PERSONNEL STATISTICS FOR THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE

Based on staff in post at 1st April 2017

NISRA
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann um Staitisticí agus Taighde

Department of Finance
An Roinn Airgeadais
www.finance-ni.gov.uk

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1 Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the personnel profile of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) at 1st April 2017 and how it has changed over time. The key findings are summarised below.

1) Numbers

At 1st April 2017 there were 21,910 full-time equivalent staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), which was a decrease of 2% on the figure at 1st April 2016, and a decrease of almost 13% from 1st April 2015. Between April 2015 and April 2017 staff numbers (headcount) in the NICS also decreased by about 13%. Over the same period the UK Home Civil Service experienced a decrease of around 3%.

2) Part-time working

Over one third of women and 7% of men in the NICS worked part-time. The proportion of women working part-time varied markedly by grade, ranging from approximately 14% at the most senior level (Grade 5 and above) to over 44% at Administrative Officer level.

3) Location

At 1st April 2017 the District Council area which had by far the largest number of NICS jobs relative to the economically active population living there was Belfast; the next highest areas were Derry and Strabane, and Lisburn and Castlereagh. The District Council areas with the fewest NICS jobs relative to the resident economically active population were Antrim and Newtownabbey, closely followed by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon and Newry, Mourne and Down.

4) Leavers

Over 3% of staff left the NICS during 2016/2017, a decrease from the previous financial year (11%, 2015/2016) and lower than the leaving rate in the Home Civil Service (8%). Ill health, resignations and the final tranche of the voluntary exit scheme each accounted for approximately one in five of all leavers.

2 Introduction

About this Report

This report provides an overview of the human resource profile of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) in 2017 and how it has changed since 2015. Where appropriate, comparisons are made with the Civil Service in Great Britain (GB).

Data Coverage

The primary data source for this report, with the exception in part of the NI Prison Service (NIPS), was HRConnect, the Human Resource Service for the NICS. Data for NIPS staff and a small number of Youth Justice Agency (YJA) staff not already on HRConnect was obtained from NIPS's and YJA's own personnel data systems.

Figures are based on actual staff in post at 1st April each year; analyses of leavers are on a financial year basis. Figures relate to employees with an employment contract who are being paid by the Organisation. Employees can be permanent, on a fixed-term contract or employed on a casual basis. Permanent employees have a contract with no agreed expiry date or a fixed-term contract of more than 12 months. Temporary/casual employees are those with a fixed term contract of twelve months or less, or employed on a casual basis.

Self-employed, contract workers and agency workers are excluded from the figures. Civil servants working on secondment to other organisations and staff on career break have also been excluded.

Figures for 2017 relate only to NICS staff in the following organisations –

DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DfI	Department for Infrastructure
DE	Department of Education
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for the Economy
DoF	Department of Finance
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ	Department of Justice
TEO	The Executive Office
PPS	The Public Prosecution Service
Other	Includes the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland, Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry Team and Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland.

Details of the methods used to count civil servants - headcount and full time equivalent (FTE) - are presented in the Appendices along with a full list of grade levels, summary information on the work locations of NICS staff, occupations, and numbers at each grade level in the various Departments. Information relating to quality is also included.

The report does not include information on absence, pay, or equality. Separate reports on these topics can be found at:-
https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/ni-civil-service-human-resource-statistics/sickness-absence-statistics
https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/ni-civil-service-human-resource-statistics/pay-statistics
https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/ni-civil-service-human-resource-statistics/equality-statistics

3 Number of Staff

All Staff

On 1st April 2017 the headcount for the NICS was 23,440, a decrease of almost 13% from April 2015. The Home Civil Service (HCS) also experienced a decrease during the same period[1], although at just over 3% it was smaller (Figure 1).

The full time equivalent (FTE) number of staff in the NICS at April 2017 was 21,910 and of these 829 were industrial staff.

The FTE number of casual staff has decreased each year from 2015, reaching a low of 90 by April 2017 (Figure 3).

[1]https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2017.

Figure 1: All Staff (Headcount)
Comparing the NICS and UK HCS
Index (April 2015=100; non zero y-axis)

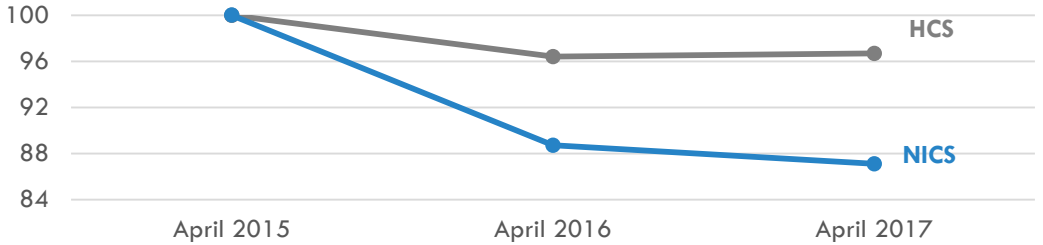

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Figure 2: All Staff (FTE)
NICS at 1st April 2015, 2016 and 2017

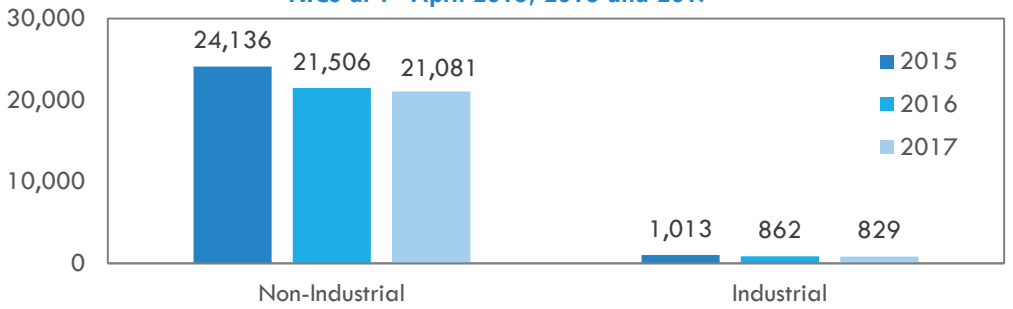

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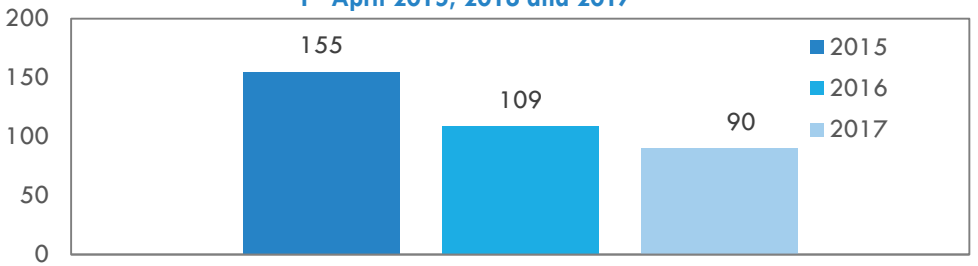
Figure 3: Casual Staff (FTE)
1st April 2015, 2016 and 2017



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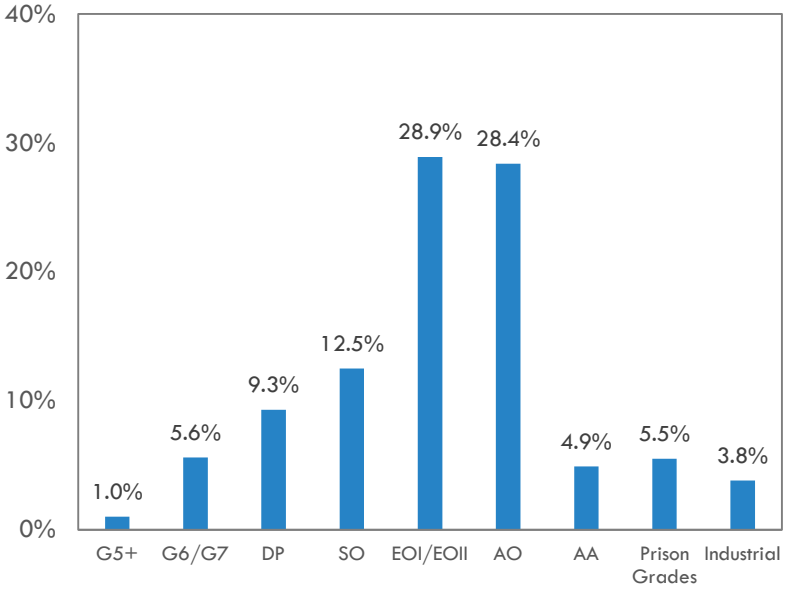
3 Number of Staff

Grade Profile

Almost three out of ten FTE staff were at the Executive Officer (EOI/EOII) grade level; a similar proportion were at Administrative Officer (AO) level.

Figure 4: All Staff (FTE)
Grade Level Distribution
1st April 2017



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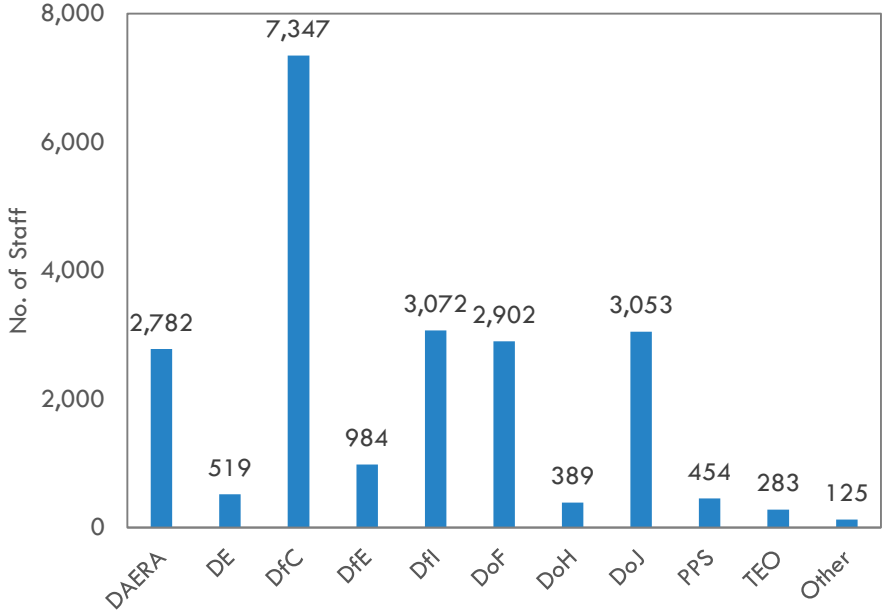
Departmental Composition

In May 2016, restructuring within the NICS saw the number of ministerial departments decrease from twelve to nine. Departments continue to differ markedly in size, ranging from over 7,300 FTE staff (DfC) to fewer than 300 (TEO). Each of the smallest four ministerial departments and the PPS had fewer than 1,000 FTE staff, whereas the largest five all had more than 2,700 FTE staff.

Figure 5: All Staff (FTE)
Departmental Composition
1st April 2017



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4 Part-time Working

Part-Time Working

There has been a slight increase in the proportion of staff working on a part-time basis during the last three years. While the proportion of females working part-time has risen consistently, reaching a high of 37.5% during 2017, that of males decreased slightly during 2016, before increasing to 7.3% in 2017 (Figure 6).

Over 13% of male and almost 17% of female part-time staff had a term time work pattern. Almost 57% of women working on a term time basis worked reduced hours during the rest of the year. The comparative figure for males was 15%.

An analysis by grade was undertaken for female staff only due to the low number of male staff working part-time. It showed that the proportion varied markedly by grade, ranging from approximately 14% at Grade 5 and above to over 44% at the Administrative Officer level.

Figure 6: Proportion of Staff (Headcount) Working Part-Time NICS at 1st April 2015, 2016 and 2017

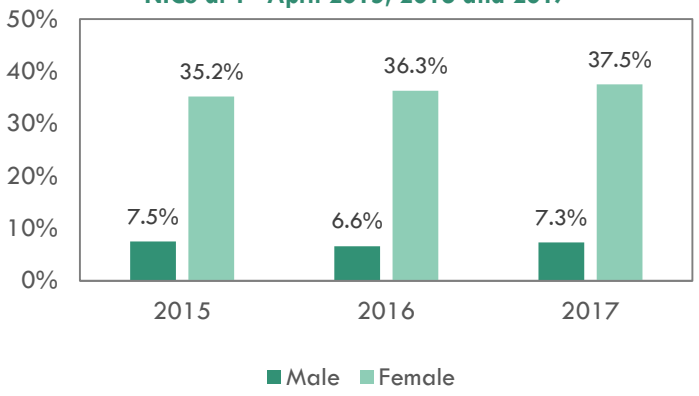

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Figure 7: Types of Part-Time Working Percentage of All Part-Time Staff (Headcount) 1st April 2017

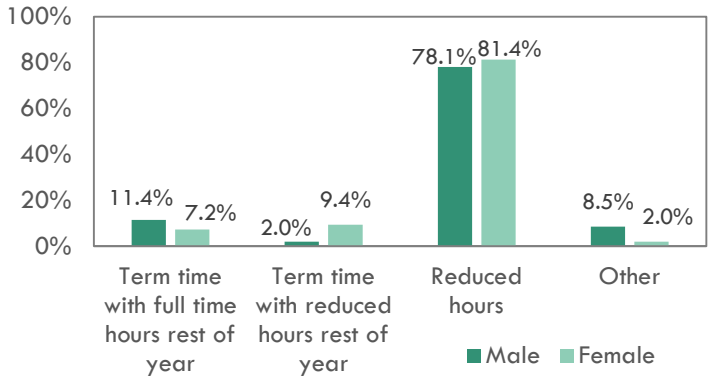

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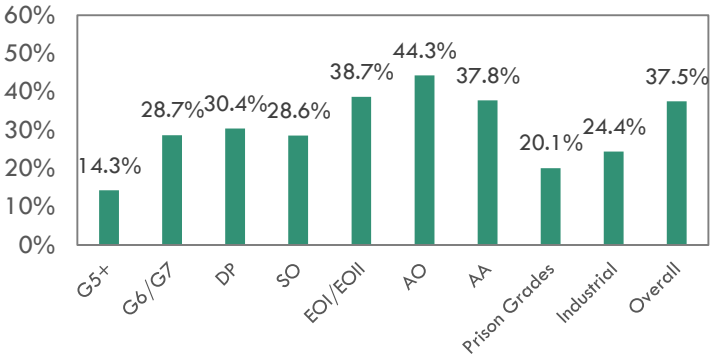
Figure 8: Female Staff (Headcount) Percentage of Part-Time at each Grade Level 1st April 2017



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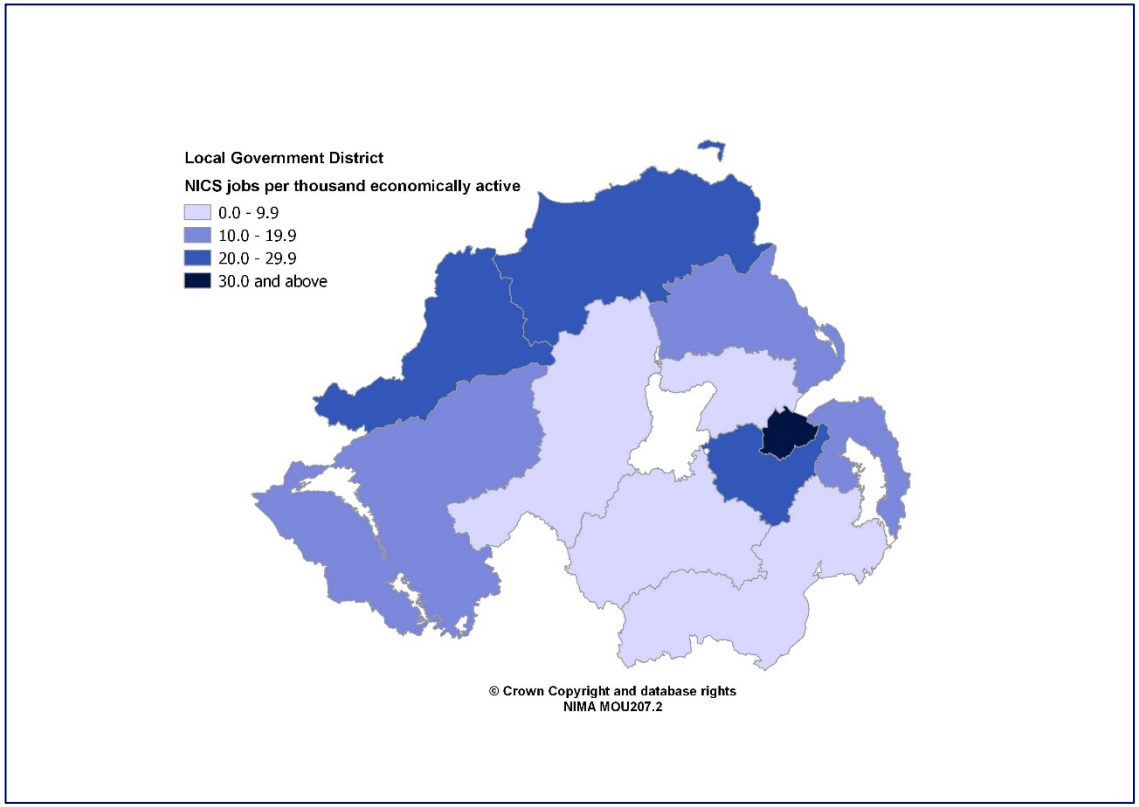
5 Job Location

Location by District Council

The area which had by far the largest number of NICS jobs relative to the economically active population living there was Belfast (79 jobs per thousand economically active people). NICS jobs were next most prevalent in Derry and Strabane (27 jobs per thousand economically active) and Lisburn and Castlereagh (23 jobs per thousand economically active). The areas with the fewest NICS jobs relative to the resident economically active population were Antrim and Newtownabbey (8 jobs per thousand economically active) closely followed by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon and Newry, Mourne and Down (each 9 jobs per thousand economically active).

Figure 9: Number of Staff (Headcount) at 1st April 2017 in each District Council Area per Thousand of the Economically Active Population Living There



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6 Leavers

Reasons for leaving

Ill health, resignations and the voluntary exit scheme each accounted for approximately one in five of all leavers. The leaving rate in 2016/17 was lower than during the previous financial year, when larger numbers left under the voluntary exit scheme. At 3.4% it was also lower than the leaving rate for the Home Civil Service (8.3%).

Figure 10: Reasons for Leaving
All Staff (Headcount) 2016/2017

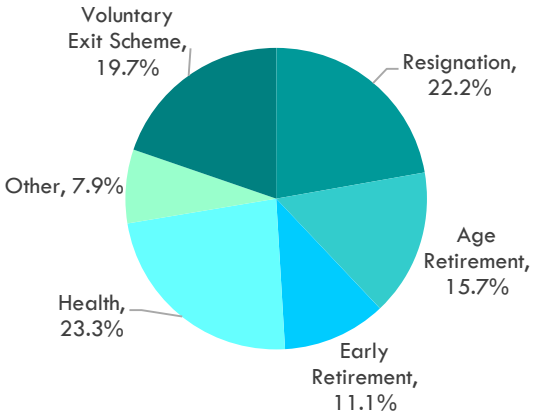

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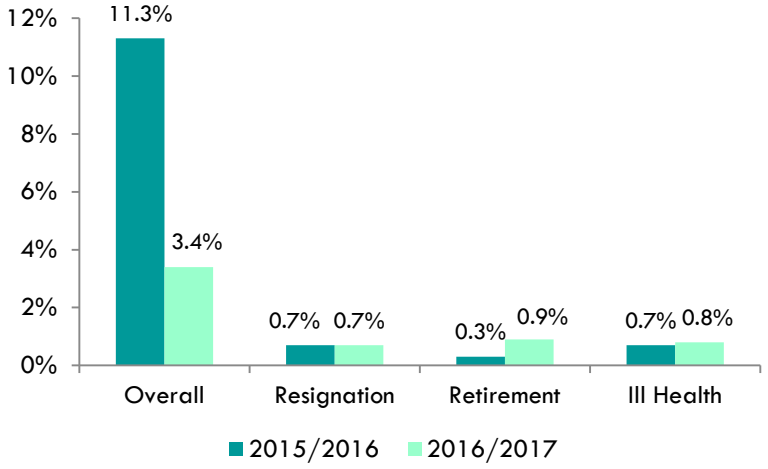
Figure 11: Leaving Rates[1] by Reason for Leaving
All Staff (Headcount)
2015/2016 and 2016/2017



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[1]Leaving rates are calculated by dividing the number of staff who left during the financial year by the number of staff in post at the start of the financial year, then multiplying by 100.

Appendix 1 – Counting Civil Servants

Two methods of counting Civil Servants are used in this report:

Headcount

Each civil servant is counted as one member of staff, regardless of whether he or she works full-time or part-time. This is appropriate, for example, when recording the numbers leaving the service.

Full-time Equivalent (FTE)

Each full-time civil servant is counted as one member of staff and each part-time civil servant is counted as a proportion (based on hours worked) of a full-time member of staff. Thus, for example, someone working 18.5 hours per week counts as 0.5 staff, since a full-time employee works 37 hours per week. This is appropriate, for example, when recording the number of staff required to perform Civil Service functions.

Coherence and Comparability

The headcount figures are identical to those in the 'Employment in the Northern Ireland Civil Service' publication, and are on the same basis as used in 'Equality Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service' and 'Pay Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service'.

Appendix 2 – Analogous Grade Level

Table 1: NICS Grading Structure in Descending Order of Seniority (Excludes Industrial and Prison Grade Staff)

Abbreviation	Analogous grade
G5	Grade 5 (Assistant Secretary)
G6/7	Grade 6 (Senior Principal) and Grade 7 (Principal)
DP	Deputy Principal
SO	Staff Officer
EOI/EOII	Executive Officer I and Executive Officer II
AO	Administrative Officer
AA	Administrative Assistant

Appendix 3 – Number of Civil Servants by Work District Council Area

Table 2: Work Locations of All Staff (Headcount) 1st April 2017

District Council Area	No. of Civil Servants Working in Each District Council Area per Thousand of the Economically Active Population*
Antrim & Newtownabbey	8.4
Ards & North Down	12.3
Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon	9.0
Belfast	79.0
Causeway Coast & Glens	20.8
Derry & Strabane	27.1
Fermanagh & Omagh	19.5
Lisburn & Castlereagh	23.4
Mid & East Antrim	11.5
Mid Ulster	9.9
Newry, Mourne & Down	9.1

[1]Economically Active Population resident in each area, sourced from Labour Force Survey Local Area Database 2016.

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Appendix 4 – Occupations

Table 3: Occupations of Staff (Headcount) 1st April 2017

Occupation[1]	No. of Staff	Occupation[1]	No. of Staff
Agricultural Inspectors (Grade)	281	Legal Grades (Solicitors)	279
Agricultural Inspectors (Group)	340	Mapping and Charting	155
Architects	95	Meat Inspectors	97
Careers Officers	105	Mechanical & Electrical Engineers	104
Civil Engineers	680	Planning Office Staff	48
Computing	570	Prison Grades	1,232
Curatorial Grades	49	Quantity Surveyors	43
DE Inspectorate	52	Scientific Grades	473
Drawing Office Staff	178	Statisticians	255
Economists	68	Support Grades	154
Fisheries	37	Trading Standards	24
Foremen	23	Typists	211
Forestry	42	Valuation	161
General Service	15,702	Vehicle and Driving Examiners	459
Health & Safety Inspectors	55	Veterinary Officers	140
Industrial Grades	843	**ALL[2]**	**23,440**
Information Officers	73		

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[1]Occupations with fewer than 20 staff have not been listed in the table.
[2]Including occupations not listed in the table.

Appendix 5 – Composition of NICS overall

Table 4: Staff (FTE) by Grade Level in Each Department, 1st April 2017

Department	Grade 5 and above	Grade 6/7	DP	SO	EOI/EOII	AO	AA	Industrial	Prison Grades	All Grades
DAERA	24	256	317	615	838	377	160	194	0	2,782
DE	19	88	78	74	121	107	32	0	0	519
DfC	23	138	290	559	2,770	3,136	404	29	0	7,347
DfE	16	71	168	179	346	162	42	0	0	984
DfI	18	118	266	370	696	909	114	581	0	3,072
DoF	41	274	440	507	773	729	127	10	0	2,902
DoH	17	50	92	94	77	40	20	0	0	389
DoJ	18	110	202	259	559	594	90	15	1,206	3,053
PPS	9	56	93	26	76	126	68	0	0	454
TEO	23	41	57	56	59	38	8	0	0	283
Other	5	22	43	9	23	12	11	1	0	125
Total	213	1,224	2,046	2,748	6,338	6,230	1,076	830	1,206	21,910

Totals may not sum because of rounding.

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Appendix 6 – Quality Assessment

This section provides information about the quality of the data used to produce this publication, and any statistics derived from these data.

Dimension	Assessment by the author
Relevance:- *The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.*	Covers a breakdown of NICS staff at 1st April 2017 by analogous grade, department and work pattern. Comparative information has been included from 2015 onwards.
Accuracy:- *The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.*	Coverage of staff is 100%. The main computer system from which the data are extracted is also used to pay staff.
Timeliness and punctuality:- *Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.*	The report relates to 1st April 2017, and is published on 18th October 2017. The gap between the reference date and the publication date is to allow inclusion of comparative HCS data.
Accessibility and clarity:- *Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.*	The report is available on the NISRA website and contains contact details for further information. It contains a description of the staff covered, and definitions of the terms used.

Appendix 6 – Quality Assessment

Dimension	Assessment by the author
Coherence and comparability:- *Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.*	Counts of staff depend on the reference date, whether staff are permanent or casual, whether those on a career break are included, and whether secondees are included. There have been various changes in the scope of the NICS over the past decade as a result of the transfer of functions (and the associated staff) to new bodies outside the NICS, or from outside bodies to the NICS.
Assessment of user needs and perceptions:- *The process for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.*	Key stakeholders, notably NICS HR, regularly communicate their personnel statistics requirements to NISRA. Where specific changes have been suggested, these have been incorporated as far as possible.
Performance, cost and respondent burden:- *The effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output.*	The annual operational cost (staff time) of producing this publication is approximately £2,000. There is no respondent burden, since the data are held on an administrative system.
Confidentiality, transparency and security:- *The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.*	Data are held on a network that is only accessible to the few statisticians who need access. Printouts containing individual records or small cell sizes are locked away, and shredded as soon as possible.