

Burden to Households and Individuals of Completing Statistical Surveys issued by Northern Ireland Departments, 2015/16

Key Points:

- There were 101 surveys or parts of surveys¹, issued to Households and Individuals by Northern Ireland Government Departments in 2015/16. This was comparable to 2014/15, when 102 surveys, or parts of surveys, were carried out.
- In total, there were 156,601 responses¹ to surveys of Households and Individuals issued by Government Departments in 2015/16. This was lower than in 2014/15, when there were 223,263 responses.
- The total burden to NI Households and Individuals in 2015/16 was 28,819 hours, or 1,201 days. This is 5,590 hours or 233 days fewer than in 2014/15, when the total compliance burden was 34,409 hours, or 1,434 days.
- In 2015/16, the average time taken to complete a survey, or part of a survey, was 11 minutes². However, there was a wide variance in completion times across surveys, with the shortest part of a survey taking on average only half a minute to complete and the longest survey taking on average just over five and a half hours per respondent.
- In 2015/16, three surveys of Households and Individuals had a compliance burden of 2,000 hours or more. Together, these surveys were responsible for 31% of the total compliance burden. These surveys were: the *Health Survey Northern Ireland (DHSSPS)*; *Labour Force Survey (DFP)* and; *Family Resources Survey (DSD)*. All three of these surveys contributed to Official Statistics.

¹ When several NI Government Departments share a survey, such as the NI Omnibus Survey or the Continuous Household Survey, each module (or part of the survey) is counted separately. This means that these surveys, and the respondents to these surveys, will be counted more than once. The compliance burden however, is based on the module and is estimated by apportioning the total compliance burden for the survey.

² The average time taken to complete a survey has been calculated as the total compliance burden divided by the total number of responses.

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Background

The [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#)³ has a statutory basis⁴ and recognises the importance of monitoring and reducing respondent burden, balanced with the need to produce official statistics that are fundamental to good government, the delivery of public services and to decision-making in all sectors of society. The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires that an estimated respondent burden cost be reported annually:

Report annually the estimated costs (for example, on businesses, service providers, or the public) of responding to statistical surveys and strive to develop methods that will reduce the costs to individual organisations or people. [Principle 6: Proportionate burden, Practice 1].

As of the 1st April 2014, surveys to Households and Individuals were included within the scope of Survey Control within Northern Ireland, thus data on Households and Individuals were collected for the first time for 2014/15.

Introduction

This 2015/16 report, which also includes information for 2014/15 in Appendix B, is the first in a series outlining the burden to Households and Individuals of complying with Government Statistical Surveys in Northern Ireland. It complements the more established annual report on the cost to businesses of complying with NI Government Statistical surveys⁵.

This report includes information on the number of surveys, or parts of surveys⁶, issued by NI Departments in the financial year ending 31st March 2016, and the time spent by Households and Individuals in complying with these regular and ad-hoc Government surveys. Information has been presented split by the Departmental structure which existed in 2015/16. Departments' names have been abbreviated as shown in Appendix C.

³ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/code-of-practice>

⁴ Statistics and Registration Service Act (2007) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/18/contents>

⁵ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/government/ni-statistical-surveys-assessment-burden>

⁶ When several NI Government Departments share a survey, each module (or part of the survey) is counted separately. This means that these surveys, and the respondents to these surveys, will be counted more than once. The compliance burden however is based on the module and is estimated by apportioning the total compliance burden for the survey.

Useful Links:

- [Cost to Business Bulletins](#)
- [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#)
- [NISRA publications and datasets](#)

- [Downloadable data 2014/15](#)
- [Downloadable data 2015/16](#)

Definitions

The compliance burden due to a Household or Individual survey is defined as the **time spent** by the Household or Individual in responding to the survey, or part of the survey.

The number of responses is based on the achieved sample for the survey, or part of the survey. When a survey is shared by more than one Department, each single *respondent* will be counted as a *response* to each part of the survey. Thus when responses are aggregated across Departments, some respondents will be counted multiple times.

The average time to complete a survey has been calculated as the total compliance burden for the group of surveys (or parts of surveys) *divided by* the total number of responses for the group of surveys (or parts of surveys).

In this report a survey refers to a single survey, or part of a survey, carried out by or on behalf of a NI Government Department. When a survey is shared across a number of Departments, each part of the survey will be treated as a separate survey.

Surveys which contribute to National or Official Statistics are referred to as Official Statistics surveys and surveys which do not contribute to National or Official Statistics are referred to as Other Statistics surveys.

Comparative Data (England & Wales)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces an [On-line List of Government Statistical Surveys](#)⁷ (OLGSS) which details the compliance burden arising from surveys of Businesses, Households and Individuals carried out by Government Departments in England and Wales. Information on Northern Ireland surveys is also available within this list⁸.

⁷ <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/about/surveys/survey-control-unit/online-list-of-government-statistical-surveys>

⁸ Northern Ireland data for Households and Individuals will be added to this list shortly after this report is published.

Compliance Burden to Households and Individuals

In 2015/16, there were 101 surveys, or parts of surveys, issued to Households and Individuals by Northern Ireland Government Departments⁹. The total compliance burden to Households and Individuals was 28,819 hours or 1,201 days.

In this report a survey refers to a single survey or part of a survey, carried out by or on behalf of a NI Government Department. A survey which is shared by a number of different Government Departments will be counted multiple times.

Of the total compliance burden, almost a quarter (23%) was attributable to DFP and 17% to DE (Table 1 and Figure 1).

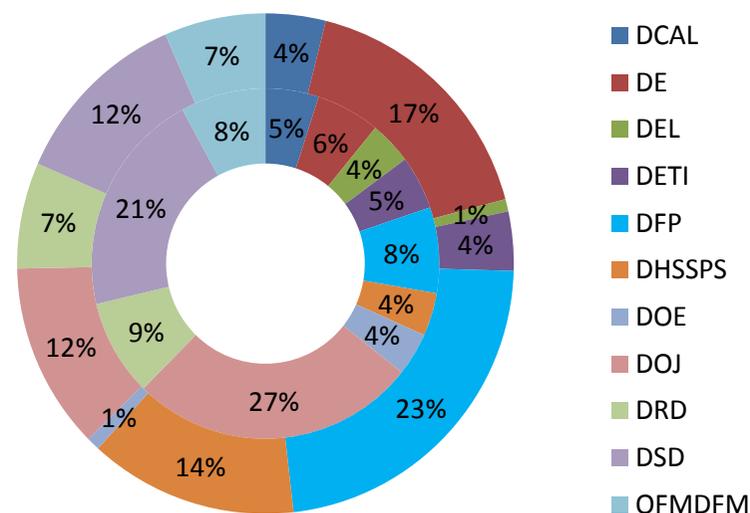
DOJ accounted for 27% of all surveys, but only 12% of the overall compliance burden. DSD accounted for 21% of all surveys and 12% of the overall burden. In contrast, DFP accounted for less than a tenth (8%) of all surveys, compared to 23% of the total compliance burden.

Part of the reason for these disparities is that both DSD and DOJ carried out a large number of short surveys, with 86% of DSD surveys (18) and 59% of DOJ surveys (16) having average completion times of 10 minutes or less. In contrast, DFP surveys tended to be longer and have a higher numbers of respondents.

Table 1: Number and Burden (Hours) for Surveys by Department

Department	Number of Surveys ⁹	Percentage of Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Percentage of Burden
DCAL	5	5.0%	1,128	3.9%
DE	6	5.9%	4,881	16.9%
DEL	4	4.0%	230	0.8%
DETI	5	5.0%	1,101	3.8%
DFP	8	7.9%	6,549	22.7%
DHSSPS	4	4.0%	3,916	13.6%
DOE	4	4.0%	246	0.9%
DOJ	27	26.7%	3,473	12.1%
DRD	9	8.9%	1,976	6.9%
DSD	21	20.8%	3,417	11.9%
OFMDFM	8	7.9%	1,902	6.6%
Total	101	100.0%	28,819	100.0%

Figure 1: Percentage of Surveys (Inner) & Percentage of Burden (Outer) by Department



⁹ This included 11 modules within 2 runs of the NI Omnibus; 8 within the Continuous Household Survey; 3 within the NI Life & Times survey; 5 within the Young Life & Times and 2 within the Kids' Life & Times. Each of these modules is counted separately. Information on the surveys carried by each Department is available in the [downloadable data](#) (see Appendix D).

In 2015/16, a relatively small number of surveys was responsible for a disproportionate amount of the overall compliance burden to Households and Individuals.

Figure 2 groups surveys by their compliance burden. The bars show the percentage of surveys falling in each category and the line shows the percentage of the overall compliance burden due to those surveys. This shows that although only 14% of surveys had a burden of over 500 hours, these surveys were responsible for 71% of the total burden. In contrast, 45% of surveys had a burden of 49 hours or less and contributed only 3% of the total burden to Households and Individuals.

In 2015/16, three surveys had a compliance burden of 2,000 hours or more. Together, these surveys were responsible for 31% of the total compliance burden. These surveys were: the *Health Survey Northern Ireland* (DHSSPS); *Labour Force Survey* (DFP) and; *Family Resources Survey* (DSD), and are shown in red on Figure 3.

A further three surveys had a compliance burden of 1,500 hours or more, accounting for 18% of the total compliance burden. These surveys were: the *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA): Well-being Survey* (DE); the *Northern Ireland Crime Survey* (DOJ); and the *Trends in International Mathematics & Science Study (Pupil)* (DE), and are shown in green on Figure 3.

Figure 2: Number of Surveys by Compliance Burden, and Contribution to Overall Compliance Burden

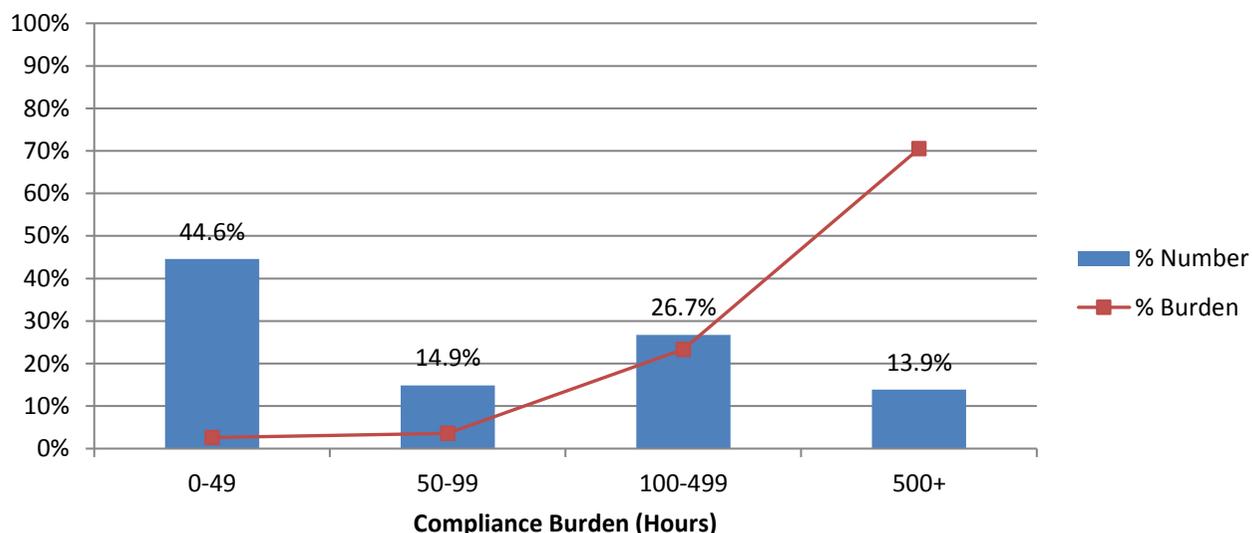
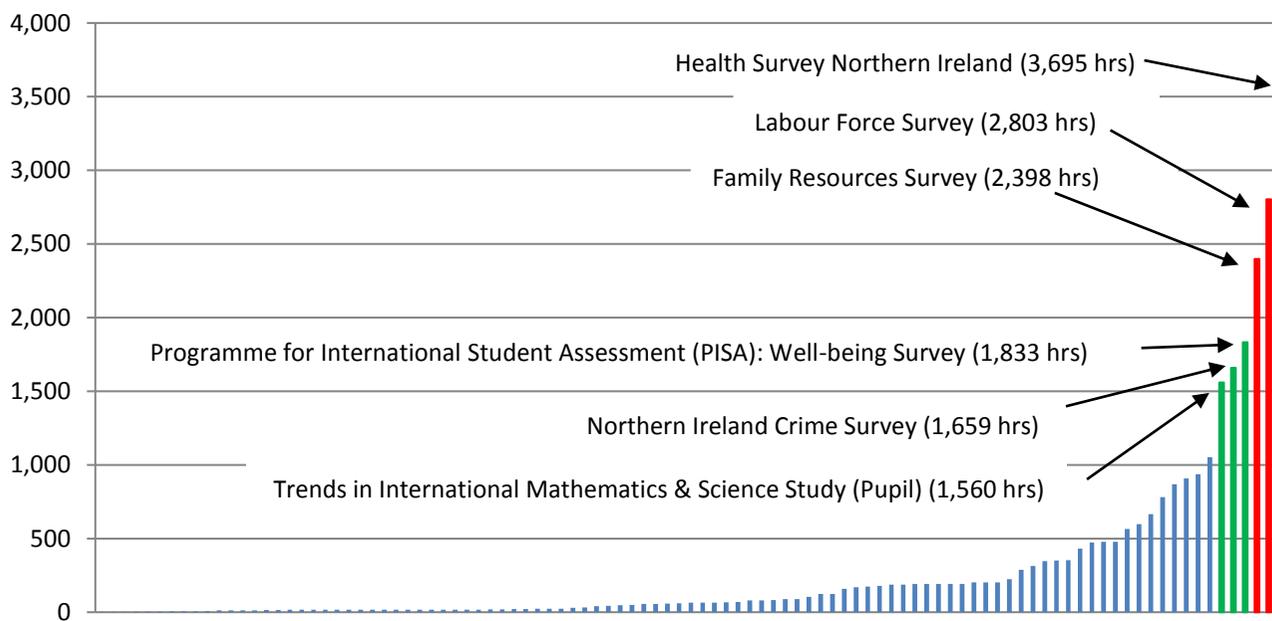


Figure 3: Distribution of Surveys by Percentage of Total Compliance Burden



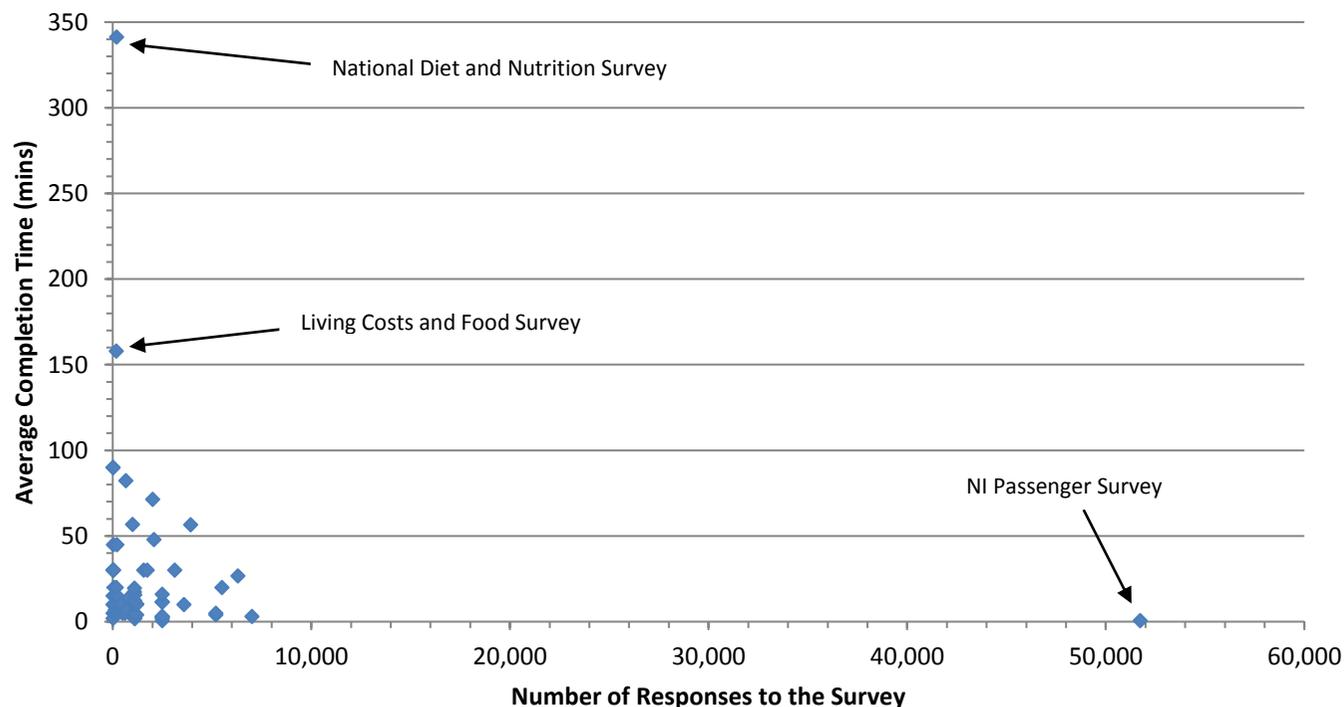
The total burden due to each survey will depend on both the number of Households and Individuals responding and the time taken to complete the survey, or part of the survey. Figure 4 shows the relationship between these two factors.

Note that there are three significant outliers: the *National Diet and Nutrition Survey*, which had only 185 responses, yet had an average completion time¹¹ of 341 minutes. Similarly, the *Living Costs and Food Survey* had 180 responses and an average completion time of 158 minutes. Conversely, the *Northern Ireland Passenger Survey*¹⁰ had 51,724 responses, but an average completion time of only 39 seconds.

Table 2 (overleaf) shows the average completion time by NI Government Department, alongside the total number of responses and total compliance burden.

The average completion time is highest for DHSSPS (44 minutes). This reflects the *Health Survey Northern Ireland* which had an average completion time of 57 minutes. The other surveys commissioned by DHSSPS had much shorter average completion times of 5 or 10 minutes. Similarly, the average completion time for DSD (28 minutes) reflects the *Family Resources Survey* which had an average completion time of 71 minutes.

Figure 4: Average Completion Time¹¹ by Number of Responses to the Survey



¹⁰ The NI Passenger Survey is a short survey of individuals exiting Northern Ireland through airports and sea ports.

¹¹ The average completion time has been calculated as the total compliance burden divided by the number of responses.

Although DFP carried out the two surveys with the highest average completion times, the *National Diet and Nutrition Survey* and *Living Costs and Food Survey* (Figure 4), these surveys had low numbers of responses. The average completion time for DFP (6 minutes) was driven by the *NI Passenger Survey* which had one of the lowest average completion times (39 seconds) and a very large number of responses (Figure 4).

The average completion time across all surveys, including parts of surveys, was 11 minutes. However, there was a wide variance in completion times, with the shortest part of a survey taking on average only half a minute to complete and the longest survey taking on average just over five and a half hours¹².

Official Statistics and Other Surveys

In 2015/16, 24% of surveys of Households and Individuals contributed towards Official Statistics¹³. Surveys which contributed to Official Statistics made up 58% of both the total compliance burden, and of all survey responses.

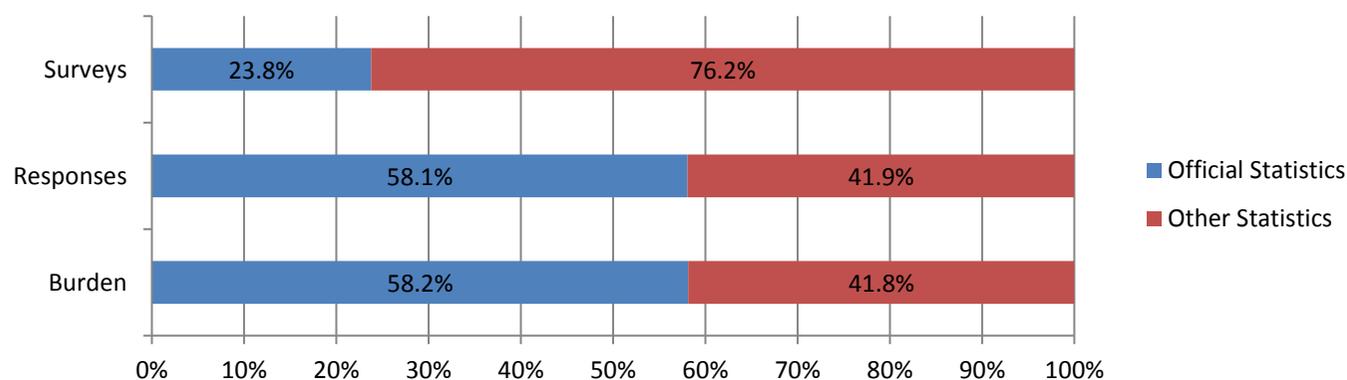
Some of the surveys which did not contribute to Official Statistics contributed to research publications; others were used for the evaluation of schemes and programmes.

¹² The shortest survey was the Health and Safety Executive (DETI) module in the Continuous Household Survey, which consisted of two questions, and the longest survey was the National Diet and Nutrition Survey.

Table 2: Average Completion Time, Number of Responses and Burden by Department

Department	Number of Surveys ¹⁴	Average Time to Complete Surveys (mins)	Number of Responses	Compliance Burden (hours)
DCAL	5	6.1	11,063	1,128
DE	6	15.4	19,023	4,881
DEL	4	12.6	1,098	230
DETI	5	12.2	5,421	1,101
DFP	8	6.1	64,675	6,549
DHSSPS	4	44.0	5,343	3,916
DOE	4	4.0	3,678	246
DOJ	27	14.9	14,018	3,473
DRD	9	7.9	14,913	1,976
DSD	21	28.1	7,302	3,417
OFMDFM	8	11.3	10,067	1,902
Total	101	11.0	156,601	28,819

Figure 5: Percentage of Surveys, Responses and Compliance Burden by Whether Surveys Contribute to Official Statistics



¹³ This included 5 of the 11 modules in the NI Omnibus; 5 of the 8 modules in the Continuous Household Survey; 2 modules in the NI Life & Times and 2 modules in the Young Life & Times survey.

¹⁴ In this report a survey refers to a single survey, or part of a survey, carried out by or on behalf of a NI Government Department. A survey carried out on behalf of a number of different Departments will be counted multiple times.

Table 3 shows that average completion times tend to be higher for surveys which contribute to Official Statistics. The lower average completion time of 5 minutes for DFP reflects the influence of the *NI Passenger Survey* which is very large survey with a very low average completion time (see Figure 4).

Of the 3,916 hours of burden attributable to DHSSPS, 94% was incurred by Official Statistics surveys. 88% of the 3,417 hours of burden attributable to DSD was incurred by Official Statistics surveys, and 82% of the 6,549 hours of burden attributable to DFP.

Table 3: Compliance Burden by Official Statistics and Other Statistics, by NI Department

Department	Official Statistics				Other Statistics			
	Number of Surveys	Number of Responses	Compliance Burden (hours)	Average Time to Complete Survey (mins)	Number of Surveys	Number of Responses	Compliance Burden (hours)	Average Time to Complete Survey (mins)
DCAL	1	2,495	478	11.5	4	8,568	649	4.5
DE	-	-	-	-	6	19,023	4,881	15.4
DEL	-	-	-	-	4	1,098	230	12.6
DETI	-	-	-	-	5	5,421	1,101	12.2
DFP	5	60,884	5,372	5.3	3	3,791	1,177	18.6
DHSSPS	1	3,915	3,695	56.6	3	1,428	222	9.3
DOE	1	2,495	125	3.0	3	1,183	121	6.1
DOJ	5	5,174	2,071	24.0	22	8,844	1,402	9.5
DRD	3	4,567	1,125	14.8	6	10,346	850	4.9
DSD	3	4,208	2,998	42.7	18	3,094	419	8.1
OFMDFM	5	7,211	895	7.4	3	2,856	1,007	21.2
Total	24	90,949	16,760	11.1	77	65,652	12,060	11.0

Statutory and Voluntary Surveys

All Statistical Surveys of Households and Individuals carried out by NI Government Departments in 2015/16 were Voluntary Surveys¹⁵.

The use of Voluntary Surveys for Official Statistics reflects the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) which states that producers of official statistics should ‘*Seek participation in statistical surveys through informed consent, rather than using statutory powers, wherever possible.*’ [Principle 6: Proportionate burden, Practice 2].

¹⁵ Although completion of the survey is voluntary, there may be a regulatory requirement for the Department to carry out such a survey.

Analysis by Method of Collection

Face-to-face surveys (including face-to-face surveys with a diary) were the most popular method of collection, making up 60% of all surveys, 70% of all responses and 70% of the total compliance burden¹⁶. Figure 7 which groups surveys by compliance burden, shows that this method of data collection was favoured for both large and small surveys.

Across all Departments, online surveys accounted for 13% of all surveys, 11% of total responses and 10% of the total compliance burden.

Telephone surveys accounted for 9% of all surveys, 6% of all responses and 7% of the total compliance burden.

Paper surveys made up 11% of all surveys, 6% of all responses and 3% of the total compliance burden.

Surveys using multiple methods accounted for 7% of all surveys, 7% of all responses and 11% of the total compliance burden. These multiple method surveys combined a paper questionnaire with either online or online and telephone methods. Figure 7 shows that multiple method approaches were only used for larger surveys.

¹⁶ When a survey is carried out on behalf of several Departments, each module (or part of the survey) is counted separately. This means that these surveys and respondents will be counted more than once. In 2015/16, most of the shared surveys were face-to-face surveys, including the two NI Omnibus Surveys (11 modules in total), the Continuous Household Survey (8 modules) and the NI Life & Times Survey (3 modules). The Young Life & Times Survey (5 modules) was conducted using multiple methods, and the Kids' Life & Times Survey (2 modules) was conducted online.

Figure 6: Percentage of Total Surveys, Responses and Compliance Burden by Method of Collection^{18, 19}

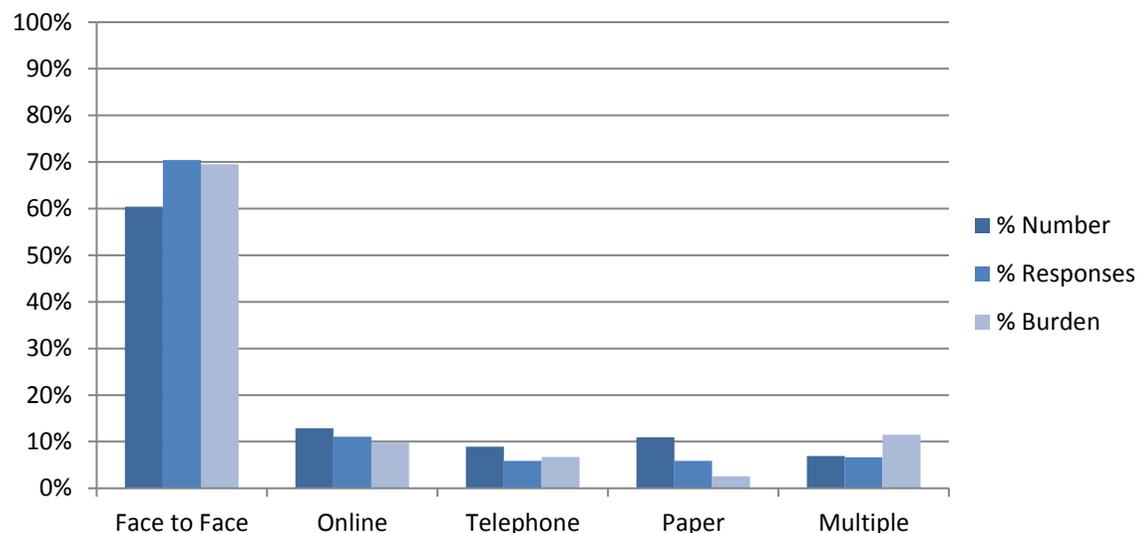


Figure 7: Method of Collection by Level of Compliance Burden^{18, 19}

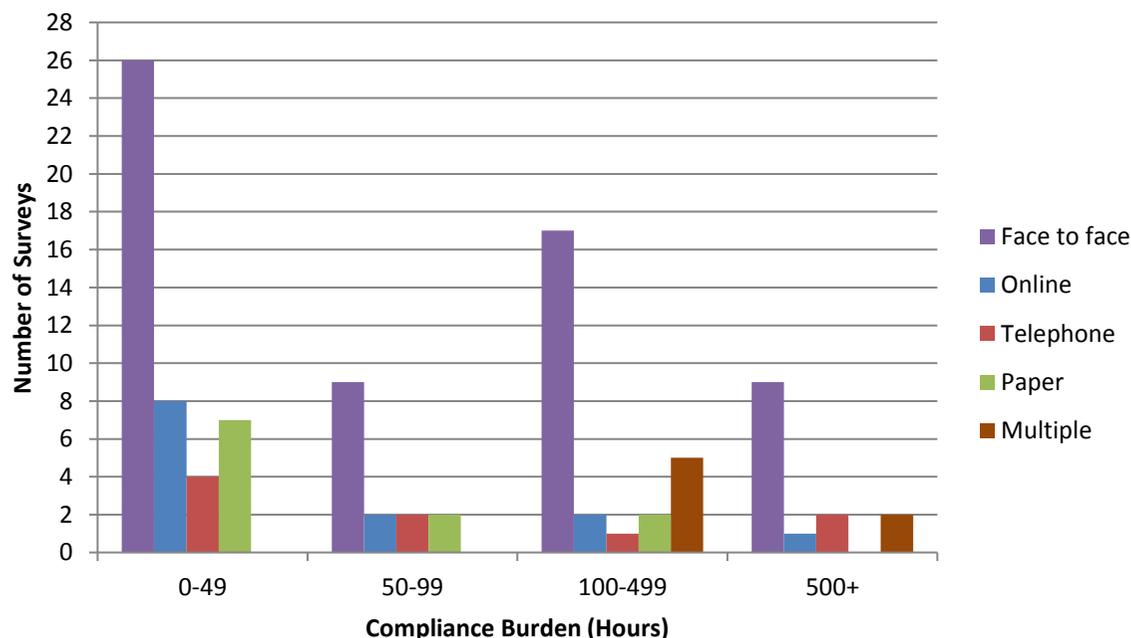


Table 4 below shows the method of collection and the associated burden for surveys of Households and Individuals, split by NI Government Department. DFP was responsible for eight surveys, which used face-to-face methods with a compliance burden of 6,549 hours; while DSD was responsible for 21 face-to-face surveys with a compliance burden of 3,417 hours; DHSSPS was responsible for two face-to-face surveys with a compliance burden of 3,897 hours; and DOJ was responsible for nine face-to-face surveys with a compliance burden of 2,049 hours.

DOJ had the most online surveys, issuing nine in 2015/16 with a total compliance burden of 173 hours, as well as a 'multiple method' survey (with an online option) which had a compliance burden of 193 hours. DE had three 'multiple method' surveys (which included an online option) with a compliance burden of 2,533 hours, and two solely online surveys with a compliance burden of 2,266 hours. Online methods or multiple methods (with an online option) were also used by DCAL, DOE and OFMDFM.

Table 4: Collection Methods for Surveys by Department¹⁷

Department	Face to Face ¹⁸		Online		Telephone		Paper		Multiple ¹⁹	
	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)
DCAL	3	589	1	346	-	-	-	-	1	193
DE	1	83	2	2,266	-	-	-	-	3	2,533
DEL	3	226	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-
DETI	2	194	-	-	1	869	2	38	-	-
DFP	8	6,549	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DHSSPS	2	3,897	-	-	-	-	2	19	-	-
DOE	2	205	1	41	-	-	1	0	-	-
DOJ	9	2,049	9	173	4	740	4	319	1	193
DRD	4	1,304	-	-	3	313	2	358	-	-
DSD	21	3,417	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OFMDFM	6	1,517	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	385
Total	61	20,030	13	2,826	9	1,926	11	734	7	3,303

¹⁷ Figures for Compliance Burden have been rounded to the nearest hour; figures less than 0.5 hours will appear as zero.

¹⁸ This category includes surveys which combined face-to-face methods with a respondent diary.

¹⁹ Multiple methods includes a paper questionnaire combined with either online data collection, or online and telephone data collection.

2014/15 and 2015/16 Comparison

Due to the biennial or quadrennial nature of some of the surveys, as well as the large number of ad-hoc and programme-specific surveys, the number of surveys and compliance burden can fluctuate from one year to the next. Additionally, NISRA statisticians are continually working towards improving the efficiency of the statistical process and thus minimising the burden on survey respondents, in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Table 5 below shows the variation in the number of surveys, number of responses and compliance burden between 2014/15 and 2015/16. Although there was little variation in the number of surveys between 2014/15 to 2015/16 (101 in 2015/16 compared to 102 in 2014/15), the overall compliance burden decreased by 5,590 hours or 233 days.

The number of responses to statistical surveys carried out by NI Government Departments also decreased, by 66,662, between 2014/15 and 2015/16. This drop in the number of responses was primarily due to reduced sample sizes rather than falling response rates. Overall the number of responses decreased by 30% between 2014/15 and 2015/16, and the overall compliance burden fell by 16%.

Table 5: Changes between 2014/15 and 2015/16

Department	Number Surveys		Number of Responses		Compliance Burden (hours)	
	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16
DCAL	1	5	2,521	11,063	579	1,128
DE	6	6	7,562	19,023	933	4,881
DEL	1	4	1,081	1,098	213	230
DETI	8	5	12,996	5,421	2,943	1,101
DFP	12	8	66,859	64,675	7,074	6,549
DHSSPS	4	4	15,963	5,343	7,470	3,916
DOE	7	4	63,712	3,678	4,488	246
DOJ	17	27	19,759	14,018	3,799	3,473
DRD	10	9	9,350	14,913	1,330	1,976
DSD	28	21	11,344	7,302	4,206	3,417
OFMDFM	8	8	12,116	10,067	1,374	1,902
Total	102	101	223,263	156,601	34,409	28,819

The most dramatic decreases in overall burden between 2014/15 and 2015/16 were in: DOE (95%) with four large biennial Customer Satisfaction Surveys occurring in 2014/15 but not in 2015/16; in DETI (63%) due to three large ad-hoc surveys not being repeated in 2015/16; and in DHSSPS (48%) where the quadrennial *Drug Use in Northern Ireland Survey* took place in 2014/15, along with a large ad-hoc survey on inpatient experience.

The overall burden due to DE surveys increased by 3,949 hours between 2014/15 and 2015/16. This was due to three large ad-hoc surveys taking place in 2015/16. These were the *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA): Well-being Survey*; the *Trends in International Mathematics & Science Study (Pupil) Survey*; and the *Trends in International Mathematics & Science Study (Parent) Survey*.

DCAL introduced two new surveys in 2015/16 and carried out a further two ad-hoc surveys. These new surveys, which were commissioned by Sport NI had a total of 6,350 responses and a compliance burden of 539 hours. The use of modules in existing surveys (the Young Life & Times Survey and the Kids' Life & Times Survey) minimised the increase in respondent burden.

The number of surveys carried out by DOJ increased by 10 (59%) between 2014/15 and 2015/16. This was due to changes in the number of ad-hoc surveys carried out by the Department, including a suite of nine surveys used by the Probation Board in 2015/16 to evaluate its *Reset* programme.

The large increase in the number of survey responses for DRD can be attributed to the *Public Transport Passengers Origin Destination Survey*, an ad-hoc survey carried out in 2015/16, which had 7,000 responses and a compliance burden of 350 hours. There were also differences between the number of ad-hoc (and biennial) surveys carried out by DEL and DSD in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Measures to Reduce Compliance Burden

A few of the specific initiatives employed by NI Government Departments in 2015/16 to reduce respondent burden include:

Department	Name of Survey	Burden Reduced by
DSD	Family Resources Survey	Annual Questionnaire consultation to determine any unnecessary questions which are removed; rigorous checking to ensure any new questions don't add too much burden and cannot be found elsewhere.
DHSSPS	Health Survey Northern Ireland	Ongoing review of questionnaire design and content to maximise the volume and quality of information collected whilst paying due cognisance to the length of the questionnaire and the resultant burden on respondents.
DE	Module of questions in Young Life and Times Survey about Shared Education	Use of an existing regular survey (Young Life and Times) to include questions on Shared Education, rather than introducing a new survey.
DE	Module of questions in Kids' Life and Times Survey about Shared Education	Use of an existing regular survey (Kids' Life and Times) to include questions on Shared Education, rather than introducing a new survey.

Appendix A: Technical notes

Data Collection

Data are requested from Survey Control Liaison Officers (SCLOs) in each of the Northern Ireland Departments, as well as from officials in Arm's Length Bodies (ALBS). SCLOs are provided with guidance notes and asked to provide details on Government Statistical Surveys of Households and Individuals which their Department / branch has commissioned or carried out in 2015/16. When surveys are shared by more than one Department / branch, the relevant survey is included on each return and the respondent burden for the survey is proportionately split across the Departments / branches. The data are returned to NISRA Statistical Support and Business Planning Branch for quality assurance.

Methodology

For surveys of Households and Individuals, respondent burden is calculated on the basis of time taken for each respondent to complete the survey (or part of the survey). Where Households or Individuals are re-contacted as part of the validation or quality assurance procedures, the burden due to re-contact is also included. The calculation of compliance burden requires the following:

- Number of responses to the survey (include full / partial and invalid)
- Number of respondents re-contacted (if applicable)
- Median time to complete the survey (or part thereof)
- Median re-contact time for validation purposes (or part thereof)

The median time taken by respondents to complete the survey will also include any time taken to establish eligibility (e.g. time spent by the interviewer on the doorstep determining household eligibility). Total compliance burden will include time taken to establish eligibility for respondents or households that are subsequently deemed out of scope.

If actual re-contact times are not available then the median time taken to complete the full survey will be used on the assumption that a respondent may need to review their entire response.

The Compliance Burden (mins) is a simple **addition** of Response Burden (mins), and where applicable, Re-contact Burden (mins)

$$\text{Response Burden (mins)} = \text{No. of responses} \times \text{Median time (mins)}$$

$$\text{Recontact Burden (mins)} = \text{No. recontacted} \times \text{Median time (mins)}$$

Compliance Burden is calculated in minutes but has been changed to hours (or days) in this report.

Shared Surveys

For those surveys which are commissioned by several branches / Departments, each part of the survey is treated as a separate survey. The compliance burden for each part of the survey (or module) is estimated by apportioning the total compliance burden for the survey. The number of responses is the same as for the complete survey (unless those questions were only asked of a subgroup of respondents).

This approach allows the burden for individual Departments (or branches) to be calculated, but means that some surveys and respondents will appear more than once when the 'number of surveys' and 'number of responses' is calculated across branches / Departments. For this reason, the number of responses is not a good proxy for the number of respondents (or Households and Individuals responding to NI Government Statistical Surveys). Some Households and Individuals may also respond to more than one NI Government Statistical Survey. As the compliance burden has been apportioned based on the time taken to answer each part of the survey, there is no 'double counting' of compliance burden.

The use of an existing or combined survey (such as the NI Omnibus Survey, the Continuous Household Survey or one of the Life and Times Surveys) is an effective way of reducing respondent burden as the overall contextual questions don't need to be repeated for each module, and the initial stages / survey introductions only need to be carried out once.

Average completion time (or average burden per response)

This has been calculated as the total compliance burden (for the group of surveys or parts of surveys) divided by the total number of responses (for the group of surveys or parts of surveys). This may differ from the median completion time.

Data Validation

Data is subject to validation and quality assurance by checking the calculated burden for each survey, comparing with previous years' returns, and by contacting data providers if there are queries on specific surveys. Efforts are also made to ensure consistency in interpretation across NI Government Departments and align where possible with Government Departments in England and Wales.

Main Uses of Data

The data are used by NI Government Departments, by the Statistics Advisory Committee (SAC), by Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), by the media and by the general public. Information can be used to investigate the burden on Households and Individuals resulting from Government Statistical Surveys, to monitor changes over time, to respond to MLA questions, and to provide briefing to Ministers.

Data Quality

Data are derived from returns provided by NI Government Departments and ALBs. Although the compliance burden is an estimate, the quality of the underlying data is considered to be good.

Rounding

Please note that figures for compliance burden (hours) have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures for average completion time (minutes) and percentages have been rounded to one decimal place. Figures may not add exactly to totals due to rounding.

Appendix B: Tables and Charts for 2014/15

Table B1: Number and Burden (Hours) for Surveys by Department, 2014/15

Department	Number of Surveys ²⁰	Percentage of Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Percentage of Burden
DCAL	1	1.0%	579	1.7%
DE	6	5.9%	933	2.7%
DEL	1	1.0%	213	0.6%
DETI	8	7.8%	2,943	8.6%
DFP	12	11.8%	7,074	20.6%
DHSSPS	4	3.9%	7,470	21.7%
DOE	7	6.9%	4,488	13.0%
DOJ	17	16.7%	3,799	11.0%
DRD	10	9.8%	1,330	3.9%
DSD	28	27.5%	4,206	12.2%
OFMDFM	8	7.8%	1,374	4.0%
Total	102	100.0%	34,409	100.0%

²⁰ This included 21 modules within 4 runs of the NI Omnibus; 8 within the Continuous Household Survey; 2 within the NI Life & Times survey and 4 within the Young Life & Times Survey. Each of these modules is counted separately. Information on the surveys carried by each Department is available in the [downloadable data](#) (see Appendix D).

Figure B1: Percentage of Surveys (Inner) & Percentage of Burden (Outer) by Department, 2014/15

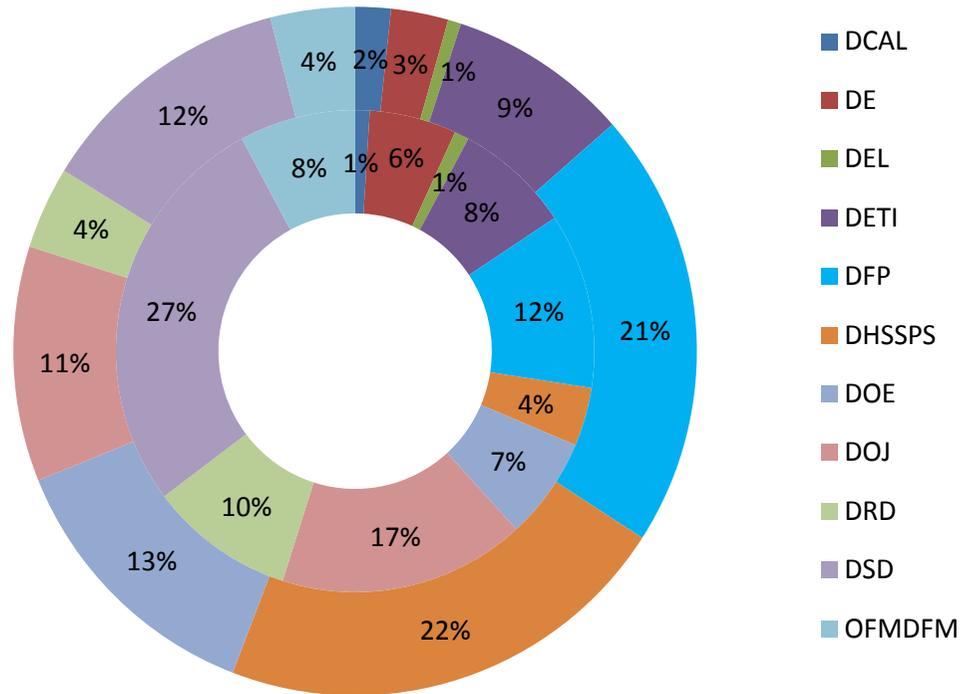


Figure B2: Number of Surveys²³ by Compliance Burden, and Contribution to Overall Compliance Burden, 2014/15

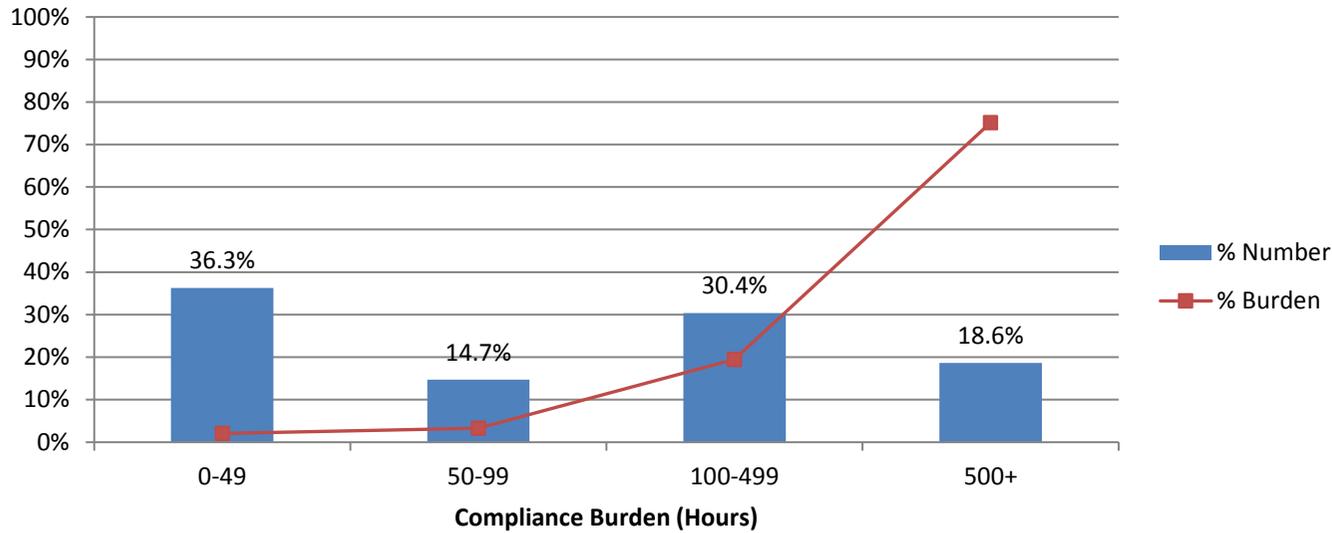


Figure B3: Distribution of Surveys by Percentage of Total Compliance Burden, 2014/15

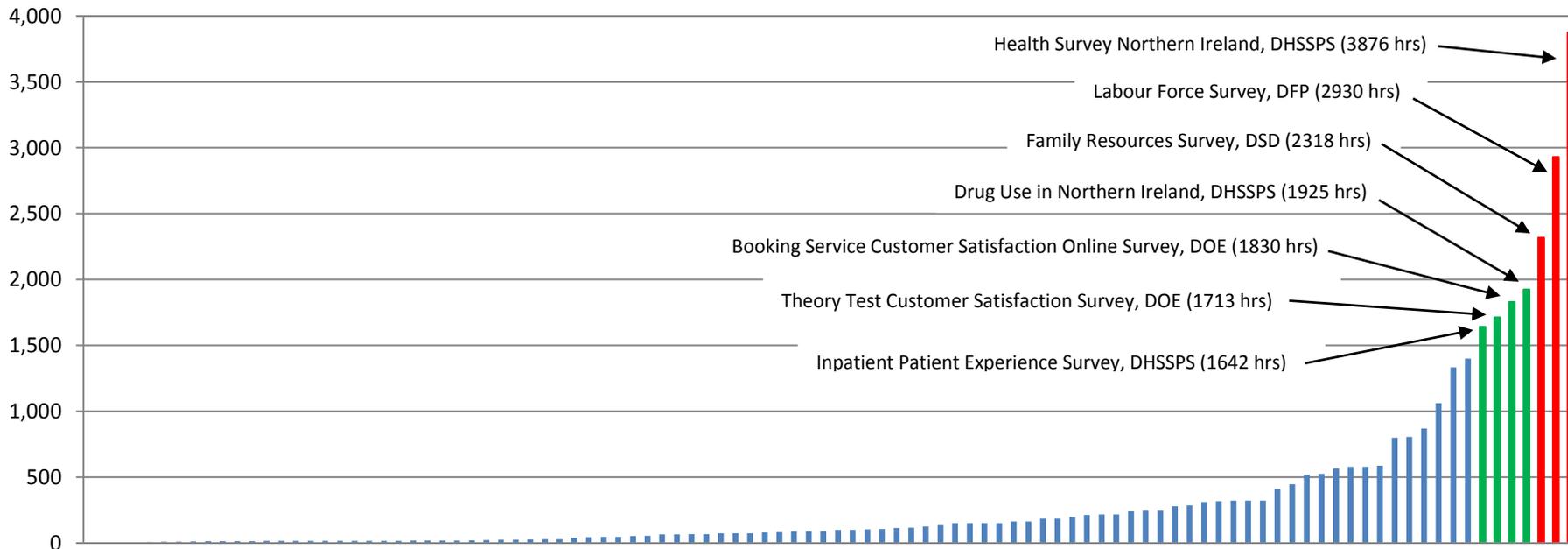
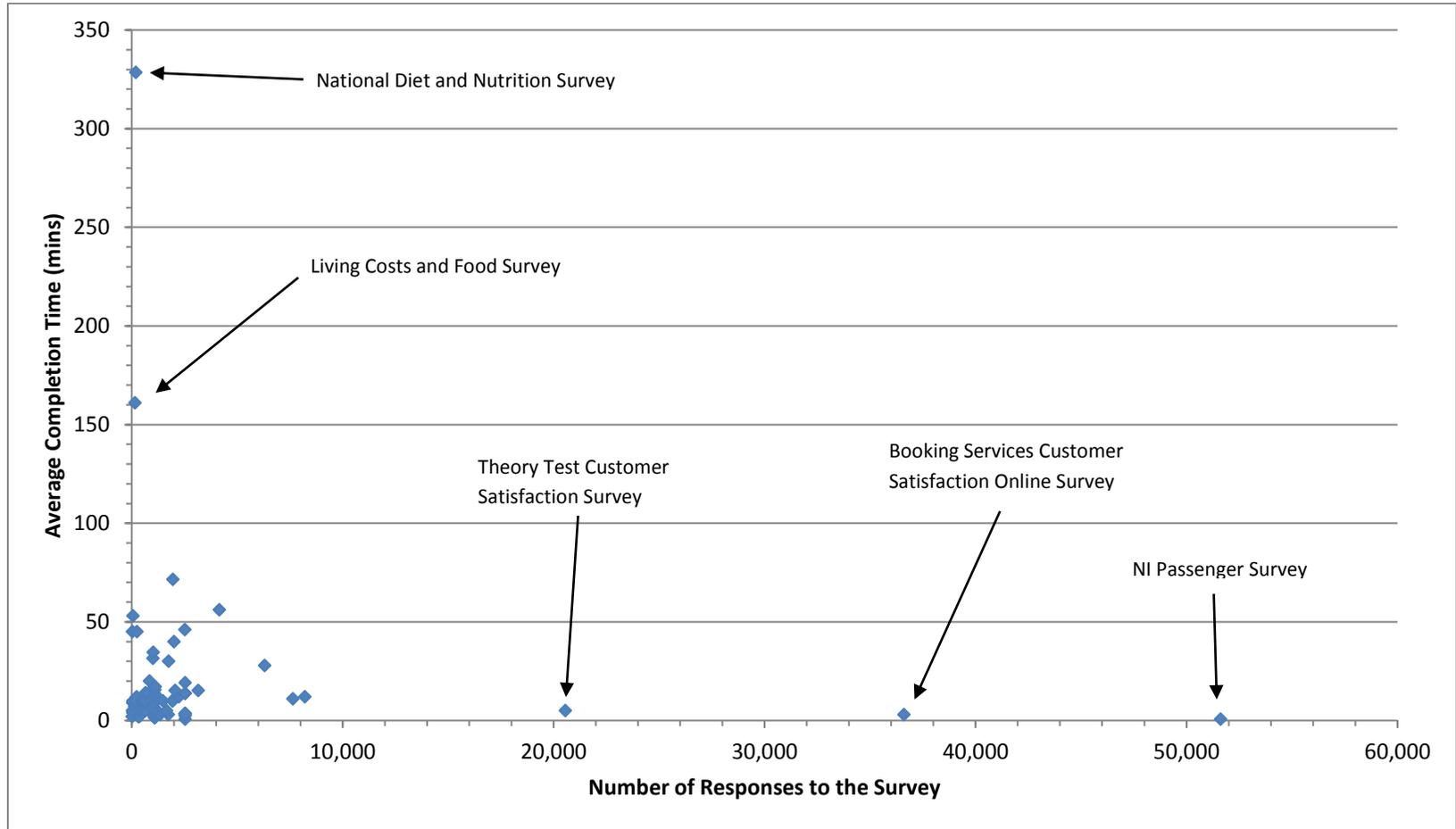


Figure B4: Average Completion Time²¹ by Number of Responses to Survey, 2014/15



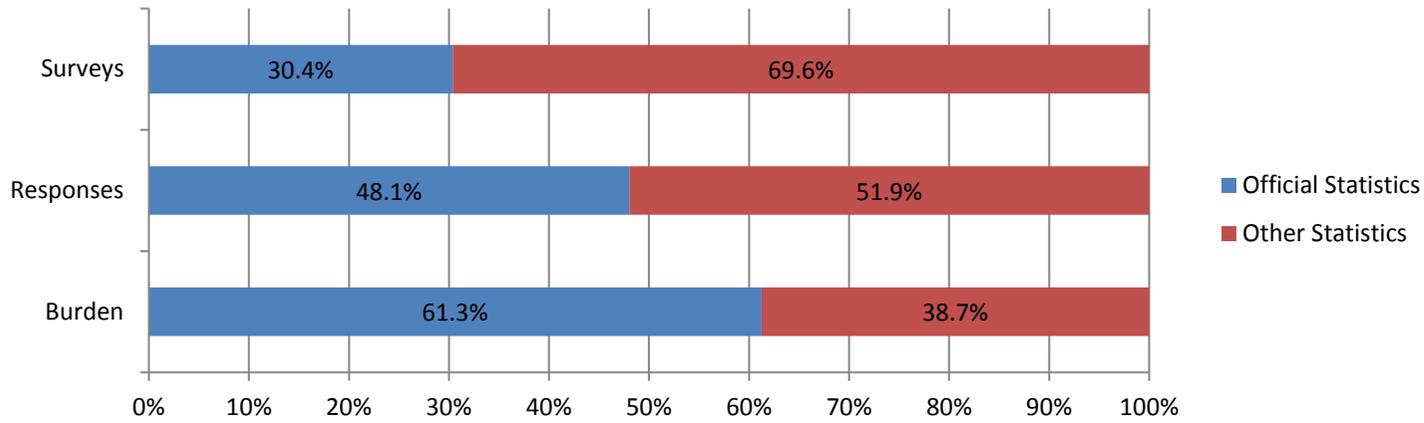
²¹ The average completion time has been calculated as the total compliance burden divided by the number of responses.

Table B2: Average Completion Time, Number of Responses²² and Burden by Department, 2014/15

Department	Number of Surveys	Average Time to Complete Surveys (mins)	Number of Responses	Compliance Burden (hours)
DCAL	1	13.8	2,521	579
DE	6	7.4	7,562	933
DEL	1	11.8	1,081	213
DETI	8	13.6	12,996	2,943
DFP	12	6.3	66,859	7,074
DHSSPS	4	28.1	15,963	7,470
DOE	7	4.2	63,712	4,488
DOJ	17	11.5	19,759	3,799
DRD	10	8.5	9,350	1,330
DSD	28	22.2	11,344	4,206
OFMDFM	8	6.8	12,116	1,374
Total	102	9.2	223,263	34,409

²² When several NI Government Departments share a survey, such as the NI Omnibus Survey or the Continuous Household Survey, each module (or part of the survey) is counted separately. This means that these surveys, and the responses to these surveys, will be counted more than once in aggregated totals. The compliance burden however, is based on the module and is estimated by apportioning the total compliance burden for the survey. Further information on surveys carried by each Department is available in the [downloadable data](#) (see Appendix D).

Figure B5: Percentage of Surveys, Responses²³ and Compliance Burden by Whether Surveys Contribute to Official Statistics, 2014/15



²³ A survey refers to a single survey, or part of a survey, carried out by or on behalf of a NI Government Department. The compliance burden is calculated by apportioning the compliance burden for the complete survey. The number of respondents to each part of the survey will normally be the same as for the complete survey.

Table B3: Compliance Burden by Official Statistics and Other Statistics, by NI Department, 2014/15

Department	Official Statistics				Other Statistics			
	Number of Surveys	Number of Responses	Compliance Burden (hours)	Average Time to Complete Survey (mins)	Number of Surveys	Number of Responses	Compliance Burden (hours)	Average Time to Complete Survey (mins)
DCAL	1	2,521	579	13.8	-	-	-	-
DE	-	-	-	-	6	7,562	933	7.4
DEL	1	1,081	213	11.8	-	-	-	-
DETI	-	-	-	-	8	12,996	2,943	13.6
DFP	7	62,887	5,711	5.4	5	3,972	1,363	20.6
DHSSPS	3	14,863	7,443	30.0	1	1,100	27	1.5
DOE	3	5,190	876	10.1	4	58,522	3,612	3.7
DOJ	7	7,427	2,070	16.7	10	12,332	1,729	8.4
DRD	3	4,541	776	10.2	7	4,809	555	6.9
DSD	5	6,260	3,283	31.5	23	5,084	923	10.9
OFMDFM	1	2,521	126	3.0	7	9,595	1,248	7.8
Total	31	107,291	21,076	11.8	71	115,972	13,333	6.9

Statutory and Voluntary Surveys, 2014/15

All Statistical Surveys of Households and Individuals carried out by NI Government Departments in 2014/15 were Voluntary Surveys²⁴.

²⁴ Although completion of the survey is voluntary, there may be a regulatory requirement for the Department to carry out such a survey.

Figure B6: Percentage of Total Surveys, Responses²⁵ and Compliance Burden by Method of Data Collection^{26, 27}, 2014/15

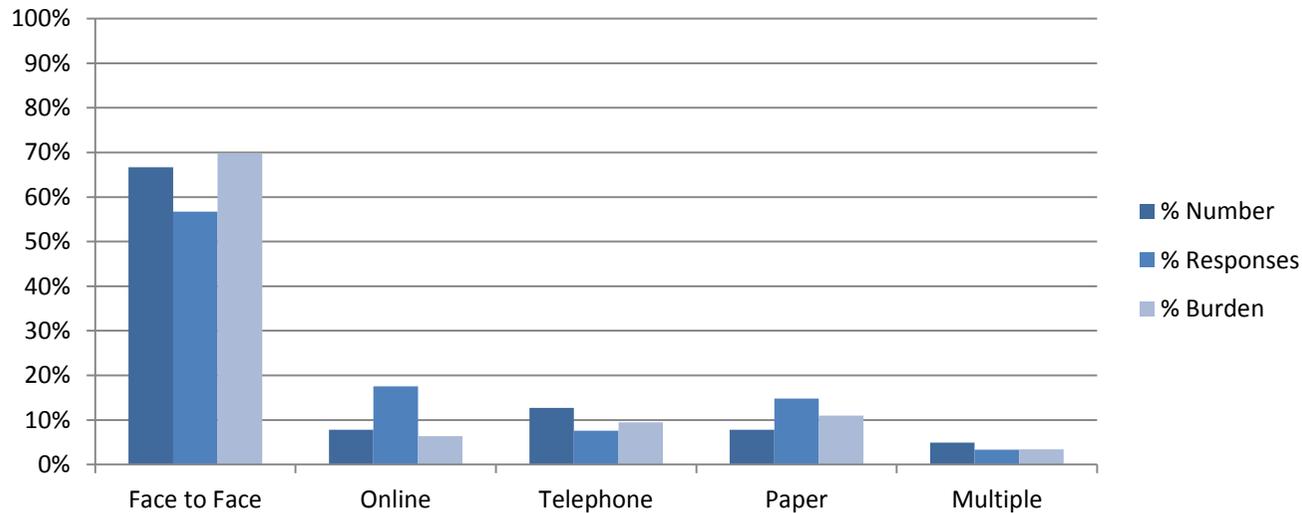
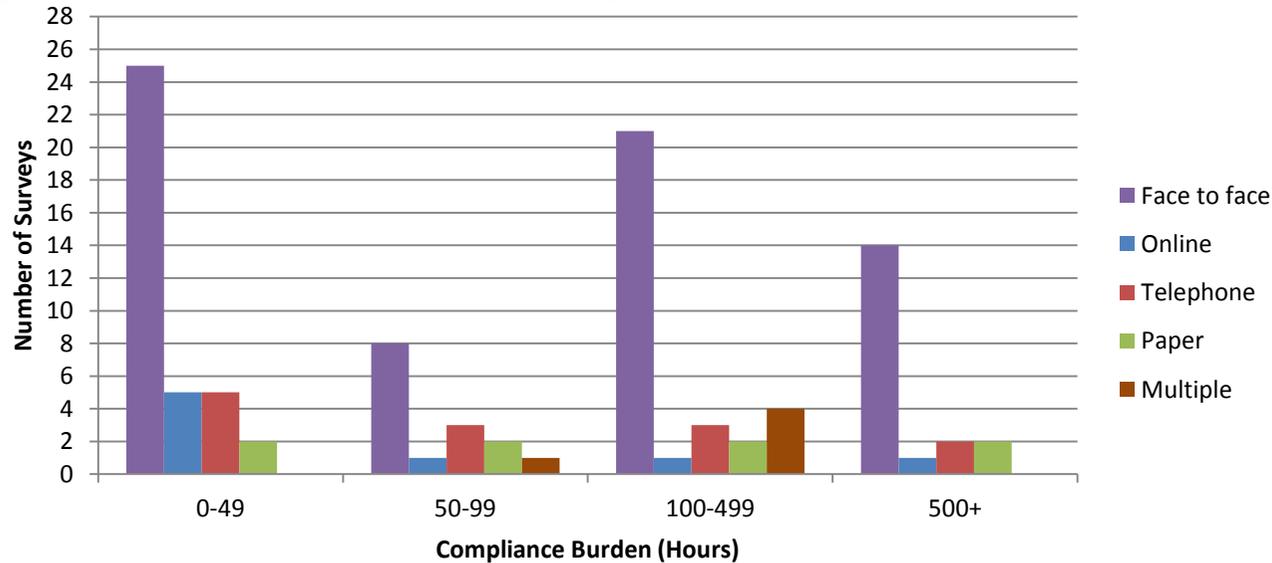


Figure B7: Method of Collection by Level of Compliance Burden^{26, 27}, 2014/15



²⁵ When a survey is shared across several Departments, each module (or part of the survey) is counted separately. This means that these surveys and respondents will be counted more than once (but not the compliance burden). In 2014/15, most of the shared surveys were face-to-face surveys, including the four NI Omnibus Surveys (21 modules in total), the Continuous Household Survey (8 modules) and the NI Life & Times Survey (2 modules). The Young Life & Times Survey (4 modules) was conducted using multiple methods.

Table B4: Collection Methods for Surveys by Department, 2014/15

Department	Face to Face ²⁶		Online		Telephone		Paper		Multiple ²⁷	
	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)	Number Surveys	Compliance Burden (hours)
DCAL	1	579	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DE	1	101	2	254	-	-	1	104	2	474
DEL	1	213	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DETI	5	2,036	-	-	1	869	2	38	-	-
DFP	11	7,067	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
DHSSPS	3	5,828	-	-	-	-	1	1,642	-	-
DOE	2	739	2	1,832	-	-	3	1,917	-	-
DOJ	8	2,048	2	70	6	1,598	1	83	-	-
DRD	5	933	1	30	3	313	-	-	1	55
DSD	25	3,729	-	-	3	476	-	-	-	-
OFMDFM	6	728	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	646
Total	68	24,001	8	2,193	13	3,256	8	3,784	5	1,175

²⁶ This category includes surveys which combined face-to-face methods with a respondent diary.

²⁷ Multiple methods includes a paper questionnaire combined with online and telephone data collection.

Measures to Reduce Compliance Burden 2014/15

A few of the specific initiatives employed by NI Government Departments in 2014/15 to reduce respondent burden include:

Department	Name of Survey	Burden reduced by
DE	Young Life and Times Survey for: (1) Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) in Education, and (2) Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)	Use of an existing regular survey (Young Life and Times) to include questions on these two areas, rather than introducing a new survey.
DETI (Tourism NI)	Leisure Consumer Barometer July, October 2014	Compliance costs managed by restricting the number of questions to minimise questionnaire completion time
DETI (Tourism NI)	Evaluation of NITB Advertising Campaigns	Compliance costs managed by restricting the number of questions to minimise questionnaire completion time
DETI (Tourism NI)	Visitor Attitude Survey 2014	Compliance costs managed by restricting the number of questions to minimise questionnaire completion time
DHSSPS	Inpatient Patient Experience Survey 2014	A review is being undertaken to ensure there is no duplication in terms of burden on individuals and work of staff in respect of patient experience surveys across the health and social care service.
DSD	Family Resources Survey	Annual Questionnaire consultation to determine any unnecessary questions which are removed; rigorous checking to ensure any new questions don't add too much burden and cannot be found elsewhere.

Appendix C: Departments and their Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Department
DCAL	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DE	Department of Education
DEL	Department for Employment and Learning
DETI	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
DOE	Department of the Environment
DRD	Department for Regional Development
DSD	Department of Social Development
DOJ	Department of Justice
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

Appendix D: Further Information

Access to all the data contained in this report can be found at:

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/government/ni-statistical-surveys-assessment-burden>

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