous year, whilst Southern and Western HSC Trusts recorded increases.*
- *Note: Figures for South Eastern HSC Trust and Northern Ireland overall will be updated when revised and validated returns have been received.*

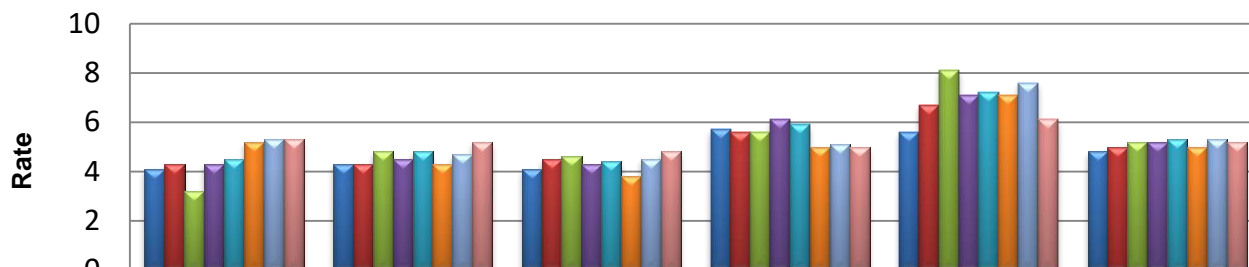


Data Source: DoH Children’s Social Care Statistics for Northern Ireland 2024/25

## Living in Safety and with Stability

**Why is it Important?** Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings; in a family, an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them. Not all children who are subjected to abuse are known to Social Services. (DoH, Co-operating to Safeguard Children, 2017). (1)

### Rate per 1000 of Children Aged 0-17 on the Child Protection Register



	Belfast Trust	Northern Trust	South Eastern Trust	Southern Trust	Western Trust	N.I.
2017/18	4.1	4.3	4.1	5.7	5.6	4.8
2018/19	4.3	4.3	4.5	5.6	6.7	5.0
2019/20	3.2	4.8	4.6	5.6	8.1	5.2
2020/21	4.3	4.5	4.3	6.1	7.1	5.2
2021/22	4.5	4.8	4.4	5.9	7.2	5.3
2022/23	5.2	4.3	3.8	5.0	7.1	5.0
2023/24	5.3	4.7	4.5	5.1	7.6	5.3
2024/25	5.3	5.2	4.8	5.0	6.1	5.2

### The Story Behind the Trends -

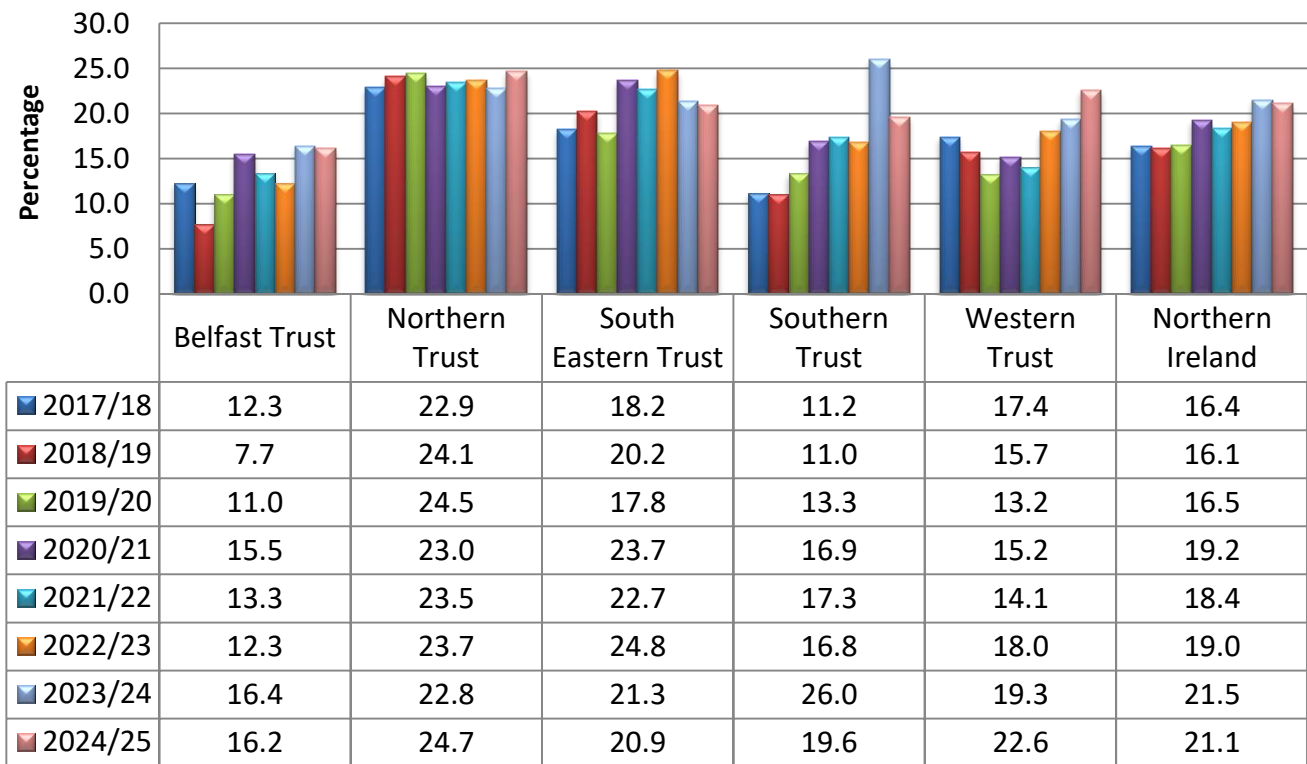
There were a total of **2,283** children on the child protection register in Northern Ireland at 31 March 2025, a decrease of **(51)** since March 2024. The Western Trust has the highest rate of children registered in 2024/25 much higher than the NI rate of **5.2**.

**Please note:** *Figures on child protection registers record the child protection process not the number of children who are abused and are, therefore, likely to underestimate the extent of abuse.*



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### Percentage of Children Re-registered to the Child Protection Register



**The Story Behind the Trends-**

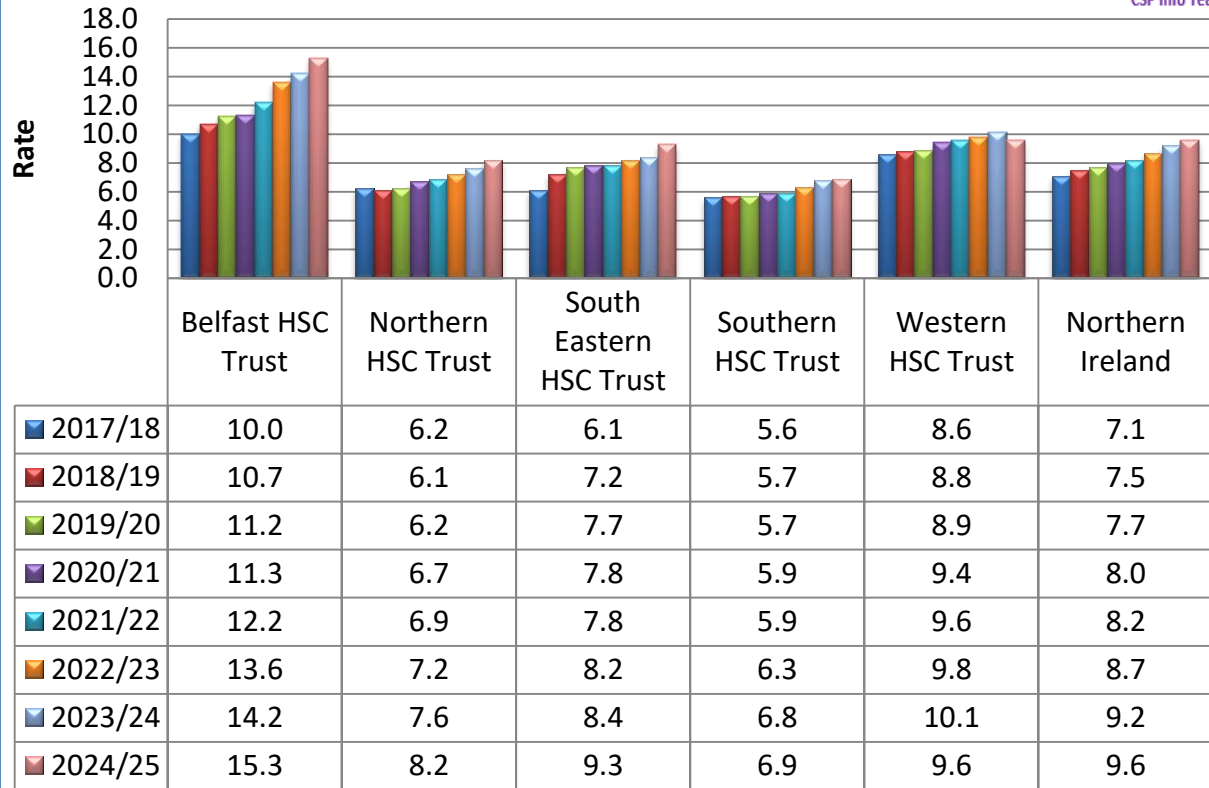
Overall during 2024/25 there were **431** children re-registered on the Child Protection Register, with an increase only in the Western Trust.

*Figures based on percentage of Total Registrations.*



**Why is it Important?** The ‘A Life Deserved: “Caring” for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland’(2) strategy aims to improve the well-being of children and young people, who are already in care, at risk of entering care and those children and young people who have recently left care. Like all children, the children in our care have hopes, dreams and aspirations. Unlike most children, however, many will have experienced hardships and trauma in their young lives. This often shapes them and sets the course for their future years and can leave it difficult for them to achieve their full potential. It will always be our aim to keep families together with the right support where this is appropriate. However, where this is not possible either in the short-term or for a longer period of time, we need to ensure as far as possible that when the decision is made to bring a child into care, that we are able to provide him or her with the best care available.

### Looked After Children per 1000 population aged 0-17 years



**The Story Behind the Trends** - At 31 March 2025, there were **4,188** Looked After Children in Northern Ireland. This was the highest recorded number of children in care since the introduction of the Children (NI) Order 1995, representing **9.6%**. Of the 4,188 looked after children, 52% were in Kinship Foster Care, 23% in Non-kinship Foster Care, 9% were in Independent Foster Care, 6% were Placed with Parents, 5% were in Residential Care and 5% were in other placement types. Nearly half of Looked After Children in NI (**48%**) have been in care for more than three years.



# Children who are Victims of Domestic Violence

Data Source: Police Service in Northern Ireland (PSNI)

[UNCRC Article: 19](#) (click link to view articles)

## Living in Safety and with Stability

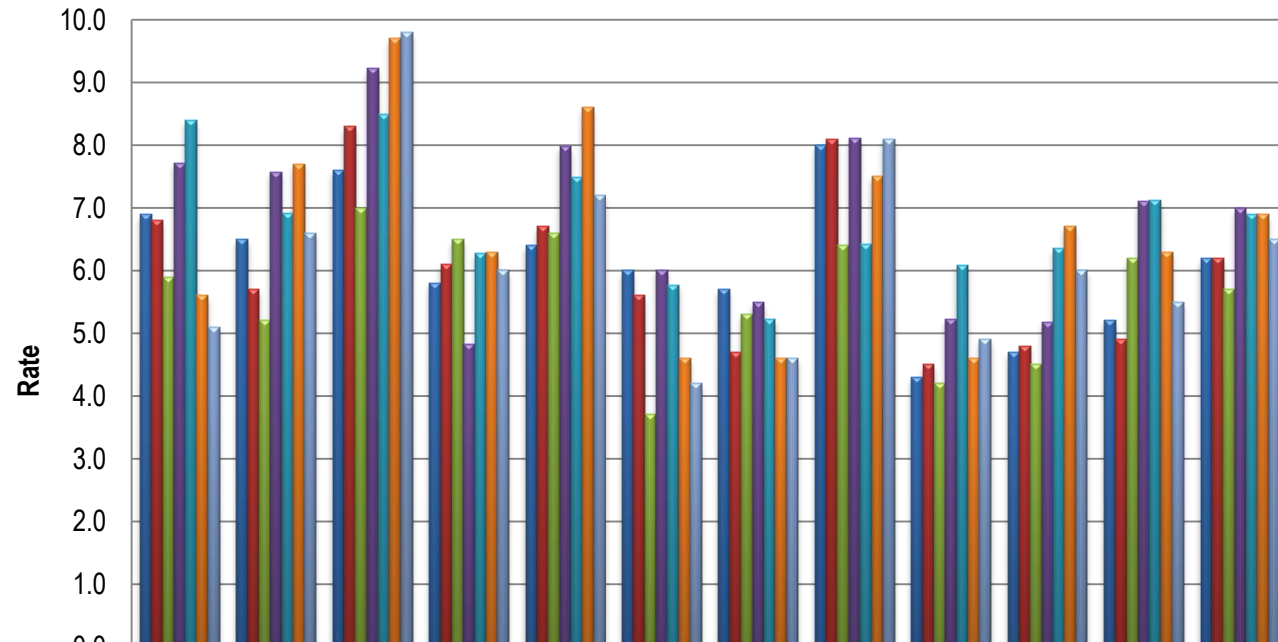


**Why is it Important?** The human cost of violence and abuse to victims and families can be enormous including physical, emotional and psychological harm, breakdown in relationships and families, and a reduction in life opportunities for individuals. In some cases domestic and sexual violence and abuse can result in serious physical harm or homicide (Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy NI). (4)

**The Story Behind the Trends** - The LGD rates of children & young people Aged 0-17 who are victims of domestic violence have fluctuated over the past 3 years with the NI rate of 6.5 having a slight drop in 2024/25.

**Please note:** Crimes are geographically recorded on the location in which the crime occurred and Trust figures are unavailable.

Rate/1000 Children & YP Aged 0-17 who are Victims of Domestic Violence



	Antrim & N'abbey	ABC	Belfast City	Causeway Coast & Glens	Derry City & Strabane	F'managh & Omagh	Lisburn & C'reagh	Mid & East Antrim	Mid Ulster	Newry, Mourne & Down	North Down & Ards	NI
2018/19	6.9	6.5	7.6	5.8	6.4	6.0	5.7	8.0	4.3	4.7	5.2	6.2
2019/20	6.8	5.7	8.3	6.1	6.7	5.6	4.7	8.1	4.5	4.8	4.9	6.2
2020/21	5.9	5.2	7.0	6.5	6.6	3.7	5.3	6.4	4.2	4.5	6.2	5.7
2021/22	7.7	7.6	9.2	4.8	8.0	6.0	5.5	8.1	5.2	5.2	7.1	7.0
2022/23	8.4	6.9	8.5	6.3	7.5	5.8	5.2	6.4	6.1	6.4	7.1	6.9
2023/24	5.6	7.7	9.7	6.3	8.6	4.6	4.6	7.5	4.6	6.7	6.3	6.9
2024/25	5.1	6.6	9.8	6.0	7.2	4.2	4.6	8.1	4.9	6.0	5.5	6.5



# Crimes Recorded with a Domestic Abuse Motivation

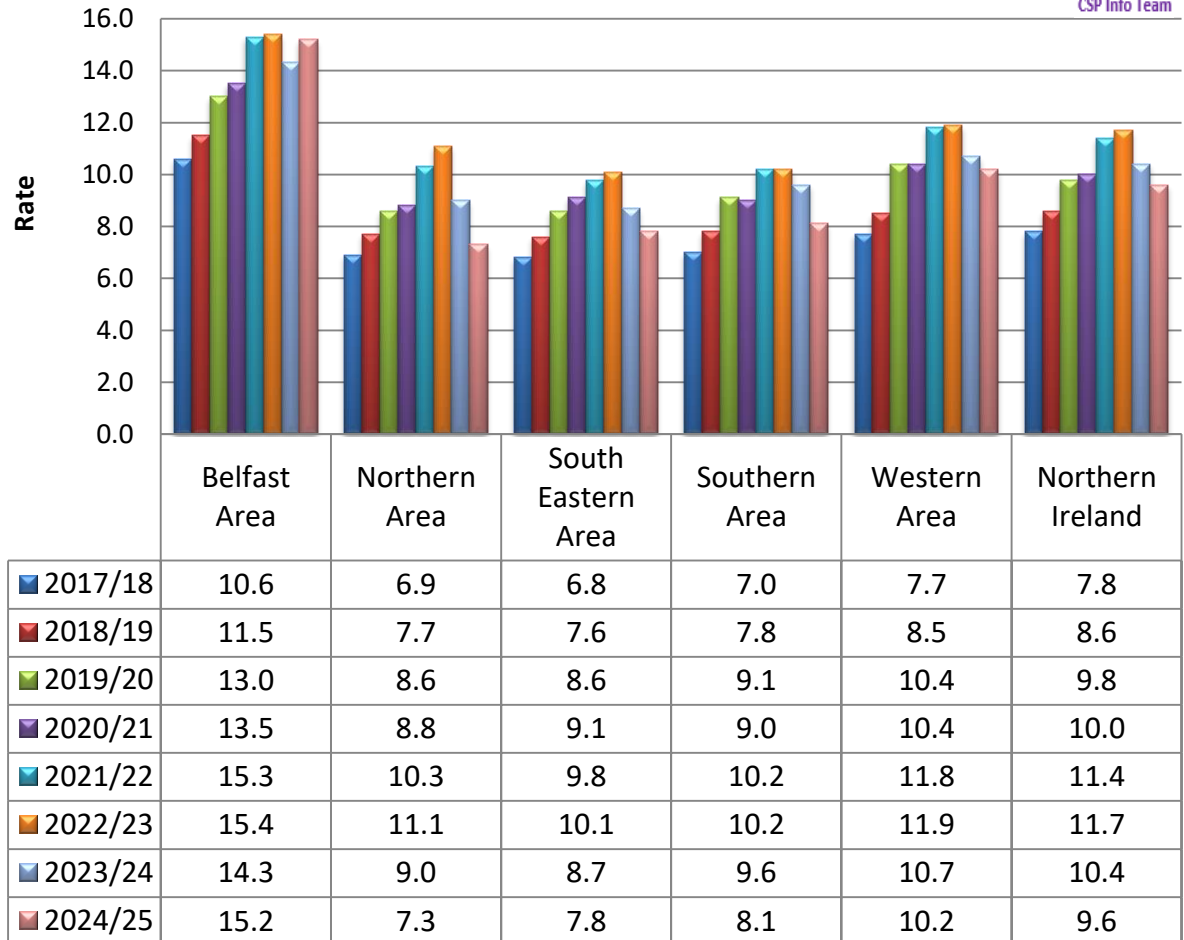
Data Source: Police Service in Northern Ireland (PSNI)

[UNCRC Article: 19](#) (click link to view articles)

Living in Safety and with Stability

**Why is it Important?** Although most incidents of Domestic Violence (DV) are reported by an adult, it is important to note that violence in the family cannot be kept hidden from the children. Children will often witness the violence, be aware of the tense atmosphere, suffer as a victim themselves or suffer in the aftermath of the violence (Women’s Aid, NI). (5) Exposure to DV can have very damaging long-term effects on a child’s mental health, sense of identity and ability to form relationships. Research highlights that the effects of DV are amplified for pre-schoolers, who are completely dependent on parents for all aspects of their care and may therefore witness greater amounts of violence than older children (Holt, Buckley & Whelan, 2008). (6)

Crimes Recorded with a Domestic Abuse Motivation - Rate per 1000 of total population



**The Story Behind the Trends** - The number of crimes recorded with a Domestic Abuse Motivation has decreased in all areas, except Belfast with an overall decrease at NI level to **9.6** in 2024/25.

**Please note:** Crimes are geographically recorded by the police based on the location in which the incident occurred.



# Young People's Attitude to Domestic Violence

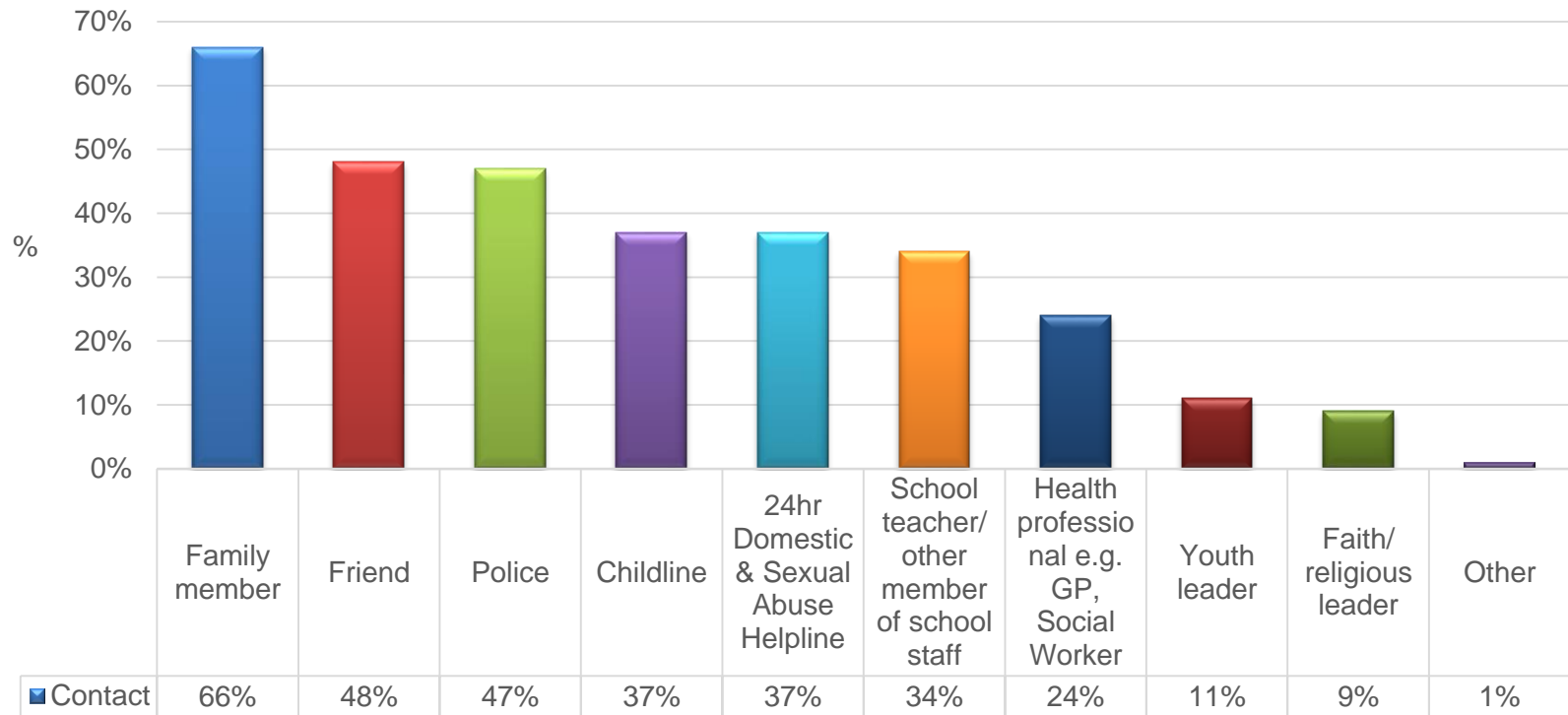
Data Source: YPBAS 2022-23, DHSSPS Sample: 7498 pupils aged 11-16 (Year 8 to Year 12) were selected at random across Northern Ireland and collected in the period September 2022 – March 2023 (collected 3 yearly) (7)

Living in Safety and with Stability

[UNCRC Article: 19](#) (click link to view articles)



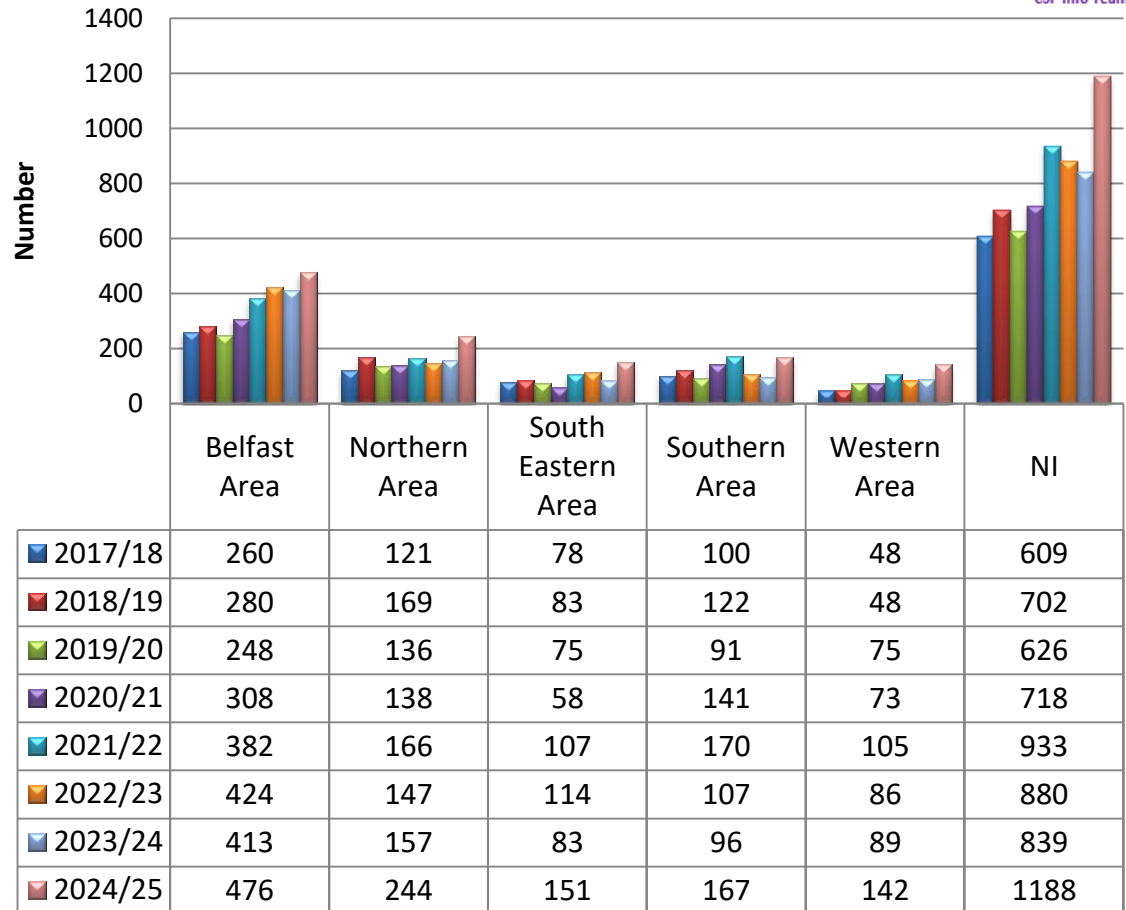
## If you wanted to discuss concerns regarding Domestic Violence/abuse, who would you contact?



**The Story Behind the Trends:** - A Family member (66%) was the first contact when Year 8 to Year 12 were asked if they wanted to discuss concerns regarding Domestic Violence/Abuse, followed by Friend 48%, Police 47% and Childline and 24hr Domestic & Sexual Abuse Helpline 37%.

**Why is it Important?** Both individual and systemic forms of racism and discrimination have far reaching social, economic and personal consequences. Long standing racism can result in profound trauma that can impact generations of a group or community:- Racism can prevent members of certain groups from feeling like equal and valued members of society. It can isolate and exclude people, creating resentment and mistrust of others. Racism can result in on-going psychological stress and anxiety, which can have an impact on work, family life and overall health and well-being. Racism can prevent people from having equal opportunities to better their lives and is the primary reason for higher levels of unemployment and under employment among different racial groups. It can prevent groups and communities from interacting with each other and can increase discomfort, fear and resentment. Racism can also have negative effects on an individual's physical and mental health.

**Number of Crimes Recorded with a Racist Motivation**



**The Story Behind the Trends** - Since 2017/18, the number of offences recorded with a racist motivation has grown with a significant rise in 2024/25 figures – NI figure rising to **1188**, with Belfast area the highest.

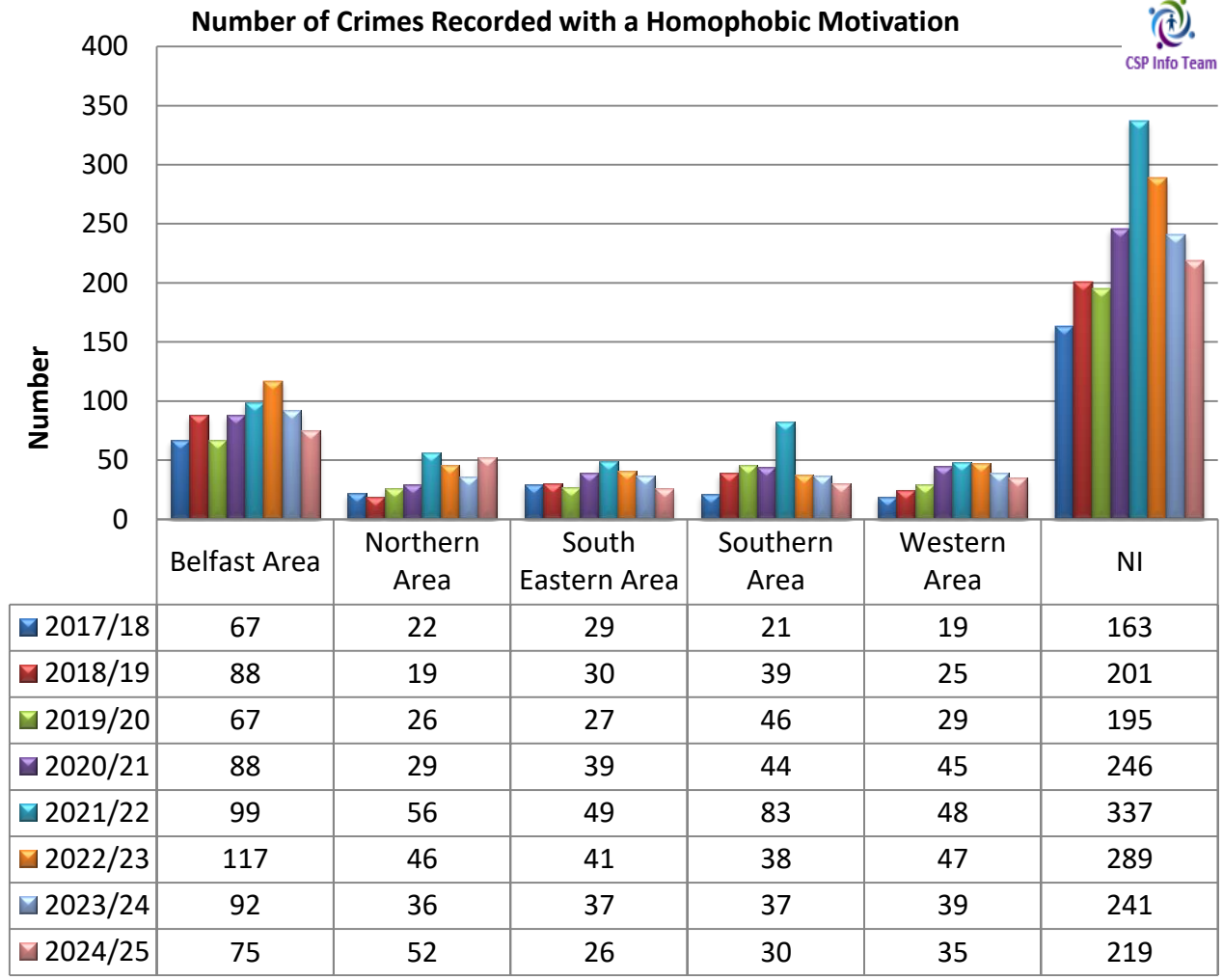
Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Article: 19](#) (click link to view articles)

## Living in Safety and with Stability

### Why is it Important?

A homophobic incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person. Homophobia can be defined as a fear or dislike directed towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people, or a fear or dislike directed towards their perceived lifestyle, culture or characteristics. Sexual orientation can be defined as an individual's preference for a particular sex (be it the opposite or the same), or an individual's view of their own sexuality. The long-term emotional effects of homophobia and negativity have been proved to impact on mental and often physical well-being. This can develop into drug and/or alcohol problems, feelings of low self-esteem, engagement in self-harm and, most worryingly, may lead to suicide contemplation.



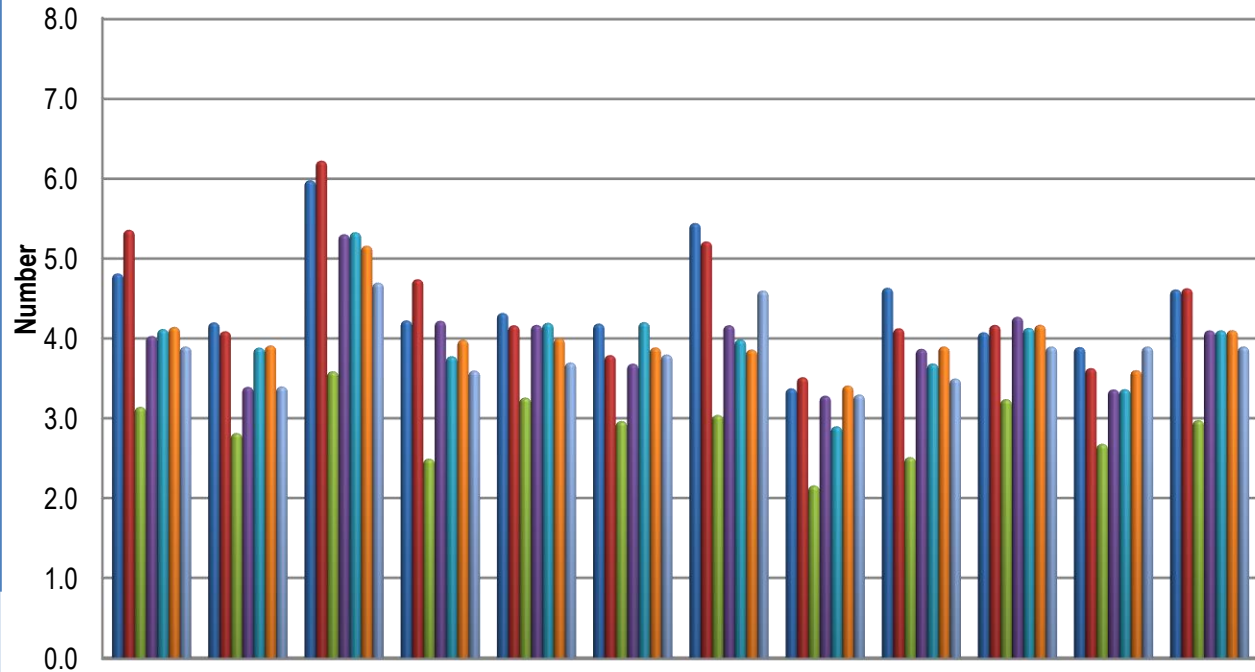
**The Story Behind the Trends** - Figures have fluctuated in the total number of offences recorded with a homophobic motivation over the past 8 years with a slight drop in all areas in the past 3 years, except for the Northern Area.



**Why is it Important?** The NI Road Safety Partnership aims to reduce the number of road traffic casualties through education and by detecting speed at locations with a history of collisions and where there is evidence of speeding. Excess speed can be a contributory factor in fatal collisions. The Road Safety Strategy for NI to 2030 sets out three strategic outcomes namely: Safe People, Safe Roads, and Safe Vehicles. (Road Safety Strategy for NI 2030) (8).

**The Story Behind the Trends** - Figures show a decrease in road traffic casualties across all areas in 2020/21, due to Covid-19 and then gradually increasing from 2021/22 to 2023/24, with a slight drop in 2024/25. Belfast and Lisburn & Castlereagh areas have the highest RTAs in 2024/25 higher than the NI rate of 3.9. In 2024/25 64 people were killed on NI roads which was 9 lower than in 2023/24.

Rate/1000 of All Population Killed, Seriously Injured or Slightly Injured on the Roads



	Antrim & N'abbey	ABC	Belfast	Causeway & Glens	Derry & Strabane	Fermanagh & Omagh	Lisburn & C'reagh	Mid & East Antrim	Mid Ulster	Newry, Mourne & Down	North Down & Ards	NI
2018/19	4.8	4.2	6.0	4.2	4.3	4.2	5.4	3.4	4.6	4.1	3.9	4.6
2019/20	5.4	4.1	6.2	4.7	4.2	3.8	5.2	3.5	4.1	4.2	3.6	4.6
2020/21	3.1	2.8	3.6	2.5	3.3	3.0	3.0	2.2	2.5	3.2	2.7	3.0
2021/22	4.0	3.4	5.3	4.2	4.2	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.9	4.3	3.4	4.1
2022/23	4.1	3.9	5.3	3.8	4.2	4.2	4.0	2.9	3.7	4.1	3.4	4.1
2023/24	4.1	3.9	5.2	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.4	3.9	4.2	3.6	4.1
2024/25	3.9	3.4	4.7	3.6	3.7	3.8	4.6	3.3	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.9



# Children Killed, Seriously or Slightly Injured on the Roads

Data Source: PSNI

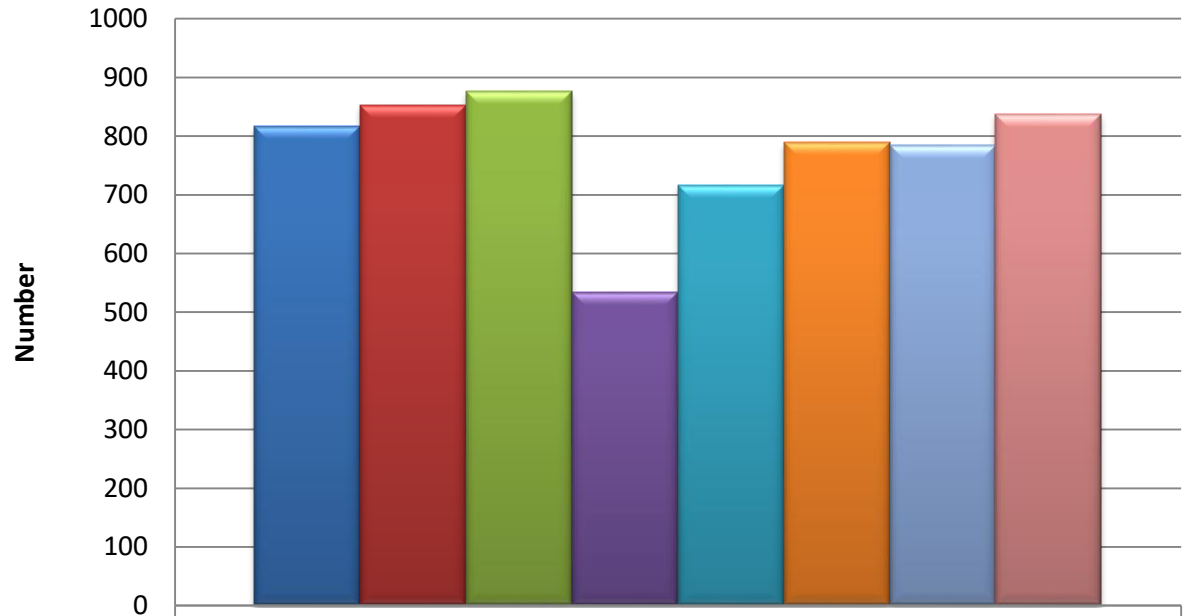
[UNCRC Article: 6](#) (click link to view articles)

Living in Safety and with Stability

**Why is it Important?** Road traffic deaths make up 41% of all child deaths, the majority of these children are pedestrians and cyclists and not car occupants. By changing children’s exposure to risk as pedestrians these death rates decline, but may lower exercise and fitness levels and restrict the child’s independence (Unicef, Road Safety Guidance). **(9)** The NI Road Safety Strategy (NIFRS) Annual Statistical Report target for 2022 is to reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured on our roads to 80 or less. (NI Road Safety Strategy, 2024) **(10)**

**The Story Behind the Trends** - Figures have shown an increase in the number of child casualties on the roads in the past year. Overall in Northern Ireland in 2024/25 there were **733** children slightly injured, **102** seriously injured and **3** killed on the roads within Northern Ireland. This shows a 6.5% increase from 2023/24 of Under 16 casualties. **Please Note:** Due to Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, PSNI moved from eight to eleven policing district in line with the new LGDs and figures are not available by Trust level.

### Number of Under 16 year olds Killed, Seriously or Slightly Injured on the Roads



	NI
2017/18	816
2018/19	853
2019/20	876
2020/21	533
2021/22	717
2022/23	789
2023/24	785
2024/25	838

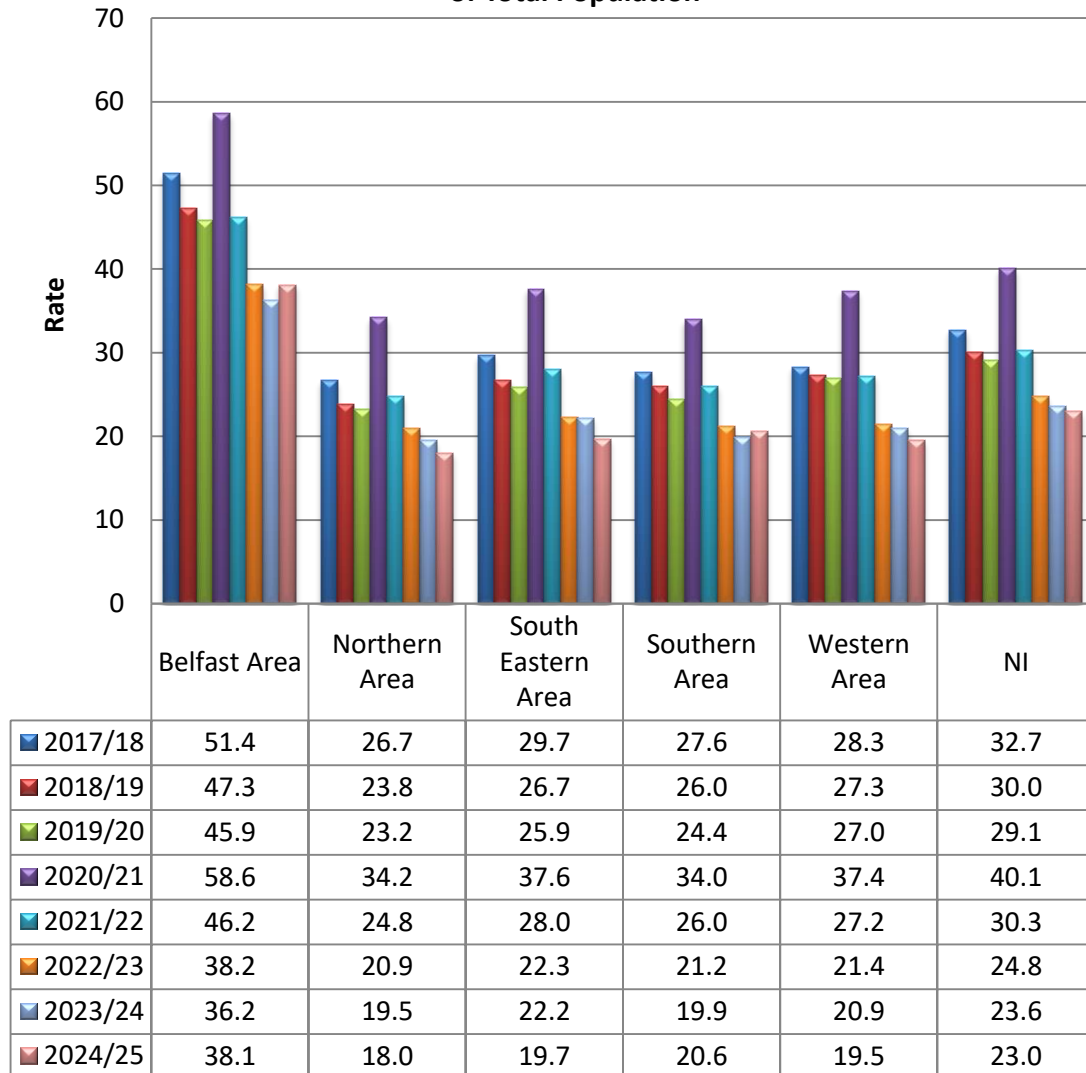


## Why is it Important?

Anti-social behaviour can have a negative effect on the quality of life of individuals and communities. It is therefore important to report concerns about anti-social behaviour you are experiencing at an early stage. The term anti-social behaviour (ASB) is used to describe a wide range of inconsiderate and nuisance behaviour, such as: excessive noise, graffiti, littering and disputes with neighbours. The PSNI gather information on anti-social behaviour for both adults and young people who come to the attention of the police and decide on the course of action required. This can range from a warning letter, home visit, Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) right up to an Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO). Each course of action is looked on in an individual basis. (11)

**The Story Behind the Trends** – NI rates are still decreasing in anti-social behaviour in 2024/25 to **23.0**. Belfast continues to have the highest rate of ASBI, above all the other areas and also NI. It is interesting to note higher rates during lockdown in 2020/21.

### Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents Rate per 1000 of Total Population





Data Source: YPBAS 2022-23, DHSSPS Sample: 7498 pupils aged 11-16 (Year 8 to Year 12) were selected at random across Northern Ireland and collected in the period September 2022 – March 23 (collected 3 yearly) (7)

**Why is it Important?** Qualitative surveys give us more in-depth information on the views children and young people hold.

[UNCRC Article:17, 19](#) (click link to view articles)

- In 2022, 58% feel very safe in the area in which they live, with 37% quite safe, which was slightly lower than the figures in 2019 at 61% and 33% and in 2016 63% and 31%.
- In 2022 61% did not think that there were any problems relating to personal safety in their area. The most common issues that were cited by young people as problems in their area were people being rowdy or drunk in public places and people using or dealing in drugs and vandalism, graffiti or deliberate damage to property (all 19%). The next common problem was people being insulted, pestered or intimidated in the street (13%).
- In 2019 60% did not think that there were any problems relating to personal safety in their area. The most common issues that were cited by young people as problems in their area were people being rowdy or drunk in public places and people using or dealing in drugs (both 21%), vandalism, graffiti or deliberate damage to property (19%) and people being insulted, pestered or intimidated in the street (10%).
- In 2022, in relation to their own personal safety, almost 30% were worried about being bullied and 19% reported being bullied in a way that frightened or upset them in the last 12 months.
- In 2019, in relation to their own personal safety, almost 29% were worried about being bullied and 18% reported being bullied in a way that frightened or upset them in the last 12 months.
- In 2016, in the past 12 months, 17% of pupils have been bullied, 4% have been physically abused, 8% of pupils have been harassed/bullied/abused via the internet and 6% have been bullied/harassed via texts/videos/images or calls to your mobile.



Data Source: YPBAS 2022-23, DHSSPS Sample: 7498 pupils aged 11-16 (Year 8 to Year 12) were selected at random across Northern Ireland and collected in the period September 2022 – March 2023 (collected 3 yearly) (7)

**Why is it Important?** Qualitative surveys give us more in-depth information on the views children and young people hold. [UNCRC Article:17, 19](#) (click link to view articles)



- ❑ In 2022, almost all young people (**98%**) reported that they use the internet at home every or almost every day. In the last 12 months (86%) have been taught about staying safe online citing teachers (**82%**) and parents (68%) as the main providers of this teaching.
- ❑ In 2019, almost all young people (97%) reported that they use the internet at home every or almost every day. In the last 12 months (89%) have been taught about staying safe online citing teachers (82%) and parents (71%) as the main providers of this teaching.
- ❑ In 2022, the vast majority of young people (**98%**) use social media sites or apps, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, TikTok or Whatsapp. Most said they use social media daily or most days (**89%**). Over half of young people (**56%**) feel that their social media accounts are a true reflection of themselves.
- ❑ In 2019 the vast majority of young people (96%) use social media sites or apps, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter or Whatsapp. Most said they use social media daily or most days (85%), with (10%) estimating that they spend over 20 hours a week on social media sites or apps. Just under two thirds of young people (63%) feel that their social media accounts are a true reflection of themselves.
- ❑ In 2022, half of young people (**36%**) travel to school by car, and the same percentage (**36%**) by Translink bus, while (**16%**) usually walk to school. In contrast, (39%) travel home by bus, (**23%**) walk home and just one quarter (**25%**) travel home from school by car.
- ❑ In 2019, half of young people (50%) travel to school by bus, almost (32%) get there by car and (16%) usually walk to school. In contrast, more than half (56%) travel home by bus, (22%) walk home and just one fifth (20%) travel home from school by car.



## What we want to achieve for our children and young people:-

- Improved outcomes for children who live in poverty.
- Access to safe, quality play areas.
- To live in homes that do not fail decent standards.
- To achieve economic stability and independence.

## The following indicators are included in this chapter to measure the economic and environmental wellbeing of all our children and young people:-

- Number of Families with Children Awarded as Full Duty Applicants
- Dependent Children in Families Awarded as Full Duty Applicants
- Number of Young People aged 16-18 Awarded as Full Duty Applicants
- Households Living in Temporary Accommodation by Length of Stay
- Number of Children Living in Temporary Accommodation by Age
- Placements in Temporary Accommodation by Accommodation Type
- Percentage of Children Living in Relative low Income Poverty (BHC)
- Percentage of Children Living in Absolute low Income Poverty (BHC)
- Percentage of Lone Parent Families claiming Jobseekers Allowance
- Percentage of Lone Parent Families claiming Income Support
- Lone Parent Families Receiving Universal Credit
- Couples with Children Receiving Universal Credit
- Percentage Universal Credit Claimants by LGD
- Percentage of Free School Meals at Primary and Post-Primary Schools
- Key Points (Family Resources Survey 2022/23)



# Number of Families with Children Awarded as Full Duty Applicants

(passed all homelessness tests) Data Source: NIHE

[UNCRC Article:27](#) (click link to view articles)

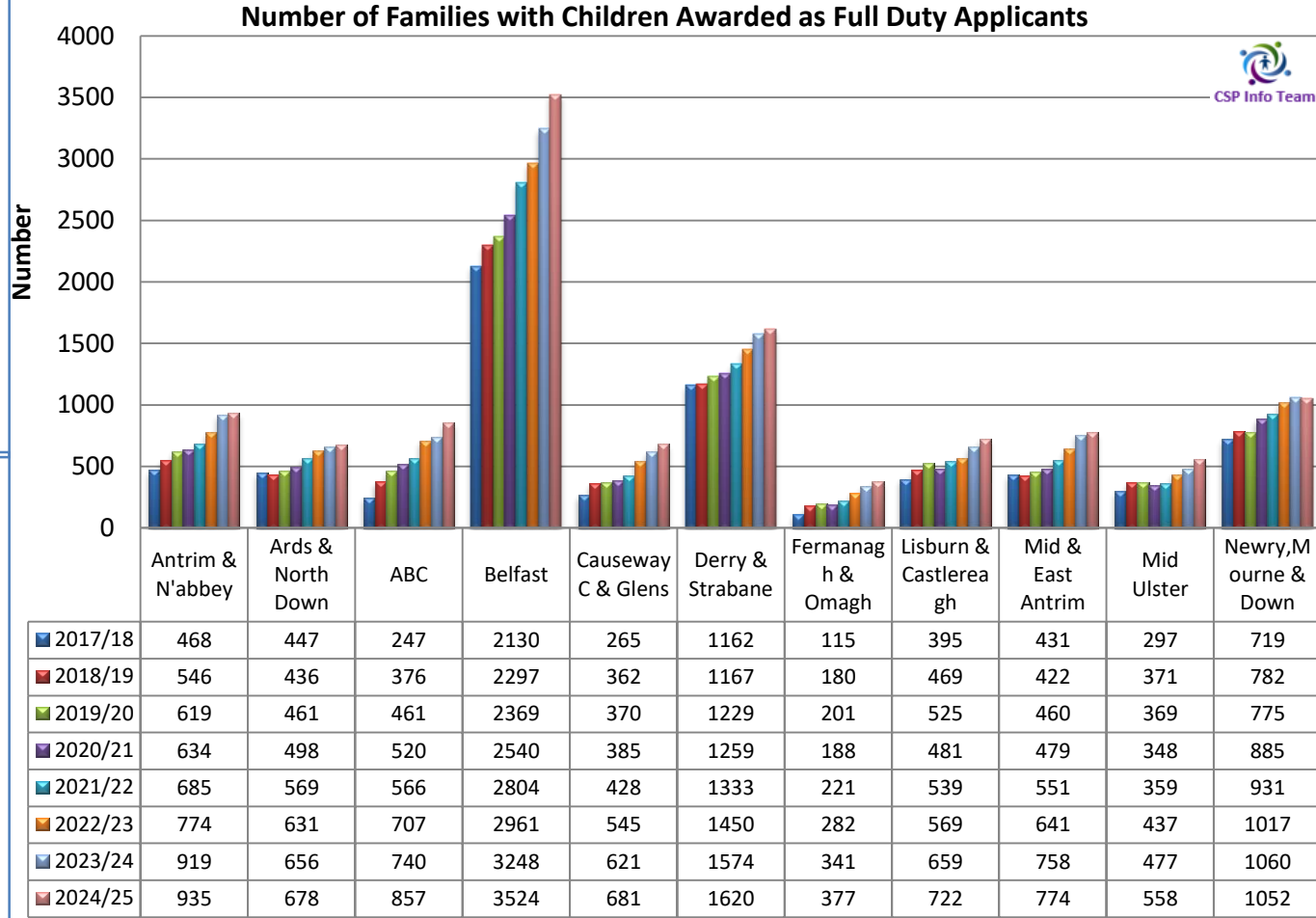
## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

### Why is it Important?

Homeless people suffer high levels of stress from lack of control over their housing situation, combined with high levels of poverty and often poor living conditions. They often also feel very isolated, especially when temporary accommodation is provided at a distance from the household's local community and friends (The Impact of Homelessness on Health). (1)

A **Full Duty Applicant** (FDA) are applicants accepted as being homeless, to whom the Housing Executive owes a duty under the Homelessness legislation, Article 10(2) of the Housing (NI) Order, 1988 to “secure that accommodation becomes available for his/her occupation”.

**Please note:** a household group is recorded at point of application and may not reflect the current composition of the household.



**The Story Behind the Trends** - The number of families with children awarded as full duty applicants has steadily increased over the past 6 years, with Belfast the highest. Overall there were **11,778** Families with Children awarded as Full Duty Applicants across NI. **Please Note:** Due to Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, NIHE moved to the new eleven LGDs and figures are not available by Trust level.

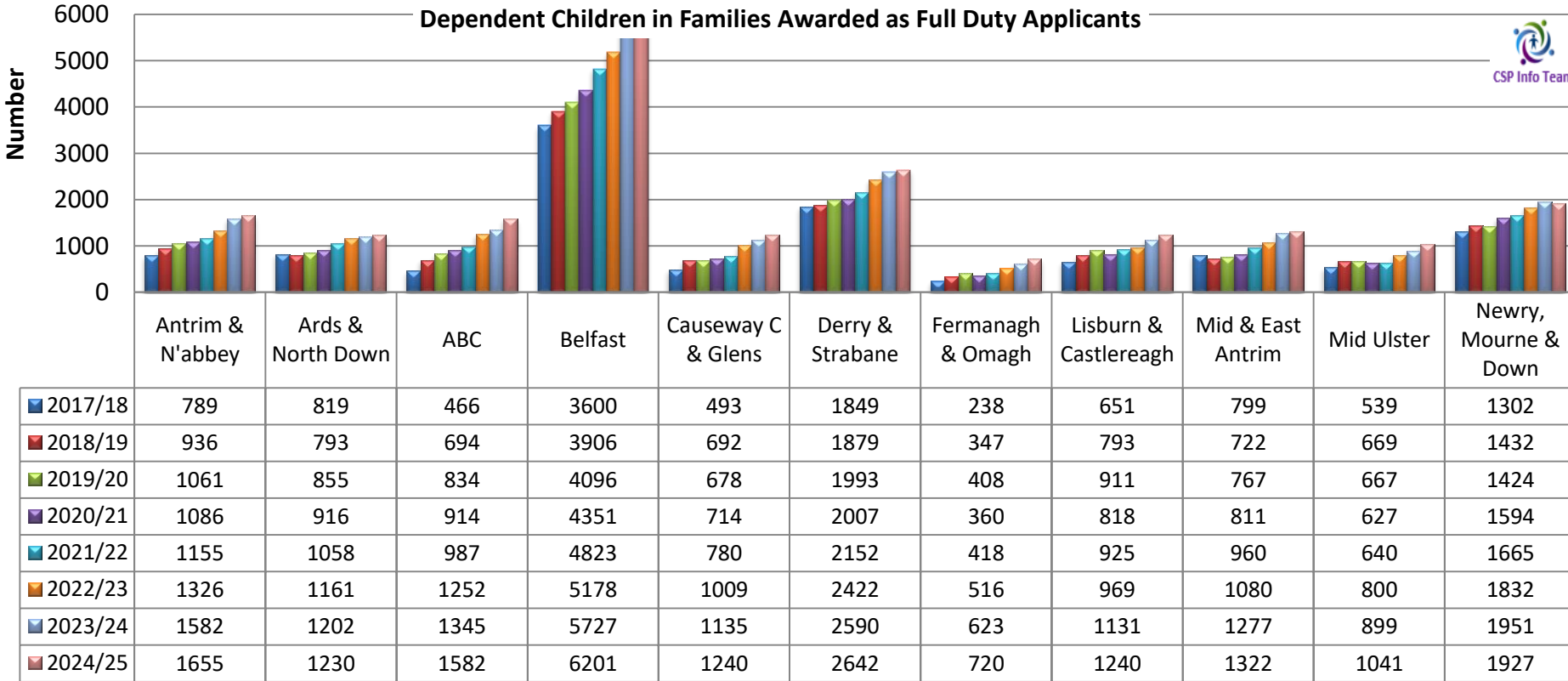


# Dependent Children in Families Awarded as Full Duty Applicants

(passed all homelessness tests) Data Source: NIHE [UNCRC Article:27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** Homeless children are more likely to experience stress and anxiety, resulting in depression and behavioural issues. There is evidence that the impact of homelessness on a child's health and development extends beyond the period of homelessness (The Impact of Homelessness on Health,)(1)



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Overall Belfast continues to have the most children in families awarded with full duty applicants. A total of **20,800** children were living in Families awarded Full Duty Applicants in Northern Ireland. **Please Note:** Due to Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, NIHE moved to the new eleven LGDs and figures are not available by Trust level. A household group is recorded at point of application and may not reflect the current composition of the household.



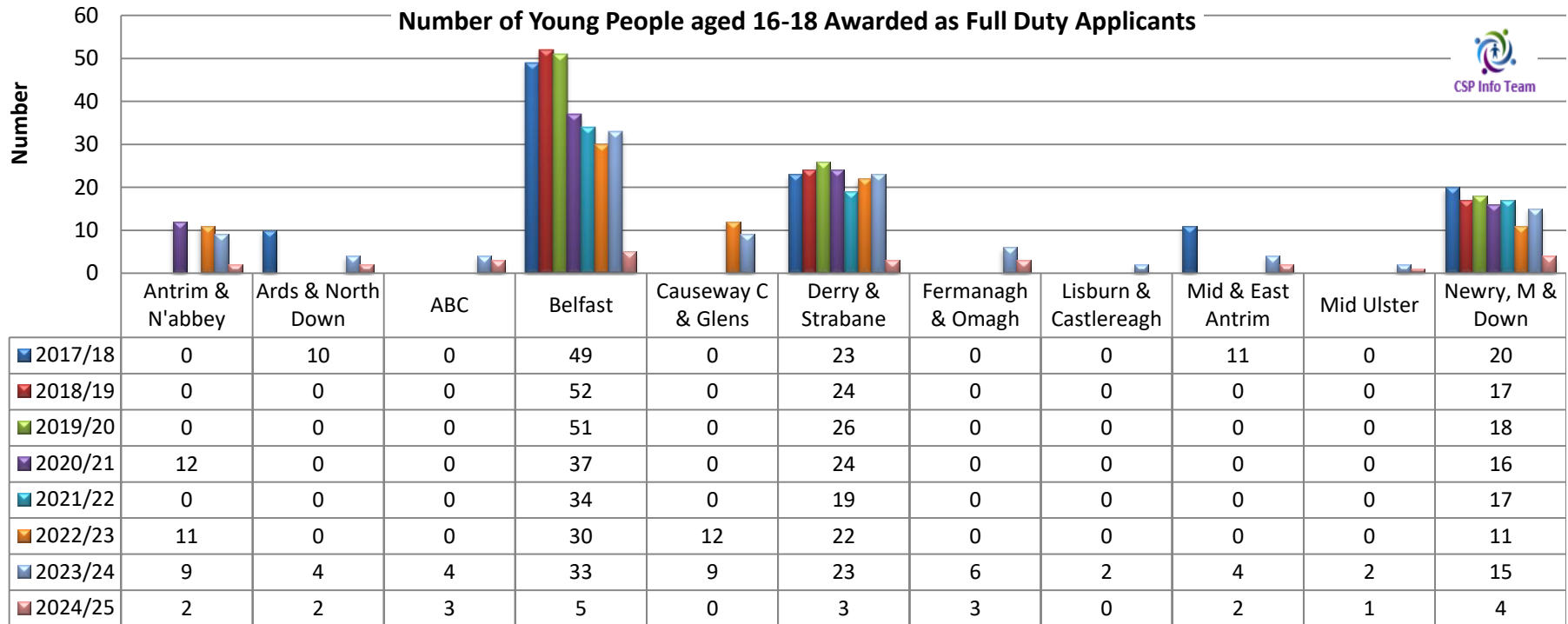
# Number of Young People Aged 16-18 Awarded as Full Duty Applicants

(passed all homelessness tests) Data Source: NIHE

[UNCRC Articles: 27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it important?** Young people who experience homelessness are at risk of embarking on a ‘career’ in homelessness, criminal justice and health systems, at significant cost to their own health and wellbeing, their families and communities, and to the public purse. Their potential to contribute to and benefit from society and the economy is affected by homelessness. (Homelessness in NI)(2)



**The Story Behind the Trends** - Overall Belfast District continues to have the most young people awarded with full duty applicants. A total of 25 young people (a significant drop from 111) were awarded Full Duty Applicants in 2024/25. **Please Note:** Due to Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, NIHE moved to the new eleven LGDs and figures are not available by Trust level.



# Households Living in Temporary Accommodation by Length of Stay

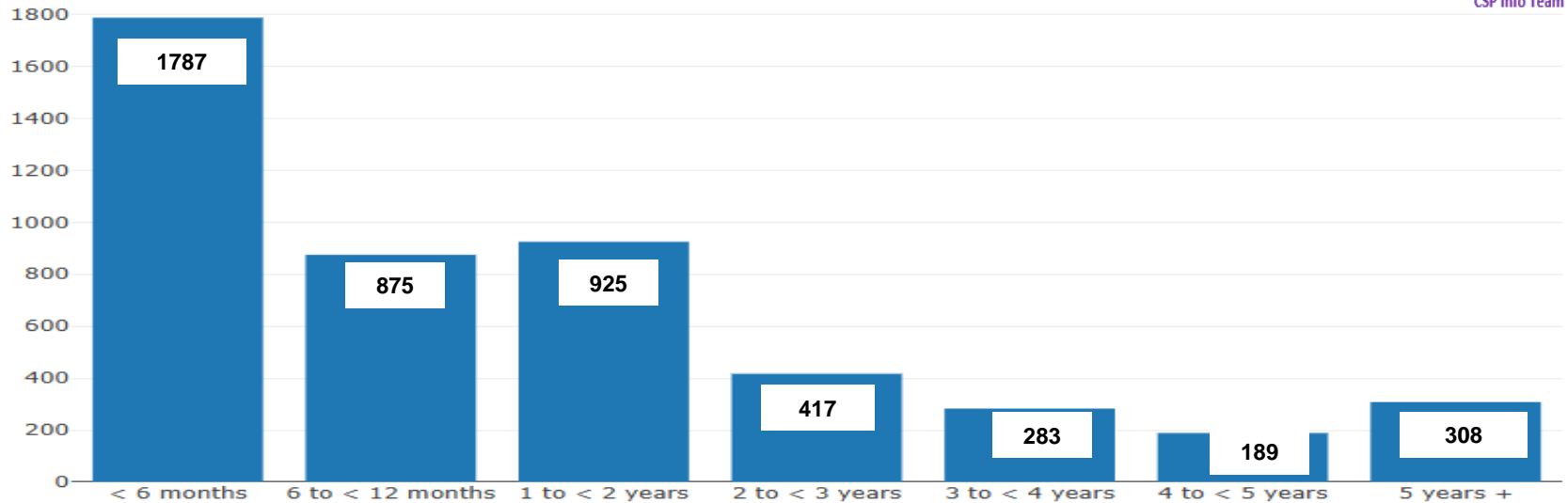
Data Source: NIHE

[UNCRC Article:27](#) (click link to view articles)

**Why is it Important?** When people are forced to move into temporary accommodation, their health suffers. The uncertainty of their situation, often combined with poor living conditions, impacts both physically and mentally on homeless individuals and families. (Ending Homelessness Together NIHE Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 ) (3)

## Households in temporary accommodation by banded length of stay (as of 29 April 2024)

The below chart refers to households in temporary accommodation at the given point in time as opposed to placements.



At 29 April 2024, there were 4,784 households in temporary accommodation, the majority of which (55.6%) had been living there for less than 12 months. However, 6.4% of these had been living in temporary accommodation for 5 or more years.



# Number of Children Living in Temporary Accommodation by Age

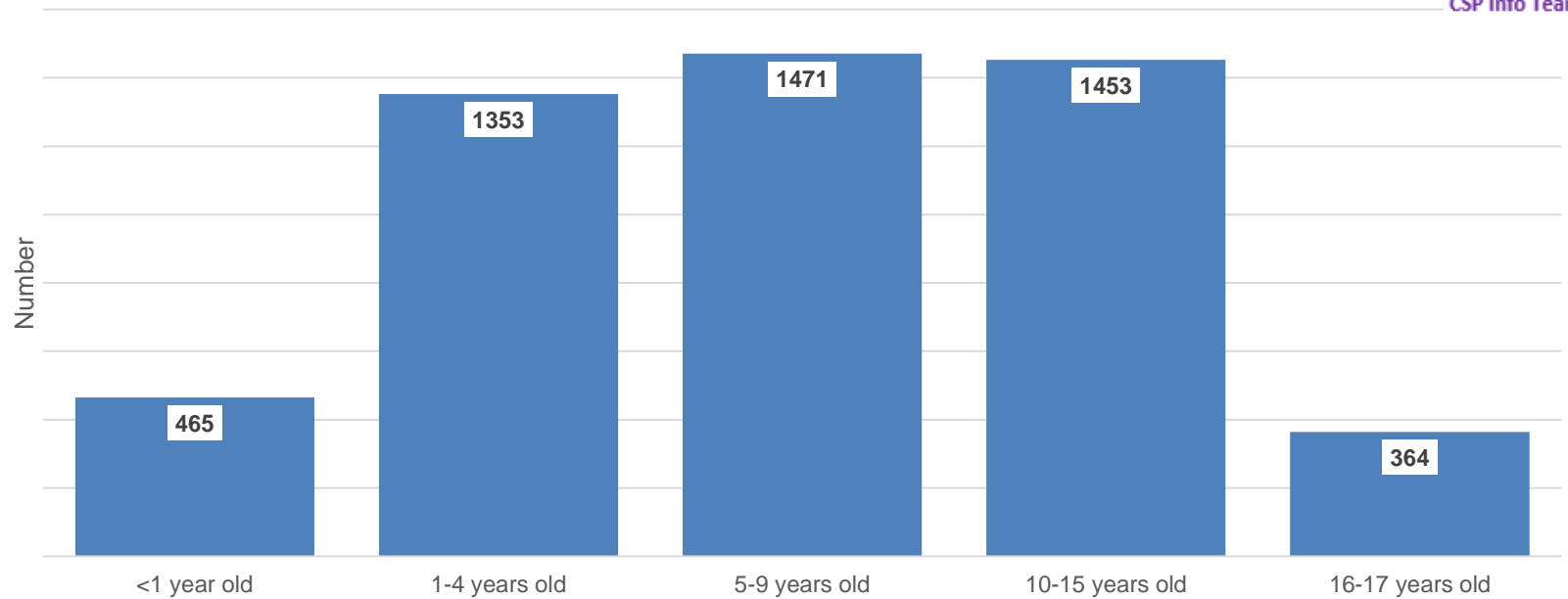
Data Source: NIHE

[UNCRC Articles: 27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** Children living in poor, temporary or overcrowded conditions are more likely to have respiratory problems, to be at risk of infections, and have mental health problems. Housing that is in poor condition, temporary or overcrowded also threatens children’s safety. The impact on children’s development is both immediate and long term; growing up in poor housing has been found to have a lasting impact on a child’s health and well-being throughout their life. (Ending Homelessness Together NIHE Homelessness Strategy 2022-27). (3)

Children in Temporary Accommodation, by age (as of 29 April 2024)



Within the 4,784 households living in temporary accommodation, there were **5,106** children.

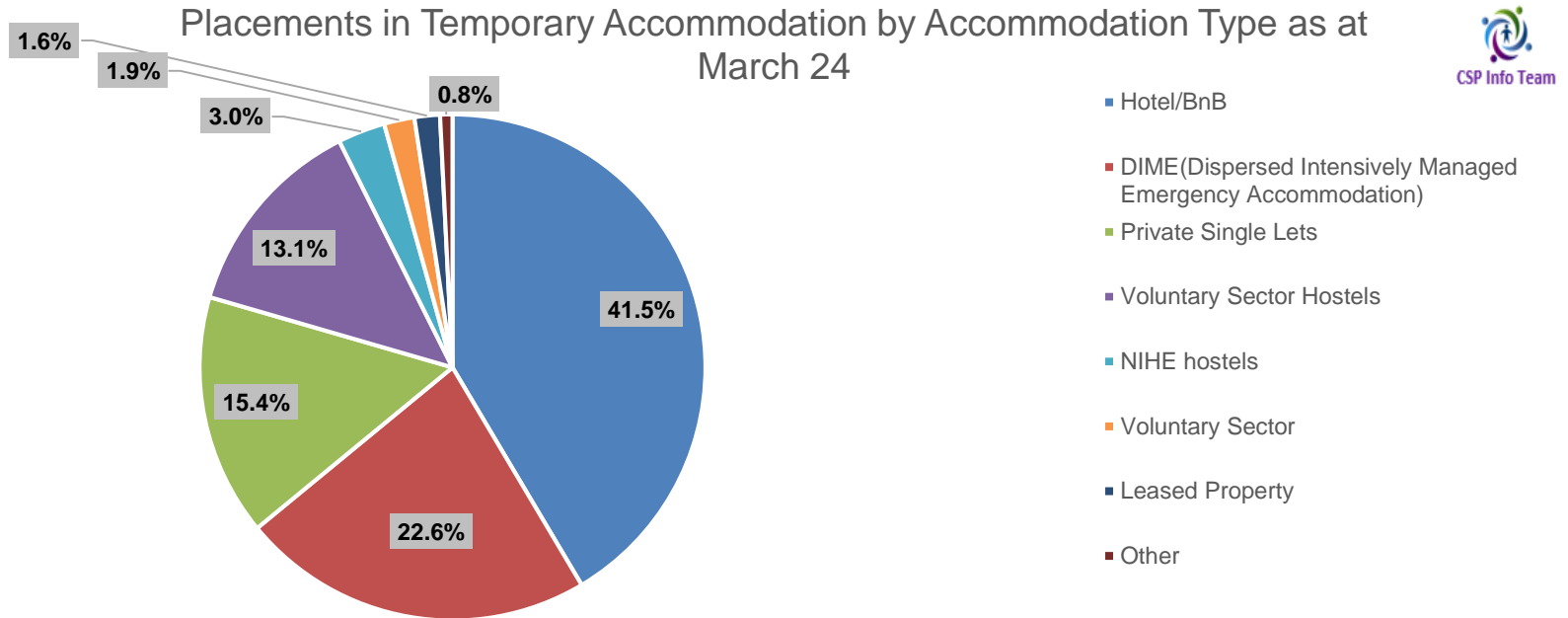


# Placements in Temporary Accommodation by Accommodation Type

Data Source: NIHE

[UNCRC Article:27](#) (click link to view articles)

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Between October 2023 and March 2024, there were **5,713** placements to temporary accommodation. Of these, 41.5% were to hotels or B ‘n’ Bs (2369), 22.6% were to DIME (1,290) (Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency Accommodation), 15.4% were to Private Single Lets (882) and 13.1% (750) were to Voluntary Sector Hostels.

[View NI Homelessness Bulletin March 2024](#) (Biannual)



# Percentage of Children Living in Relative Low Income Poverty BHC

Data Source: Dept. for Communities

[UNCRC Articles: 18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

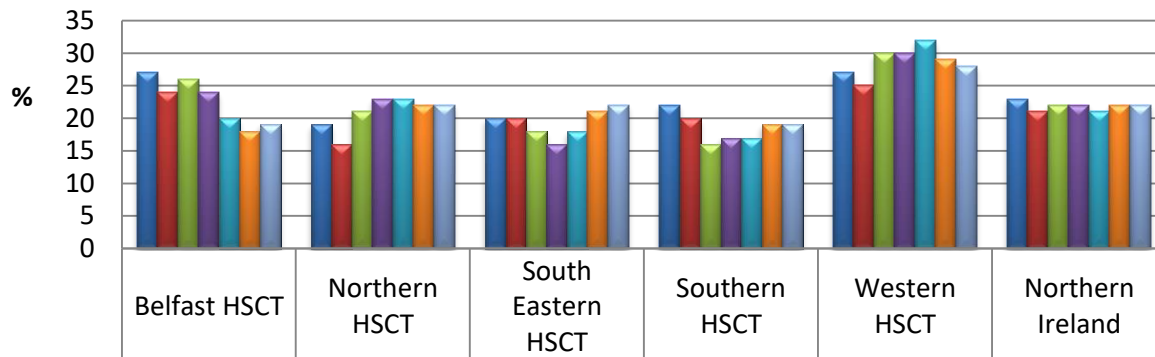
## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** An individual is considered to be in relative poverty if they are living in a household with an equivalised income below 60% of UK median income in the year in question. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the population as a whole. (N.I. Poverty and Income Inequality Report, 2024/25) (4)

**The Story Behind the Trends** – The Western HSCT is above the NI average (22%) in children living in relative low income poverty before housing costs in 2021/24. The % of children in relative poverty before housing costs was 15% in 2024/25, which is approximately 67,000 children, which is lower than the estimate of 18% in 2023/24. (NI Poverty and Income Inequality Report, 2024/25). (4)



### Percentage of Children Living in Relative Low Income Poverty Before Housing Costs



Year	Belfast HSCT	Northern HSCT	South Eastern HSCT	Southern HSCT	Western HSCT	Northern Ireland
2014-17	27	19	20	22	27	23
2015-18	24	16	20	20	25	21
2016-19	26	21	18	16	30	22
2017-20	24	23	16	17	30	22
2018-22	20	23	18	17	32	21
2019-23	18	22	21	19	29	22
2021-24	19	22	22	19	28	22

**Please Note:** Poverty and Income Inequality statistics in Northern Ireland and across the United Kingdom (UK) are now using an updated methodology which replaces survey responses relating to major state benefits and tax credits, with administrative data. The new methodology applies to the most recent year 2024/25, and revised estimates have also been produced for 2021/22 to 2023/24. **Due to the ongoing changes to the methodology, Dept of Communities decided to publish only population level statistics relating to poverty this year. As a result, we do not intend to produce statistics at LGD or HSCT level until the transformation process is complete.**

*The 3 year average figures (2018/2022 and 2019/23) actually covers 4 years BUT the COVID year of 2020/21 is not used and there are no single year figures also for the COVID year.*



# Percentage of Children Living in Absolute Low Income Poverty BHC

Data Source: Dept. for Communities

[UNCRC Articles: 18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

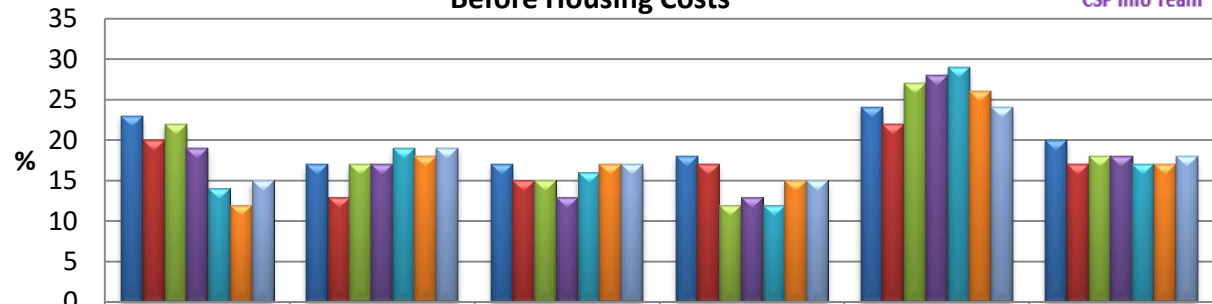
## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** **Absolute poverty** is defined as a condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. An individual is considered to be in absolute poverty if they are living in a household with an equivalised income below 60% of the (inflation adjusted)UK median income. In 2024/25 the absolute poverty threshold for a couple with children was an income of £660 per week (BHC). (N.I. Poverty and Income Inequality Report,2024/25) (4)

**The Story Behind the Trends** – The Western Area has constantly been above the NI average of (18%) in children living in absolute low income poverty (BHC) over the years. In 2024/25 15% of children were in absolute poverty, before housing costs which is approximately 67,000 children. This figure has decreased significantly from 21% in 2023/24. (NI Poverty and Income Inequality Report, 2024/25) (4)

**Please Note:** Poverty and Income Inequality statistics in Northern Ireland and across the United Kingdom (UK) are now using an updated methodology which replaces survey responses relating to major state benefits and tax credits, with administrative data. The new methodology applies to the most recent year 2024/25, and revised estimates have also been produced for 2021/22 to 2023/24. **Due to the ongoing changes to the methodology, Dept of Communities decided to publish only population level statistics relating to poverty this year. As a result, we do not intend to produce statistics at LGD or HSCT level until the transformation process is complete.**

Percentage of Children Living in Absolute Low Income Poverty Before Housing Costs



	Belfast HSCT	Northern HSCT	South Eastern HSCT	Southern HSCT	Western HSCT	NI
2014-17	23	17	17	18	24	20
2015-18	20	13	15	17	22	17
2016-19	22	17	15	12	27	18
2017-20	19	17	13	13	28	18
2018-22	14	19	16	12	29	17
2019-23	12	18	17	15	26	17
2021-24	15	19	17	15	24	18

The latest 3 year average figures (2018/2022 and 2019/23) actually covers 4 years BUT the COVID year of 2020/21 is not used and there are no single year figures also for the COVID year.



# Percentage of Lone Parent Families Claiming Job Seeker's Allowance

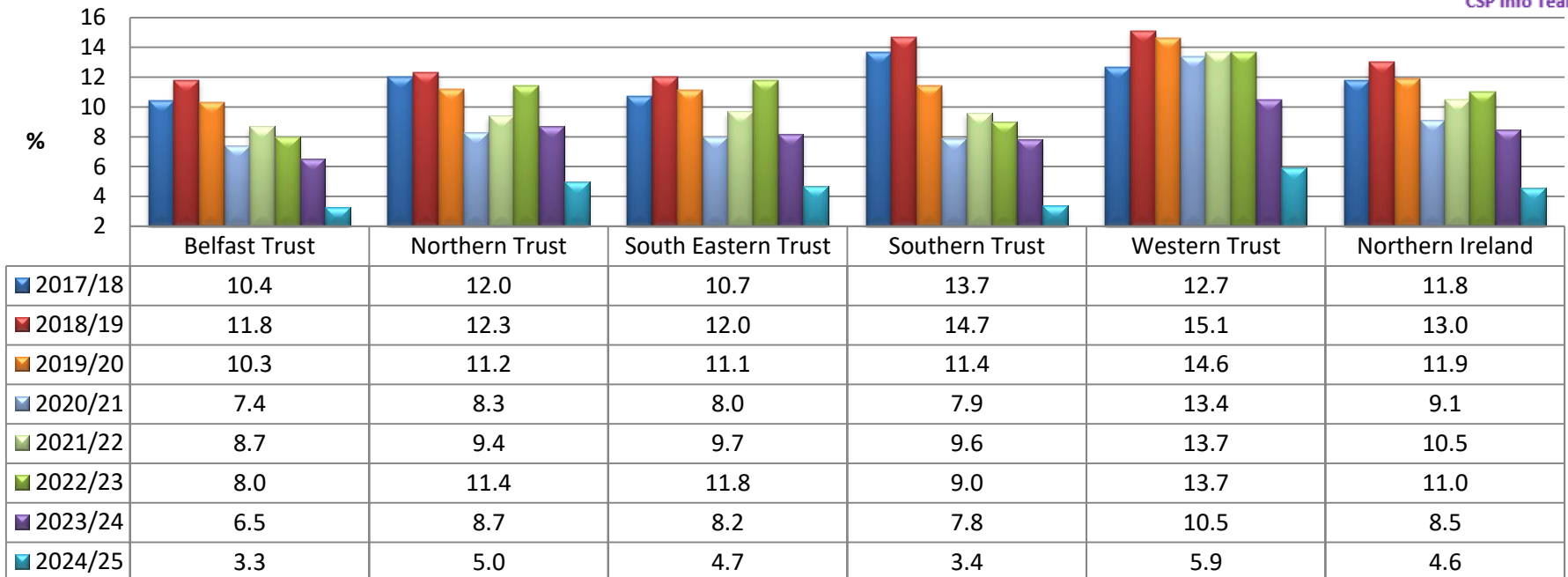
Data Source: Dept. for Communities

[UNCRC Article:18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** According to the most recent figures for Northern Ireland, over one quarter (26%) of families with dependent children are now headed by lone parents (ONS, 2017). While Northern Ireland's overall unemployment rate (2.7%) compares favourably with Great Britain (3.7%), The percentage of unemployed who have been unemployed for 1 year or more (long-term) in NI was 38.5%. This was a decrease of 1.3pps from the same period last year (NISRA NI Labour Market Report March 25). (5)

### Percentage of Lone Parent Families Claiming JSA



**The Story Behind the Trends** – All areas have seen a decrease in the percentage of Lone Parents claiming JSA in the past year. The Northern and Western Trust area has a higher % of Lone Parent Families claiming JSA than NI at **4.6%**. **Please note:** This is a snapshot taken in February and Lone Parents are defined as anyone listed as having no partner and 1 or more children. *Due to the phased roll-out of Universal Credit there will be no new claimants to Income-based JSA. Rollout of UC was completed in December 2018.*



# Percentage of Lone Parent Families Claiming Income Support

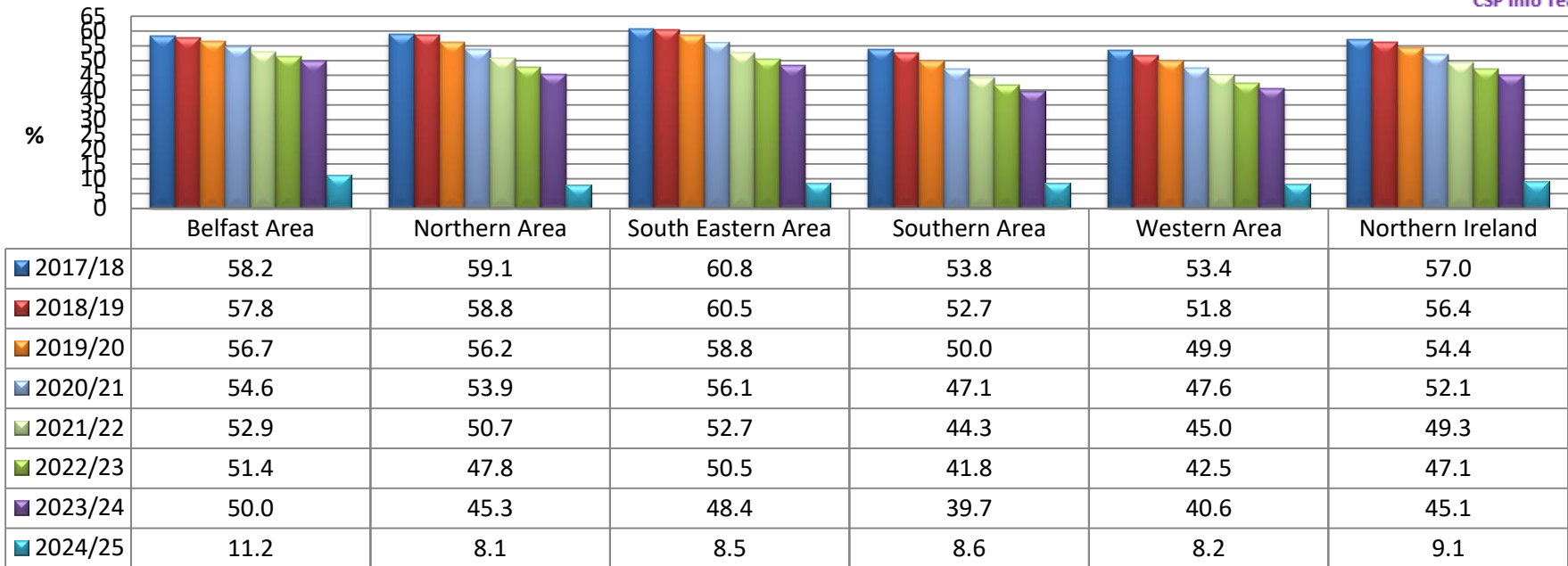
Data Source: Dept. for Communities

[UNCRC Article:18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** Children living in lone parent families and families claiming Income Support have less experience of handling their own money than other children: they are less likely to receive regular pocket money and are less likely to get part-time jobs. Children in lone-parent or Income Support families have much lower expectations about their future careers than their peers. They are more likely than other youngsters to want jobs that require few qualifications and little training, and they are less likely to aspire to attaining professional qualifications or occupations. (N.I. Poverty and Income Inequality Report,2023/24) (4)

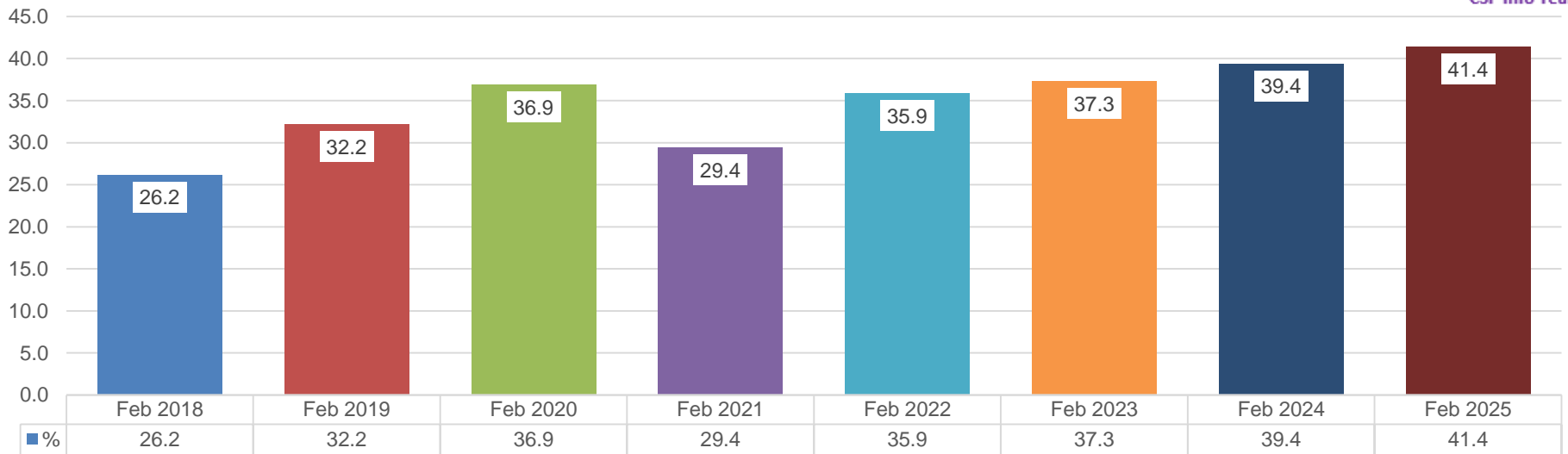
### Percentage of Lone Parent Families Claiming Income Support



**The Story Behind the Trends** - All areas have seen a decrease in the last year of the % of lone parent families claiming Income Support, with only Belfast area above the NI percentage of **9.1**. **Please note:** *This is a snapshot taken in February and Lone Parents are defined as anyone listed as having no partner and 1 or more children, exact ages are unable to be confirmed and some children may be over the age of 18. Due to the phased roll-out of Universal Credit there will be no new claimants to Income Support. Rollout of UC was completed in December 2018.*

**Why is it Important?** Universal Credit (UC) provides a single award per household based upon the circumstances of the household. Support for housing costs, children and childcare costs are integrated into UC via additional elements. UC is available to people who are in work and on a low income, as well as to those who are out of work. UC replaces six existing benefits and tax credits; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

% of Lone Parent Families Receiving Universal Credit



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Since the start of Universal Credit being rolled out from September 2017 to completion in December 2018 in NI, Lone Parent Families receiving UC increased from 26.2%(450) in Feb. 2018 to **41.4%** (72,930) in Feb. 2025. In Feb. 2025 the average amount (mean) of UC awarded to households was £1000 per month compared to lone parents who received on average £1260.

**Please note:** Due to Covid-19 the government announced a temporary increase to the UC standard allowance increasing the amount of earnings a household could receive before their UC award was reduced to nil. This increase was removed in October 2021.



# Couples with Children Receiving Universal Credit

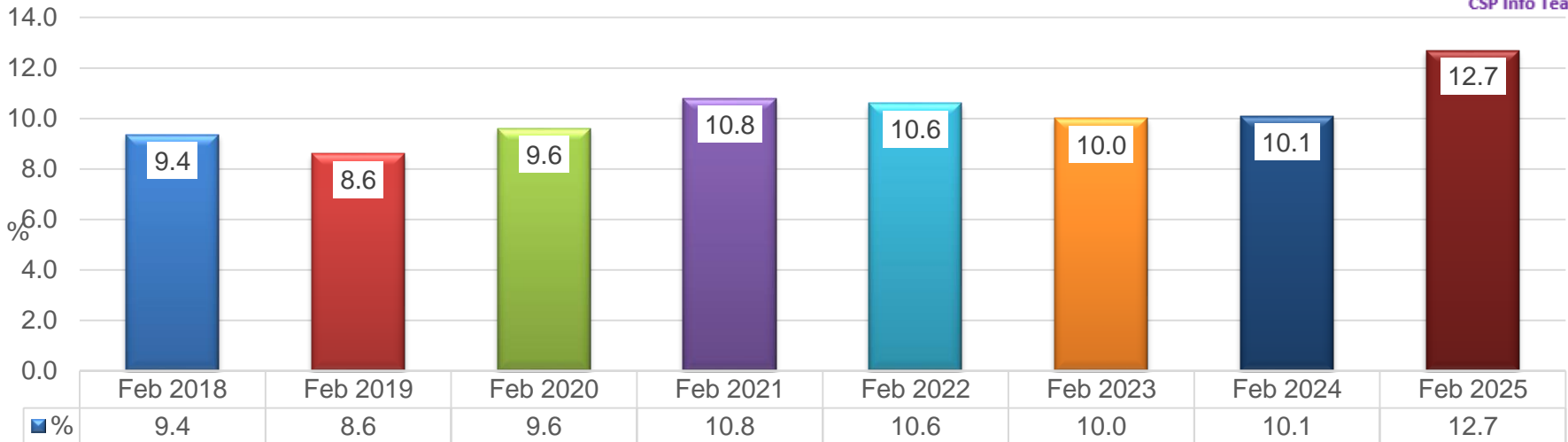
Data Source: Dept. for Communities

[UNCRC Articles: 18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** Universal Credit (UC) provides a single award per household based upon the circumstances of the household. Support for housing costs, children and childcare costs are integrated into UC via additional elements. UC is available to people who are in work and on a low income, as well as to those who are out of work. UC replaces six existing benefits and tax credits; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

### % of Couples with Children Receiving Universal Credit



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Since the start of Universal Credit being rolled out from September 2017 to completion in December 2018 in NI, Couples with Children receiving UC increased from 9.4%(160) in Feb. 2018 to **12.7%** (22,300) in Feb. 2025. In Feb. 2025 the average amount (mean) of UC awarded to households was £1000 per month compared to couples with children who received on average £1170.

**Please note:** Due to Covid-19 the government announced a temporary increase to the UC standard allowance increasing the amount of earnings a household could receive before their UC award was reduced to nil. This increase was removed in October 2021.



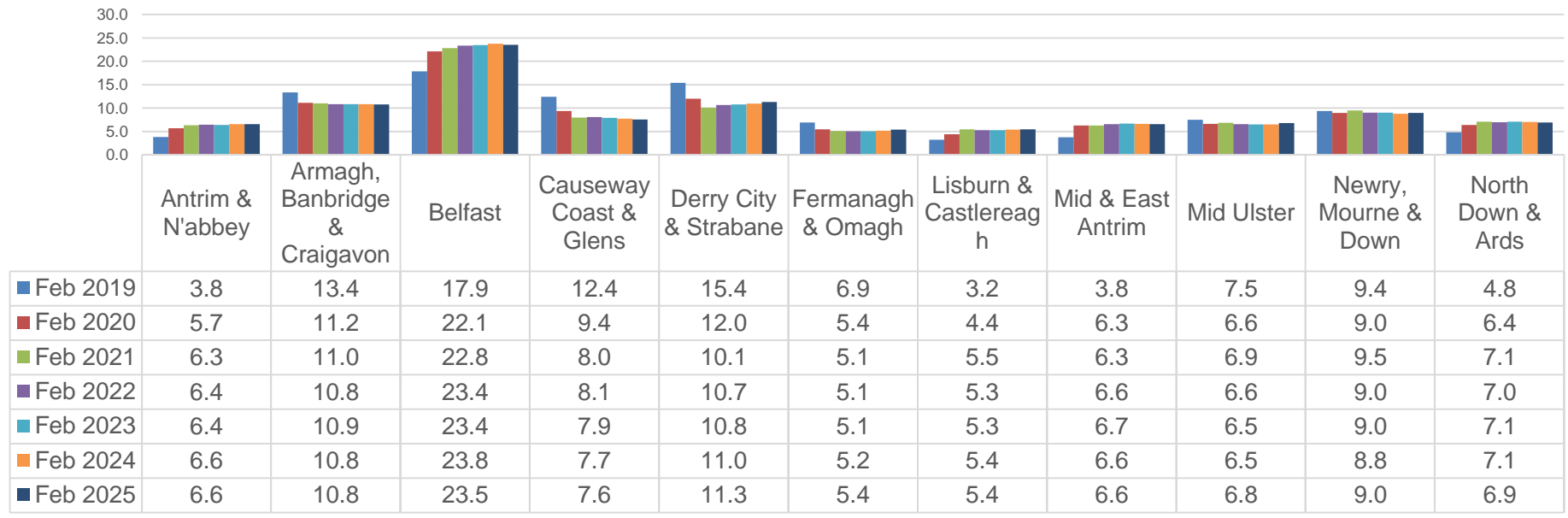
# % Universal Credit Claimants by LGD

Data Source: Dept. for Communities [UNCRC Articles: 18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** Universal Credit (UC) provides a single award per household based upon the circumstances of the household. Support for housing costs, children and childcare costs are integrated into UC via additional elements. UC is available to people who are in work and on a low income, as well as to those who are out of work. UC replaces six existing benefits and tax credits; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

% Universal Credit Claimants by LGD



**The Story Behind the Trends** – Belfast LGD has the highest % of Universal Credit claimants in Feb 2025 at 23.5% followed by Derry City & Strabane at 11.3%, Fermanagh and Omagh and Lisburn & Castlereagh have the lowest at 5.4%.  
**Please note:** Due to Covid-19 the government announced a temporary increase to the UC standard allowance increasing the amount of earnings a household could receive before their UC award was reduced to nil. This increase was removed in October 2021.



# Percentage of Free School Meals at Primary School

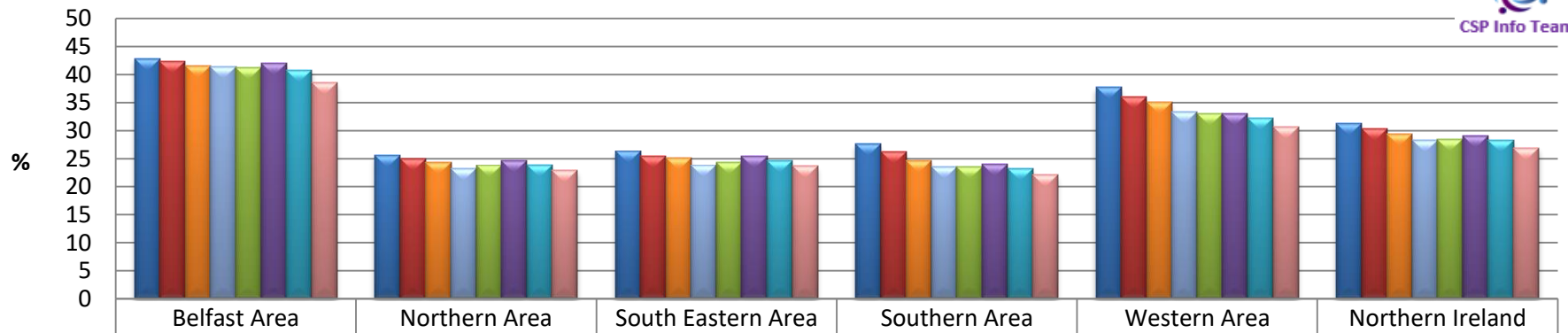
Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** – Free school meals provide vital support for low-income families and for almost a third of children, school lunch is their main meal of the day. Evidence shows that eating a nutritious meal at lunchtime: has important health and educational benefits for children, can improve their diet and increase their concentration during afternoon lessons.

### Percentage of Free School Meals at Primary School (including Nursery and Reception Classes)



	Belfast Area	Northern Area	South Eastern Area	Southern Area	Western Area	Northern Ireland
2016/17	42.9	25.6	26.3	27.6	37.7	31.3
2017/18	42.4	25.0	25.5	26.2	36.0	30.3
2018/19	41.5	24.3	25.2	24.6	35.0	29.4
2019/20	41.4	23.2	23.8	23.5	33.4	28.3
2020/21	41.2	23.8	24.3	23.6	33.0	28.5
2021/22	42.0	24.6	25.4	24.0	33.1	29.1
2022/23	40.8	23.9	24.6	23.3	32.2	28.3
2024/25	38.6	22.9	23.7	22.1	30.7	26.9

**The Story Behind the Trends** - All areas have seen a slight decrease in 2024/25 of the % of Free School Meals at Primary Schools (including nursery and reception classes) with the Belfast and Western areas above the NI percentage of **26.9**. *Please note: Data is not available for 2023/24 due to ongoing Action Short of Strike (ASOS).*



# Percentage of Free School Meals at Post-Primary School

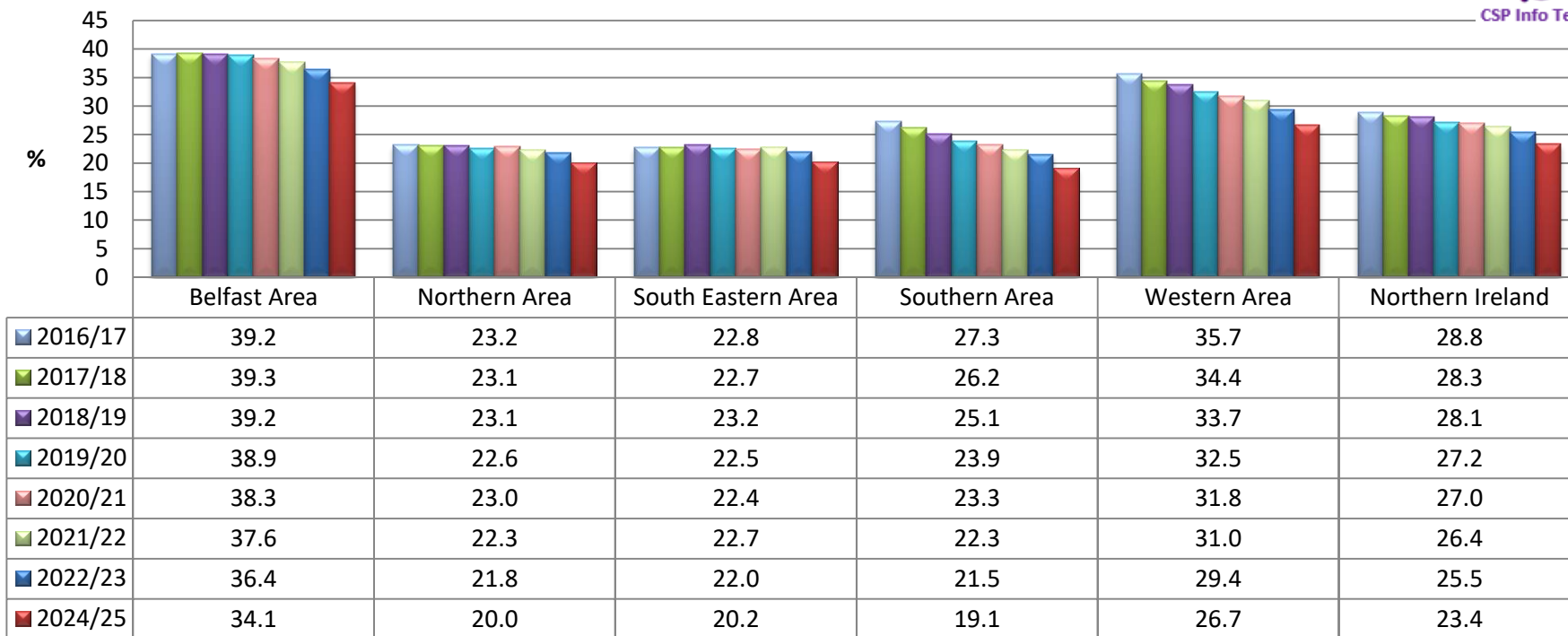
Data Source: NISRA

[UNCRC Articles: 18,26,27](#) (click link to view articles)

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing

**Why is it Important?** – Free school meals provide vital support for low-income families and for almost a third of children, school lunch is their main meal of the day. Evidence shows that eating a nutritious meal at lunchtime: has important health and educational benefits for children, can improve their diet and increase their concentration during afternoon lessons.

### Percentage of Free School Meals at Post Primary School



**The Story Behind the Trends** – All areas have seen a slight decrease in 2024/25 of the % of Free School Meals at Post Primary School, with the Belfast and Western areas above the NI percentage of **23.4**.

*Please note: Data is not available for 2023/24 due to ongoing Action Short of Strike (ASOS).*



## Family Resources Survey 2023/24



CSP Info Team

- ❑ **72%** of household income in NI in 2023/24 is sourced from wages, salaries, self-employment and employment related dividends, compared to **74%** in the UK overall.
- ❑ In 2023/24 (**67%**) of families in Northern Ireland received either none or less than £10,000 a year in state support compared to 72% in 2022/23.
- ❑ **19%** of NI households had a weekly household income of less than £400 in 2023/24. This was lower than last year at 20%. UK households were the same.
- ❑ **15%** of families (benefit units) in 2023/24 have no savings or investments compared to 13% in 2022/23. *(A benefit unit is defined as a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children.)*
- ❑ The proportion of disabled people differed by age group: in 2023/24 the percentage of children was **12%** compared to **24%** of working age adults and **49%** of adults over state pension age. The estimated % of the population who were disabled has showed a general increase over time at **19%** in 2013/14 to **25%** in 2023/24.
- ❑ The average number of persons per household is **2.4** in NI the same as in the UK. This has remained at a similar level in the past 10 years.
- ❑ NI households as a whole are **91%** food secure compared to **90%** in the UK. *(Please note: The questions do not directly ask about the food security status of children.)*



## What we want to achieve for all children and young people:-

- That children and young people are valued by society and their communities;
- Increased opportunities for volunteering in community and voluntary work;
- Access to leisure activities involving young people in their design and delivery;
- A preventative and early intervention approach to youth offending.

## The following indicators are included in this chapter to measure if all our children and young people are making a positive Contribution:-

- Participation in Youth Services
- Contributing Positively to Society (Young Life and Times Survey 2025)



## Making a Positive Contribution

**Why is it important?** Youth work is a vital non-formal educational process of personal and social development, through which young people can develop their knowledge, understanding, attitudes, confidence and personal and inter-personal skills. Young people have the right to expect that it will be accessible, affordable, high quality and flexible to meet changing needs and a changing environment (Youth Service NI). (1)

Regional  
Assessment of Need  
2026 – 2029

# Statistical Profile

Full Data Report

**The Story Behind the Trends** - The Department of Education (DE) invests approximately £36m annually into youth work in NI to implement its key priorities outlined in the DE youth work policy document. DE's vision is to ensure that 'every child and young person is happy, learning and succeeding'.

A total of 5,451 children and young people responded to the survey. Children and young people from a range of statutory, local and voluntary youth groups involved in DE funded youth work participated in a Regional Assessment of Need.

[Download the Regional Assessment of Need Here](#)



## Making a Positive Contribution

The 2025 YLT survey invited all young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between Jan - Mar 2025 to take part in the survey. The survey was completed by **2,129** respondents.

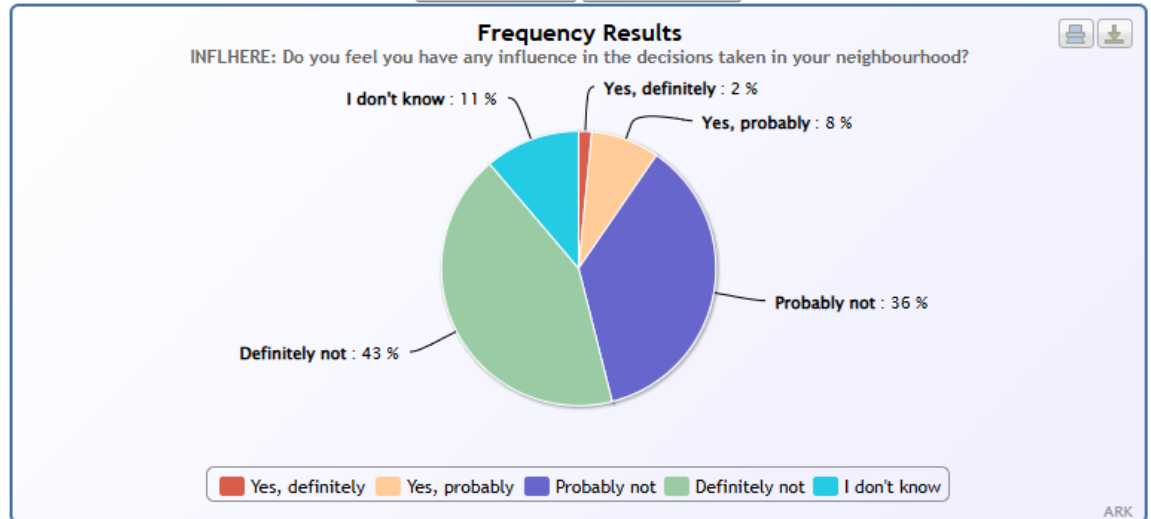


Nearly half of young people (**43%**) felt they had definitely not any influence and **36%** said probably not when it came to any of the local decisions made in their neighbourhood.

Do you feel you have any influence when it comes to any of the local decisions made in your neighbourhood?

	%
Yes, definitely	2
Yes, probably	8
Probably not	36
Definitely not	43
I don't know	11

[View Pie Chart](#) [Hide Pie Chart](#)





## Making a Positive Contribution

The 2025 YLT survey invited all young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between Jan - Mar 2025 to take part in the survey. The survey was completed by **2,129** respondents.

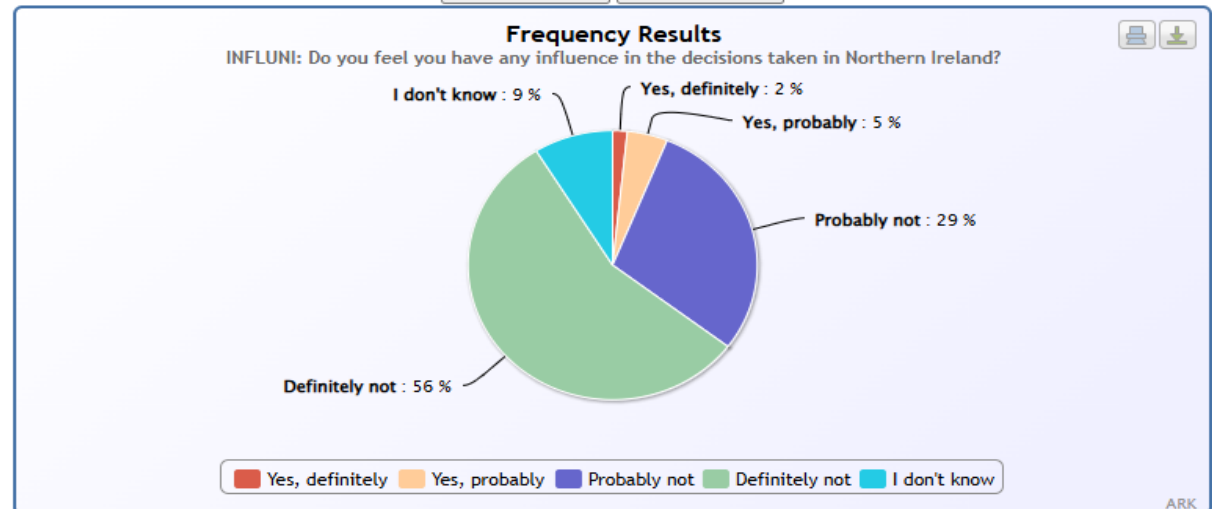


Do you feel that you have any influence when it comes to any of the decisions made about what happens in Northern Ireland?

	%
Yes, definitely	2
Yes, probably	5
Probably not	29
Definitely not	56
I don't know	9

**56%** in 2025 felt they had definitely no influence when it came to any of the decisions made about what happens in Northern Ireland, which was slightly lower than in 2023(60%).

[View Pie Chart](#) [Hide Pie Chart](#)





## Making a Positive Contribution

The 2025 YLT survey invited all young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between Jan - Mar 2025 to take part in the survey. The survey was completed by **2,129** respondents.

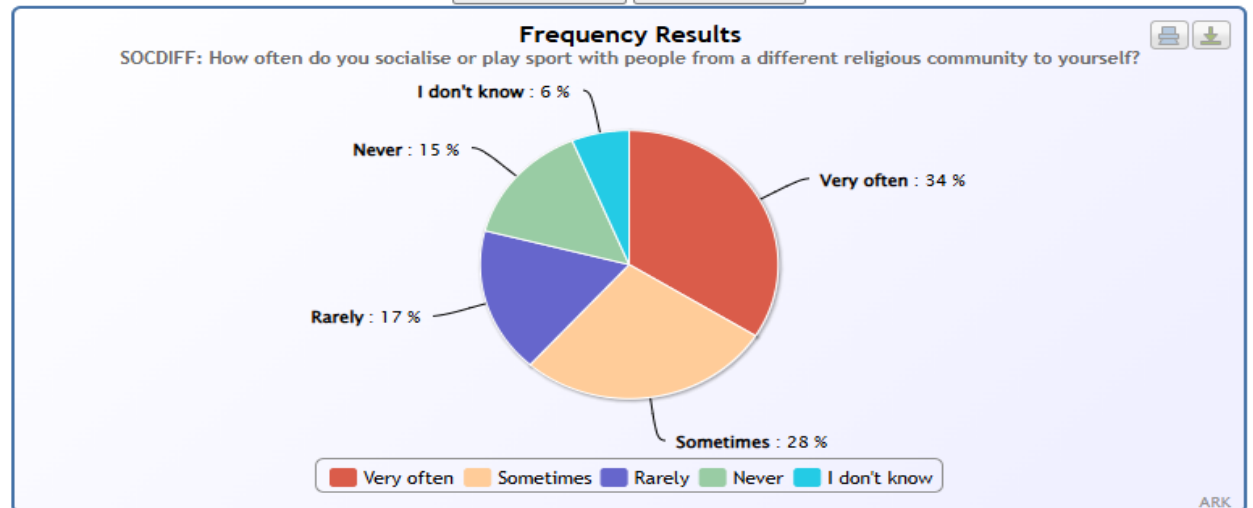
How often do you socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community to yourself?



	%
<b>Very often</b>	34
<b>Sometimes</b>	28
<b>Rarely</b>	17
<b>Never</b>	15
<b>I don't know</b>	6

In 2025 **34%** of the young people surveyed said they socialised or played sport with people from a different religious community to themselves, which is slightly lower than in 2023(35%).

[View Pie Chart](#) [Hide Pie Chart](#)





## Making a Positive Contribution

The 2025 YLT survey invited all young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between Jan - Mar 2025 to take part in the survey. The survey was completed by **2,129** respondents.

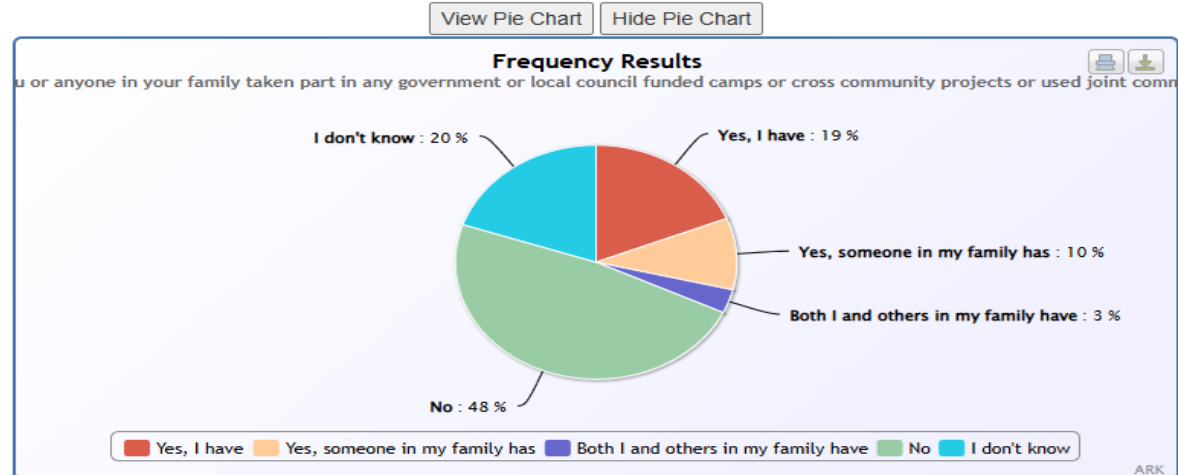


The government and/or local councils give money every year to schemes which are designed to help improve relations between the different religions and communities in Northern Ireland. The schemes include camps for children and young people, various cross community projects, or using joint community facilities.

Have you or anyone in your family ever taken part in any of these camps or cross community projects or used joint community facilities?

Only **19%** of the young people surveyed said they had taken part in camps or cross community projects and **48%** said No.

	%
Yes, I have	19
Yes, someone in my family has	10
Both I and others in my family have	3
No	48
I don't know	20





## Making a Positive Contribution

The 2025 YLT survey invited all young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday between Jan - Mar 2025 to take part in the survey. The survey was completed by **2,129** respondents.

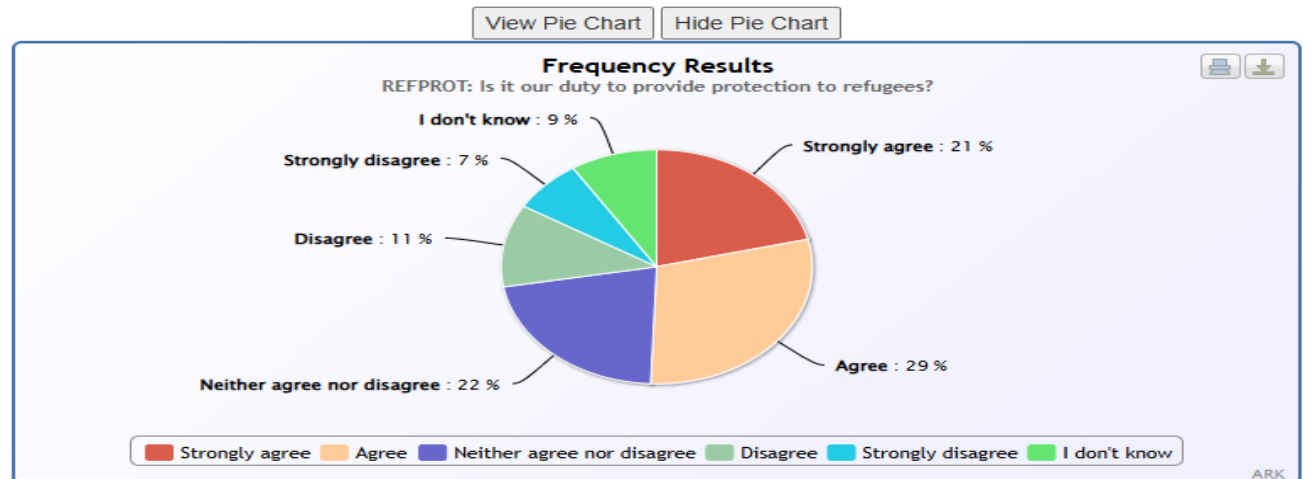
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement about refugees and asylum seekers generally?

I think it is our duty to provide protection to refugees who are escaping persecution in their home country.



**21%** strongly agree and **29%** agree that it is our duty to provide protection to refugees who are escaping persecution in their home country.

	%
Strongly agree	21
Agree	29
Neither agree nor disagree	22
Disagree	11
Strongly disagree	7
I don't know	9





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## Contact Details

For further information on indicators in your area please contact:-

Valerie Maxwell

Children's Services Planning & Information  
Manager

Social Work, Mental Health & Disability  
Directorate

SPPG (DoH)

Tower Hill

Armagh

028 9536 3168

[Valerie.Maxwell@hscni.net](mailto:Valerie.Maxwell@hscni.net)

Yvonne Neill

CSP Information Officer

Social Work, Mental Health & Disability  
Directorate

SPPG (DoH)

Tower Hill

Armagh

028 9536 2793

[Yvonne.Neill@hscni.net](mailto:Yvonne.Neill@hscni.net)