

# Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018

Geographical Area: Northern Ireland

Theme: Labour Market

Frequency: Quarterly

## Key Points

Employee jobs estimates are calculated from the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) aspect of the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS). The QES has a sample size of approximately 5,700 and covers all employers with 25 or more employees, all public sector employers and a representative sample of smaller firms.

- The total number of employee jobs increased over the quarter (5,330 jobs) and over the year (15,090 jobs) to 756,030 in December 2017. Increases were experienced in the manufacturing, construction and services sectors over the year with the services sector accounting for the majority (62%) of the growth.
- Private sector jobs increased over the quarter (0.9% or 4,820 jobs) and year (2.6% or 13,840 jobs) to their highest level (549,340) since records began in 1974.
- Public sector jobs increased over the quarter and over the year. This follows a period of general decline between 2009 and 2016. There are now 21,680 fewer public sector jobs than the series peak in September 2009 (-9.5%).
- Since the start of recovery in 2012 employee jobs have increased by 9.2% (63,940 jobs) with over three quarters of the increase occurring in the services sector.
- There has been five years of growth since the recovery began in 2012. The annualised growth rate of 1.6% between 2016 and 2017 is at a similar level to the growth in employee jobs between 2014 and 2015 but below growth rates seen between 2013 and 2014.

## **The Quarterly Employment Survey Bulletin contains the following chapters:**

### **1. Summary**

- Employee jobs summary
- Infographic summary
- Context

### **2. NI Employee Jobs**

- Seasonally adjusted employee jobs by sector

### **3. Unadjusted and seasonally adjusted series public / private**

- NI public and private sector jobs

### **4. Composition of employee jobs**

- Gender splits
- Full-time/part-time employees

### **5. Notes to editors**

### **6. Index of Tables**

## **National Statistics**

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is a producer's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

# 1 Summary of Employee Jobs

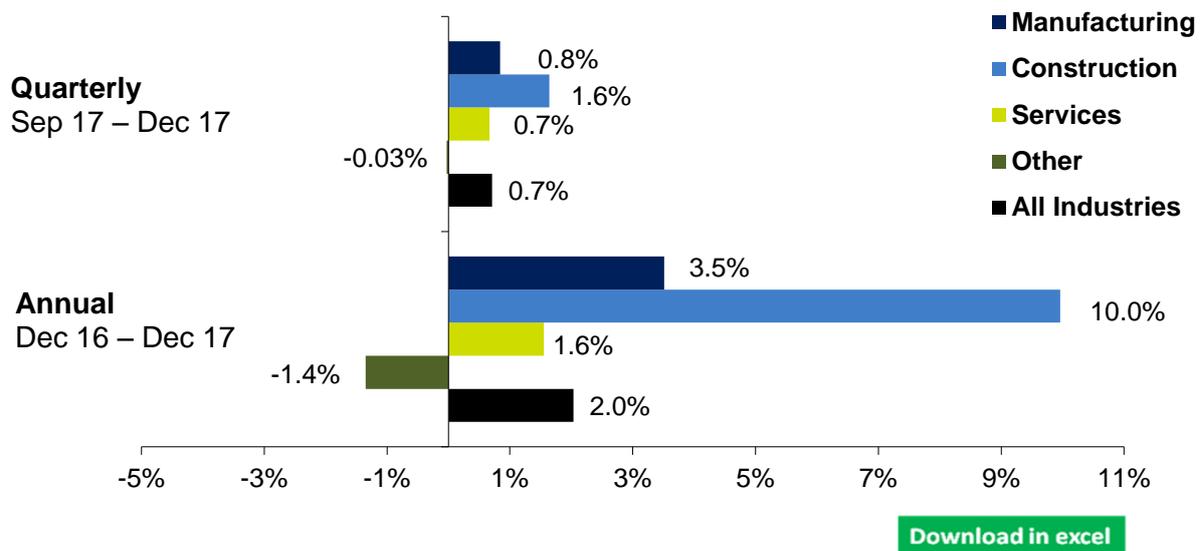
Updated March 2018

## Change in employee jobs

The seasonally adjusted employee jobs estimate for Northern Ireland (NI) at December 2017 was 756,030, this was:

- an increase of 0.7% (5,330 jobs) over the quarter from the September 2017 estimate of 750,710.
- an increase of 2.0% (15,090 jobs) over the year from the revised December 2016 estimate of 740,940.

**Fig 1.1 Annual and Quarterly Changes in Employee Jobs at Section Level**



## Change over the quarter

Comparing seasonally adjusted December 2017 employee jobs to the September 2017 estimates showed:

- an increase in the manufacturing sector by 0.8% (710 jobs) to 84,560 jobs.
- an increase in the construction sector by 1.6% (550 jobs) to 34,220 jobs.
- an increase in the services sector by 0.7% (4,080 jobs) to 615,170 jobs.
- a decrease in the other industries sector by 0.03% (-10 jobs) to 22,080 jobs.

## Change over the year

Comparing seasonally adjusted December 2017 employee jobs to the revised December 2016 estimates showed:

- an increase in the manufacturing sector by 3.5% (2,870 jobs) to 84,560 jobs.
- an increase in the construction sector by 10.0% (3,100 jobs) to 34,220 jobs.
- an increase in the services sector by 1.6% (9,420 jobs) to 615,170 jobs.
- a decrease in the other industries sector by 1.4% (-300 jobs) to 22,080 jobs.

Comparing unadjusted data over the year, estimates show:

- (i) Food and beverage service activities; (ii) specialised construction activities and (iii) employment activities saw the greatest increases over the year accounting for 27.2% of all increases in employee jobs.

- (i) Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles; (ii) wholesale and retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles and (iii) services to buildings and landscape activities saw the greatest decreases over the year accounting for 46.9% of all decreases.
- Despite the decreases in these sections, there was a net increase in employee jobs.

### **Change over the past five years**

The first sign of recovery after the decline in employee jobs was in 2012. Over the period December 2012 to December 2017, the seasonally adjusted employee job figures increased by 8.7% (60,450 jobs).

The increases were seen across all four industry sectors:

- an increase in the manufacturing sector by 15.8% (11,510 jobs).
- an increase in the construction sector by 15.3% (4,540 jobs).
- an increase in the services sector by 7.6% (43,570 jobs).
- an increase in the other industries sector by 4.0% (840 jobs).

Comparing unadjusted data over this five year period, estimates show:

- (i) Residential care activities, (ii) food and beverage service activities, (iii) employment activities accounted for 37.4% of all increases over the five year period.
- (i) Human health activities, (ii) public administration and defence; compulsory social security, and (iii) manufacture of tobacco products accounted for 83.3% of all the decreases over the five year period.
- Despite the decreases in these sections, there was a net increase in employee jobs.

### **Public / private sector changes**

Seasonally adjusted employee jobs estimates for the public and private sector at December 2017 show:

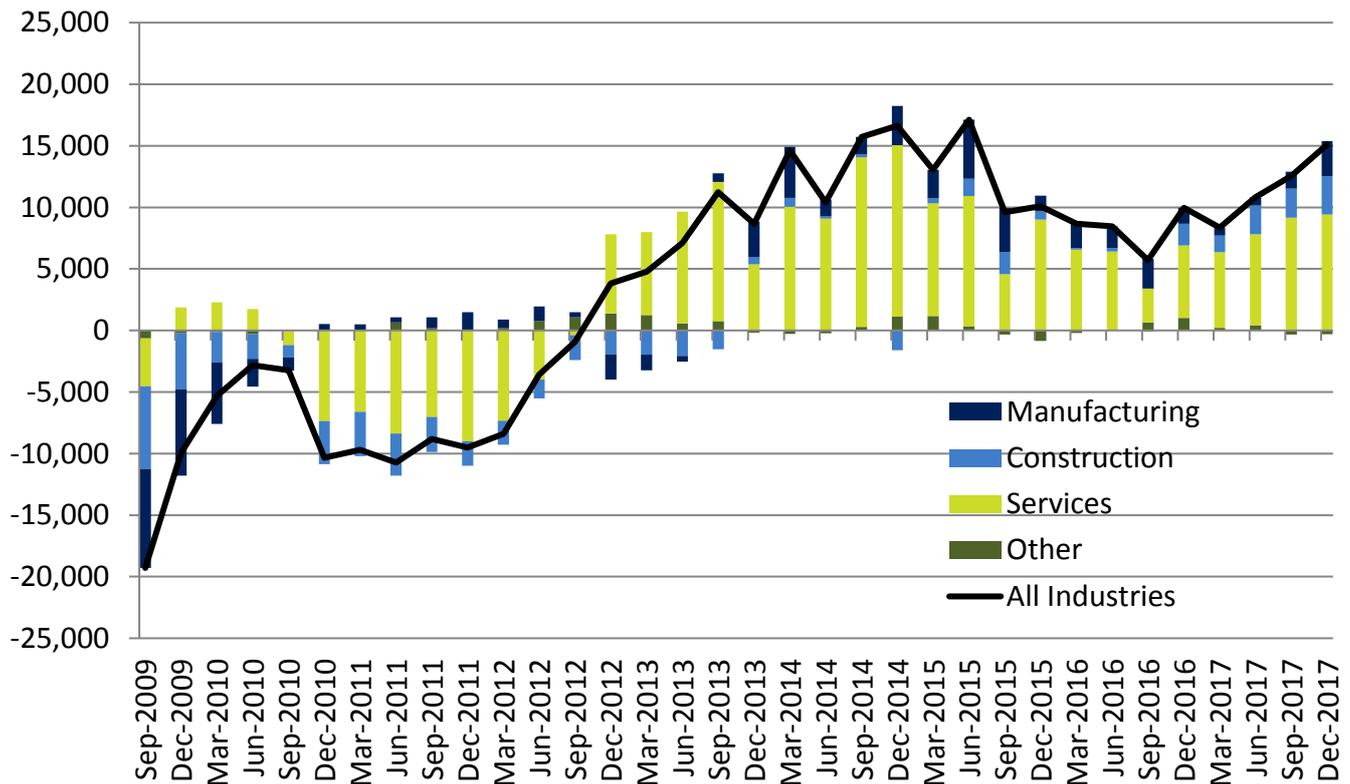
- an increase of 0.4% (740 jobs) in the public sector over the quarter and an increase of 0.3% (670 jobs) over the year to 206,430 jobs.
- an increase of 0.9% (4,820 jobs) in the private sector over the quarter and an increase of 2.6% (13,840 jobs) over the year to 549,340 jobs.

## Commentary

Northern Ireland (NI) employee jobs increased over the quarter and the year to a series high of 756,030 in December 2017. The number of jobs in NI surpassed the pre-downturn peak in June 2016, and has shown quarter on quarter growth since March 2016.

Although increases were seen in the manufacturing, construction and services sectors over the year, the services sector accounted for the majority of the growth (62%). The dominance of services sector growth is consistent with trends since recovery began in 2012.

**Fig 1.2 Annual Change in Employee Jobs in NI, December 2007 – December 2017**



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Private sector jobs continued to grow over the quarter and year and are now 7.1% above the pre-downturn peak. Whilst public sector jobs showed a marginal increase (670 jobs or 0.3%) over the year to December 2017, there are now 21,680 fewer public sector jobs than the series peak in September 2009 (-9.5%).

The number of employee jobs in the United Kingdom (UK) as a whole decreased marginally over the quarter and increased over the year.

### Date of next publication

The next Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey publication is planned for 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Please note from April 2018, Labour Market publications will be published one day earlier than previously announced.

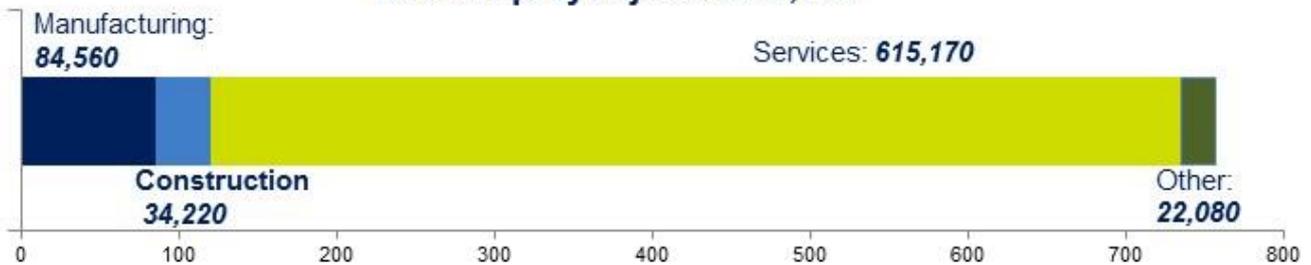
Further information is available on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website:

[Quarterly Employment Survey](#)

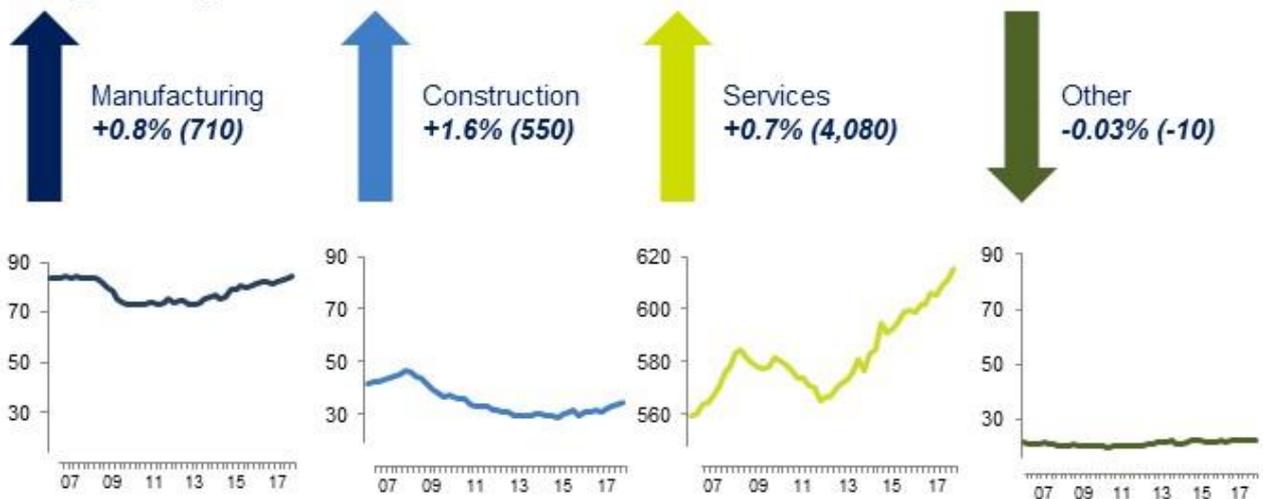
# NISRA Labour Market Statistics

## Quarterly Employment Survey – December 2017

Total employee jobs: 756,030



### Change on quarter



### Change on year



All data seasonally adjusted and subject to future revisions.  
Data published on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018 by Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch (NISRA).

## Infographic summary of the latest QES statistics

### Context

This bulletin presents data from the Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey (QES), which is conducted by the Economic & Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) Branch of the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA).

The QES provides short-term employee jobs estimates for Northern Ireland and covers all public sector bodies, all private sector firms with 25 or more employees and a sample of the remainder. The QES excludes the self-employed, HM Armed Forces, private domestic servants, homeworkers and training for success trainees without a contract of employment (non-employed status). The survey collects information on the number of males/females in full-time and part-time employment by business activity and the results are collated into industry classes using the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC07). The number of jobs are counted rather than the number of persons with jobs. For example, a person holding both a full-time job and part-time job, or someone with two part-time jobs, will be counted twice.

Figures from the QES are included in the Labour Market Report (LMR) alongside figures from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Claimant Count, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) and redundancies data. The current version of the LMR can be found on the ELMS website [LMR](#).

QES employee jobs are also a component of the Office for National Statistics quarterly workforce jobs estimates for the UK. [UK Labour Market Publications](#)

QES employee jobs are included in the [DfE Economic Commentary](#) which provides an overview of the state of the Northern Ireland economy, setting it in context with the UK and Republic of Ireland. The most up-to-date official statistics on the economy and labour market are available on the [Economic Overview section](#) of the website.

### Revisions

Results are provisional and subject to revision as more up-to-date data becomes available (e.g. through late returns). Figures can also change as a result of the seasonal adjustment process, methodological changes or changes to classifications.

**Further information on the revisions can be found on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey Revisions](#)**

**Further information on using QES employee jobs statistics can be found on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)**

### Alternative measures of employment

QES is only one of the measures of employment for Northern Ireland. Other measures include the BRES and the Labour Force Survey (LFS). In addition the Farm Census and the Northern Ireland Civil Service Employee Bulletin provide information on specific sub-groups of employees.

### Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)

The BRES is a statutory business survey based on a larger sample than QES and alternates between sample and census coverage biennially. Quarter 3 of the QES is taken at the same survey date as BRES. Breakdowns of employee jobs by geographical location and industry are available from the BRES.

The BRES and QES cover employee jobs only, excluding the self-employed, HM Armed Forces, private domestic servants, homeworkers and training for success trainees without a contract of employment.

**Further information can be found on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Business Register and Employment Survey](#)**

### **Labour Force Survey (LFS)**

The LFS is a household survey carried out by interviewing individuals about their personal circumstances and work. The LFS defines employment as the number of people in work. This differs from the concept of jobs measured by business surveys as a person can have more than one job, and some jobs may be shared by more than one person. LFS employment figures are based on a rolling three month period whereas QES measures the number of jobs on a particular day. LFS employment figures include those who are employed, self-employed, unpaid family workers and those on Government supported training programmes.

**Further information on using LFS statistics can be found on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [LFS employment](#)**

### **Farm Census**

Figures for the number of employees in agriculture are available separately from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Farm Census. The Census is conducted in June of each year, with the results published in the January of the following year. The QES includes farm census figures in the total number of employee jobs.

Further information on using Farm Census statistics can be found on the NISRA DAERA website: [Farm Census](#)

### **Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Employee Bulletin**

NICS employee jobs figures are included in the QES employee jobs figures and breakdowns can be found in Table 5.12 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website (in the historical data section): [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)

Further information on NICS employee jobs can be found in the NICS Employee Bulletin. This bulletin provides details on NICS staff numbers on a quarterly basis and provides comparisons with the previous quarter, the wider public sector, as well as a comparison with the previous year. The survey dates for the NICS Employee Bulletin differ from the QES survey dates. As such the figures for the NICS employee jobs may differ.

**Further information on employment within the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is available from the NICS Employment bulletin [NICS Employment bulletin](#).**

## 2 NI Employee Jobs

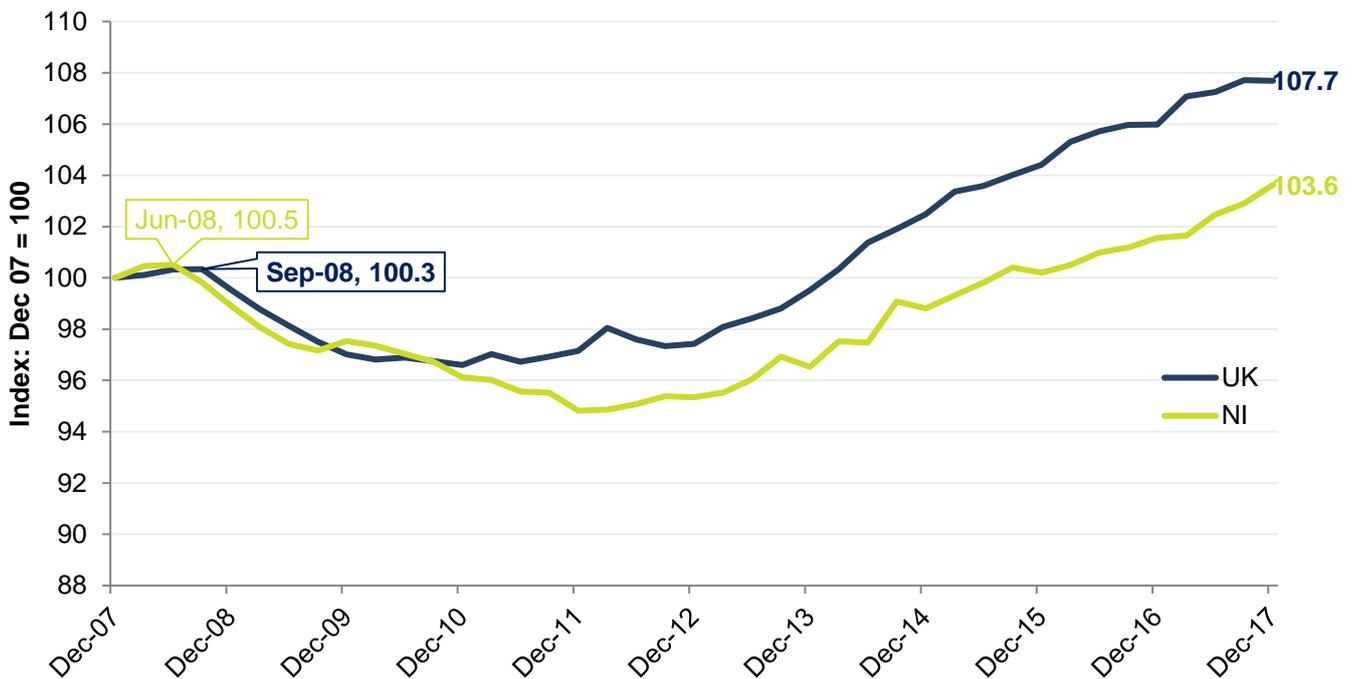
**Employee:** An employee is defined as anyone aged 16 years or over that is directly paid from a business's payroll for carrying out a full-time or part time job or being on a training scheme in Northern Ireland.

Employee jobs counts the number of jobs rather than the number of persons with jobs.

### Key Findings:

- Employee jobs increased over the quarter by 0.7% (5,330 jobs) and over the year by 2.0% (15,090 jobs) to 756,030.

**Figure 2.1: Index of Employee Jobs, December 2007 – December 2017**



Figures are indexed to December 2007

[Download in excel](#)

Figure 2.1 shows the estimated seasonally adjusted employee jobs, indexed to allow comparison between NI and the UK. NI had a peak in June 2008 and the UK in September 2008. The UK reached its lowest point in December 2010, one year before the NI low in December 2011. Both NI and the UK have surpassed their pre-downturn peaks. NI employee jobs have been above the pre-downturn peak (experienced in June 2008) since June 2016.

### Employee Jobs

The December 2017 seasonally adjusted employee jobs total in NI stands at 756,030, which was:

- an increase of 0.7% (5,330 jobs) from the September 2017 estimate of 750,710.
- an increase of 2.0% (15,090 jobs) over the year from the December 2016 estimate of 740,940.

### Employee jobs by broad industry sector

The seasonally adjusted quarterly change consisted of:

- an increase of 0.8% in the manufacturing sector (710 jobs) to 84,560 jobs
- an increase of 1.6% in the construction sector (550 jobs) to 34,220 jobs
- an increase of 0.7% in the services sector (4,080 jobs) to 615,170 jobs
- a decrease of 0.03% in the other industries sector (-10 jobs) to 22,080 jobs.

The seasonally adjusted annual change consisted of:

- an increase of 3.5% in the manufacturing sector (2,870 jobs) to 84,560 jobs
- an increase of 10.0% in the construction sector (3,100 jobs) to 34,220 jobs
- an increase of 1.6% in the services sector (9,420 jobs) to 615,170 jobs
- a decrease of 1.4% in the other industries sector (-300 jobs) to 22,080 jobs.

December 2017 marks 6 years since the employee jobs low in December 2011, and five years since the first annual increase in employee jobs following the downturn. Comparing annualised growth rates for this period shows that growth between 2016 and 2017 (1.6%) was at a similar pace to growth between 2014 and 2015 (1.7%); and below the rate seen between 2013 and 2014 (2.0%).

# Northern Ireland employee jobs annual change by industry Q4 2016 - Q4 2017

## Change by broad industry sector (seasonally adjusted)

### Manufacturing



**+3.5% (2,870 jobs)**  
total jobs 84,560

### Construction



**+10.0% (3,100 jobs)**  
total jobs 34,220

### Services



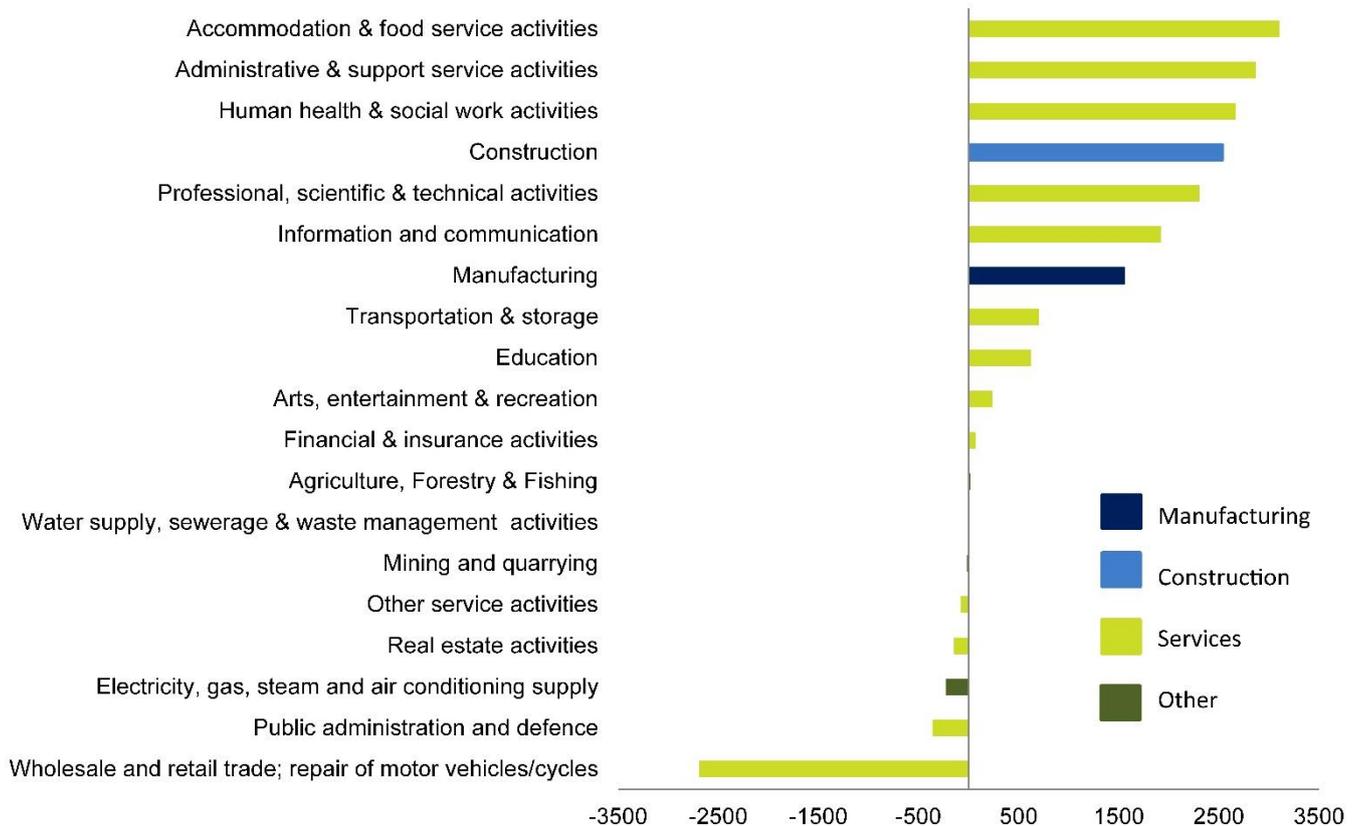
**+1.6% (9,420 jobs)**  
total jobs 615,170

### Other



**-1.4% (-300 jobs)**  
total jobs 22,080

## Change by industry section (seasonally adjusted)



Data published on 21st March 2018 by Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch (NISRA)

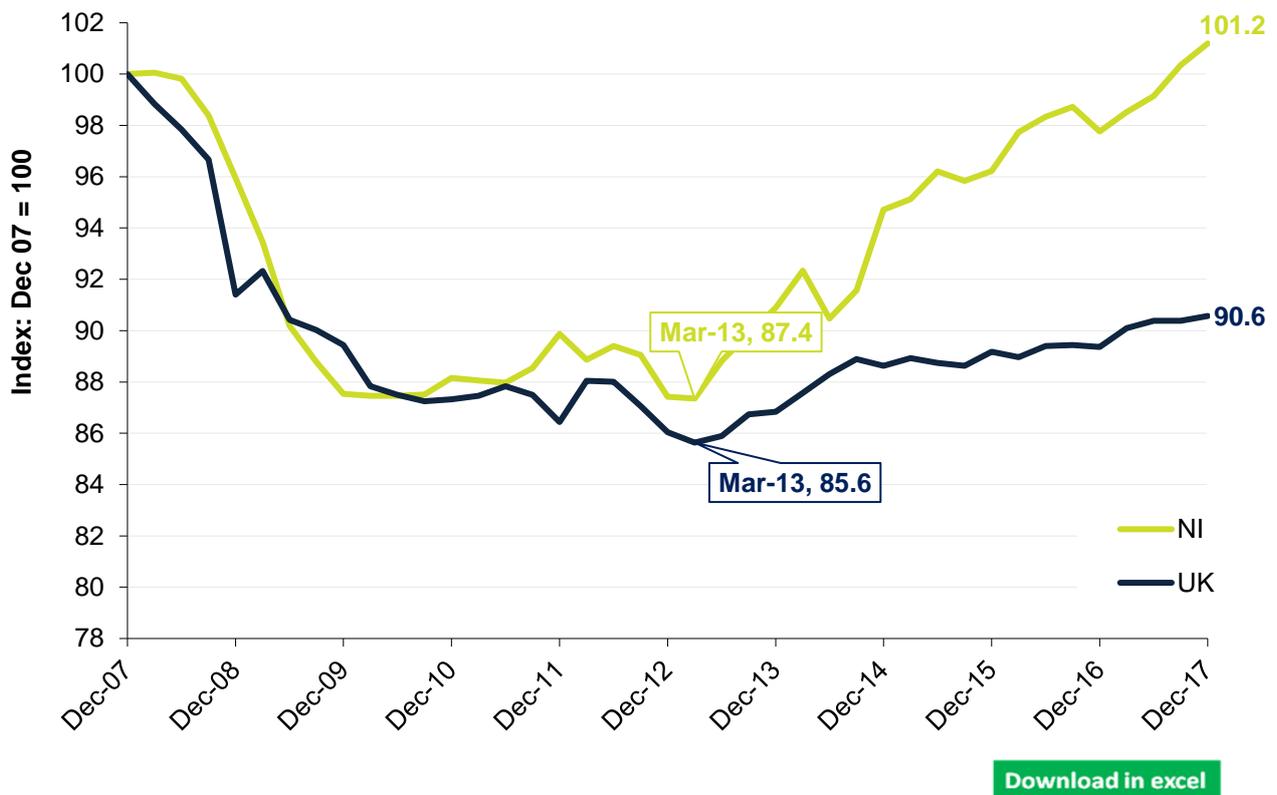
## Manufacturing sector

**Manufacturing sector:** the manufacturing sector contains businesses which produce merchandise for use or sale. It also contains businesses with activity of printing and reproduction of recorded media and businesses that repair and install machinery and equipment.

### Key Findings:

- The manufacturing sector accounted for 11.2% of all employee jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted figures show an increase of 0.8% in the manufacturing sector over the quarter to December 2017 and an increase of 3.5% over the year to 84,560 jobs.

Figure 2.2: Index of manufacturing employee jobs, December 2007 – December 2017



Figures are indexed to December 2007

The manufacturing sector in NI experienced a period of sharp decline between March 2008 and December 2009 whilst the UK showed a sharp decrease in the number of employee jobs in the manufacturing sector from December 2007. Both NI and the UK reached a series low in March.

NI is now 1.2% above the December 2007 level while the UK remains 9.4% lower than in December 2007.

## Key Findings

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the manufacturing sector increased by 0.8% (710 jobs) over the quarter and increased by 3.5% (2,870 jobs) over the year to 84,560 in December 2017.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC manufacturing data that have not been adjusted for seasonality:

### Changes over the year

Over the year to December 2017 the unadjusted figures showed an increase of 3.4% (2,820 jobs) in the manufacturing sector. The 3 largest contributors to this increase were:

- an increase of 12.3% (950 jobs) in the manufacture of fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment
- an increase of 3.5% (670 jobs) in the manufacture of food products
- an increase of 7.4% (450 jobs) in the manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c.

These increases were partially offset by decreases in the manufacturing sector; the 3 largest decreases over the year being:

- a decrease of 5.8% (-180 jobs) in the manufacture of basic pharmaceutical products and pharmaceutical preparations
- a decrease of 14.4% (-140 jobs) in the manufacture of beverages and tobacco products
- a decrease of 0.7% (-50 jobs) in the manufacture of other transport equipment

**For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)**

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 5 – Further Info.

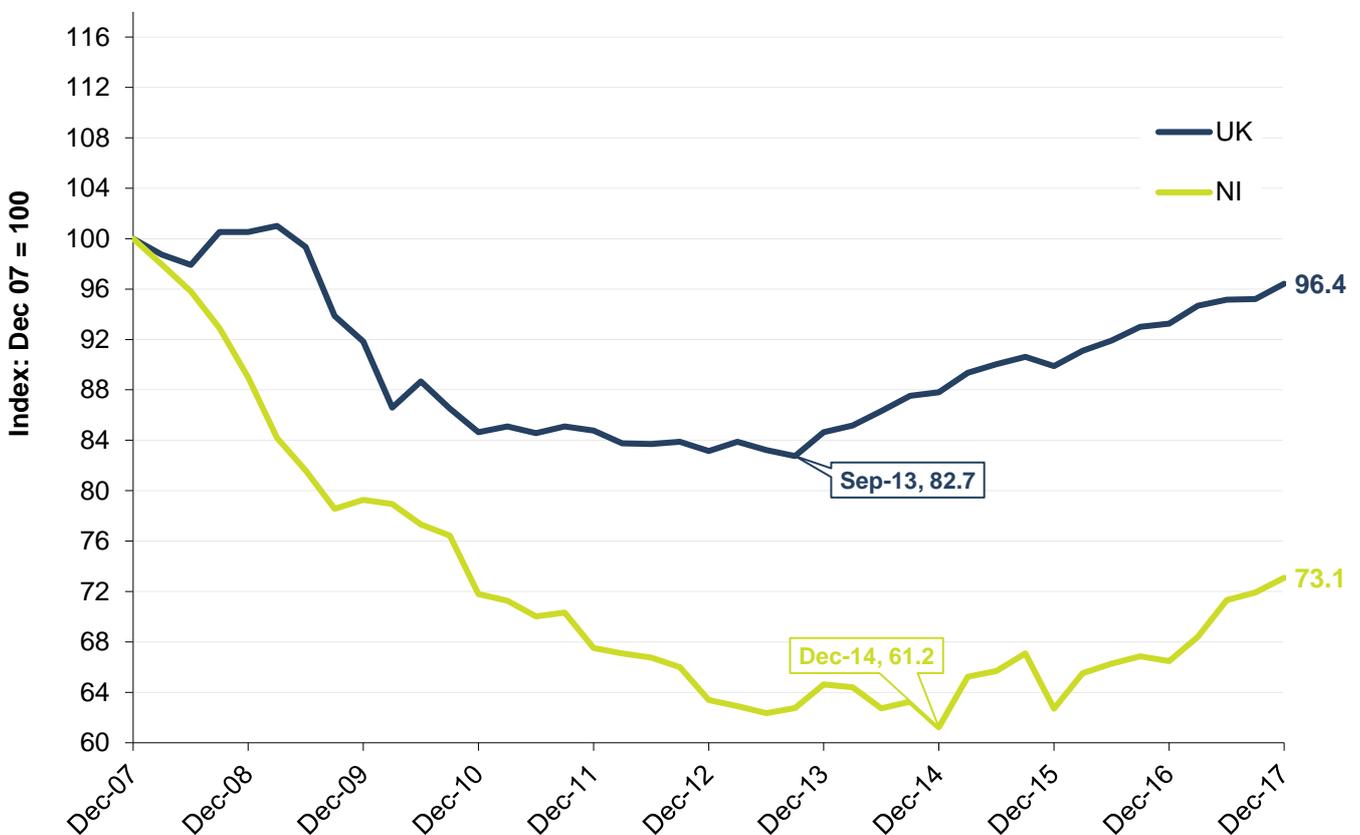
## Construction sector

**Construction sector:** construction is the process of creating and building infrastructure or a facility. It differs from manufacturing in that manufacturing typically involves mass production of similar items without a designated purchaser and construction is typically done on location for a known client. The construction sector consists of businesses with activity in the construction of buildings, civil engineering or specialised construction activities.

### Key Findings:

- The construction sector made up 4.5% of the total employee jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted figures showed an increase of 1.6% over the quarter to December 2017 and an increase of 10.0% over the year to 34,220 jobs.

Figure 2.3: Index of construction employee jobs, December 2007 – December 2017



Figures are indexed to December 2007

[Download in excel](#)

The number of employee jobs in the construction sector in NI reached a low in December 2014 (28,660 jobs). Most recent estimates show a 19% improvement on this level; however the number of employee jobs in the construction sector is currently 26.9% lower than the series peak in December 2007.

## **Key Findings**

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the construction sector increased by 1.6% (550 jobs) over the quarter and increased by 10.0% (3,100 jobs) over the year to 34,220.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC construction data that have not been adjusted for seasonality:

## **Changes over the year**

Over the year to December 2017 the unadjusted figures showed an increase of 10.0% (3,100 jobs) in the construction sector.

The following changes occurred over the year:

- an increase of 14.7% (1,120 jobs) in civil engineering
- an increase of 12.8% (2,060 jobs) in specialised construction activities
- a decrease of 1.1% (-80 jobs) in construction of buildings

**For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)**

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 5 – Further Info.

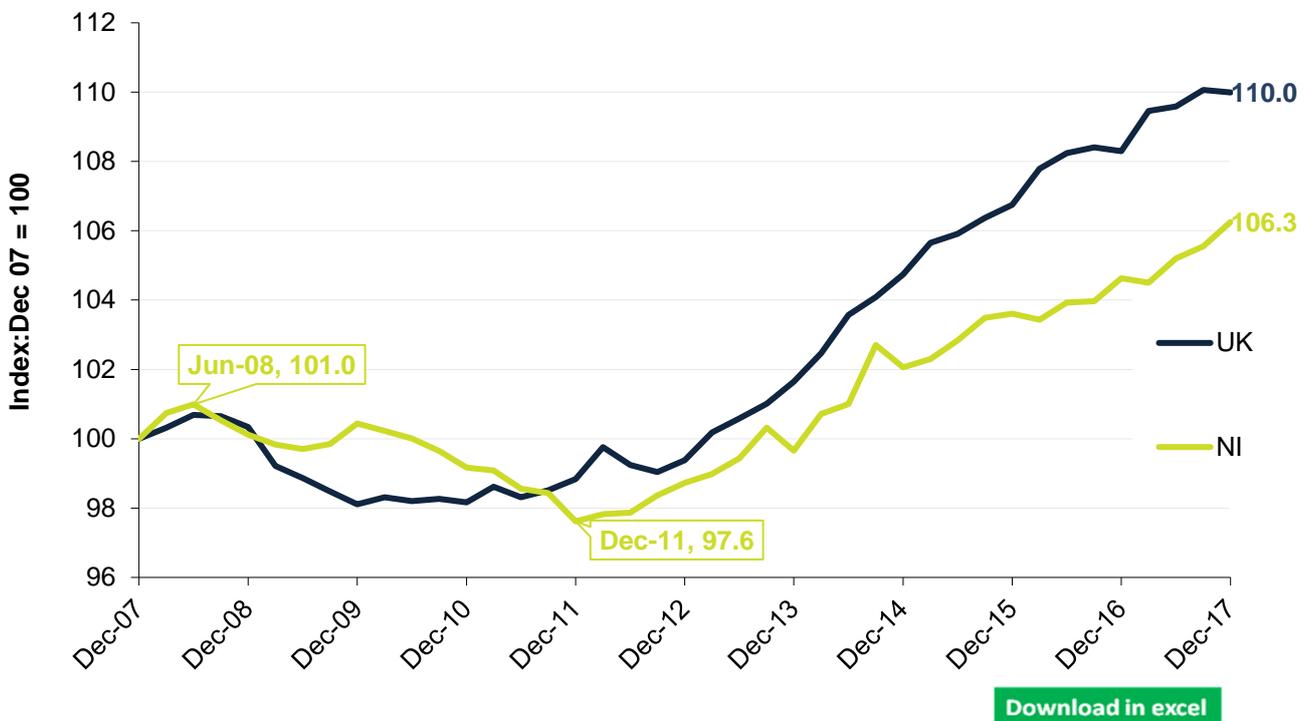
## Services sector

The services sector contains businesses which sell services and skills; and includes education, public administration and health and social work activities. A full list of the industry sections G-S which are included in the services sector can be found in table 5.5 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)

### Key Findings:

- The services sector accounted for 81.4% of all employee jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted figures showed an increase of 0.7% over the quarter to December 2017 and an increase of 1.6% over the year to 615,170 service sector jobs.
- The services sector accounted for the majority (62.4%) of growth over the year and has been driving the recovery since the series low in employee jobs in December 2011.

Figure 2.4: Index of services employee jobs, December 2007 – December 2017



Figures are indexed to December 2007

Over the last 10 years the services sector in both NI and the UK increased overall, with NI recording a peak level in employee jobs in the most recent quarter. The number of employee jobs in the NI services sector increased by 36,210 over the 10 year period.

When considering the pre-downturn period, employee jobs in the services sector reached a peak in June 2008; declining to a series low in December 2011. The decline of 2.4% during this period is notably smaller than the declines experienced in the manufacturing or construction sectors during the downturn.

## Key Findings

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the services sector increased by 0.7% (4,080 jobs) over the quarter and by 1.6% (9,420 jobs) over the year to 615,170 in December 2017.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC services data that have not been adjusted for seasonality:

### Changes over the year

Over the year to December 2017 the unadjusted figures reported an increase of 1.6% (9,520 jobs) in the services sector. The 3 largest contributors to this increase over the year were:

- an increase of 6.2% (2,470 jobs) in food and beverage service activities.
- an increase of 6% (1,280 jobs) in employment activities.
- an increase of 12.0% (1,220 jobs) in office administrative, office support and other business support activities.

These increases were partially offset by decreases in the services sector, the 3 largest decreases over the year being:

- a decrease of 1.6% (-1,500 jobs) in retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles.
- a decrease of 6.1% (-840 jobs) in wholesale trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles.
- a decrease of 3.9% (-580 jobs) in services to buildings and landscape activities.

**For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)**

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 5 – Further Info.

## Other industries sector

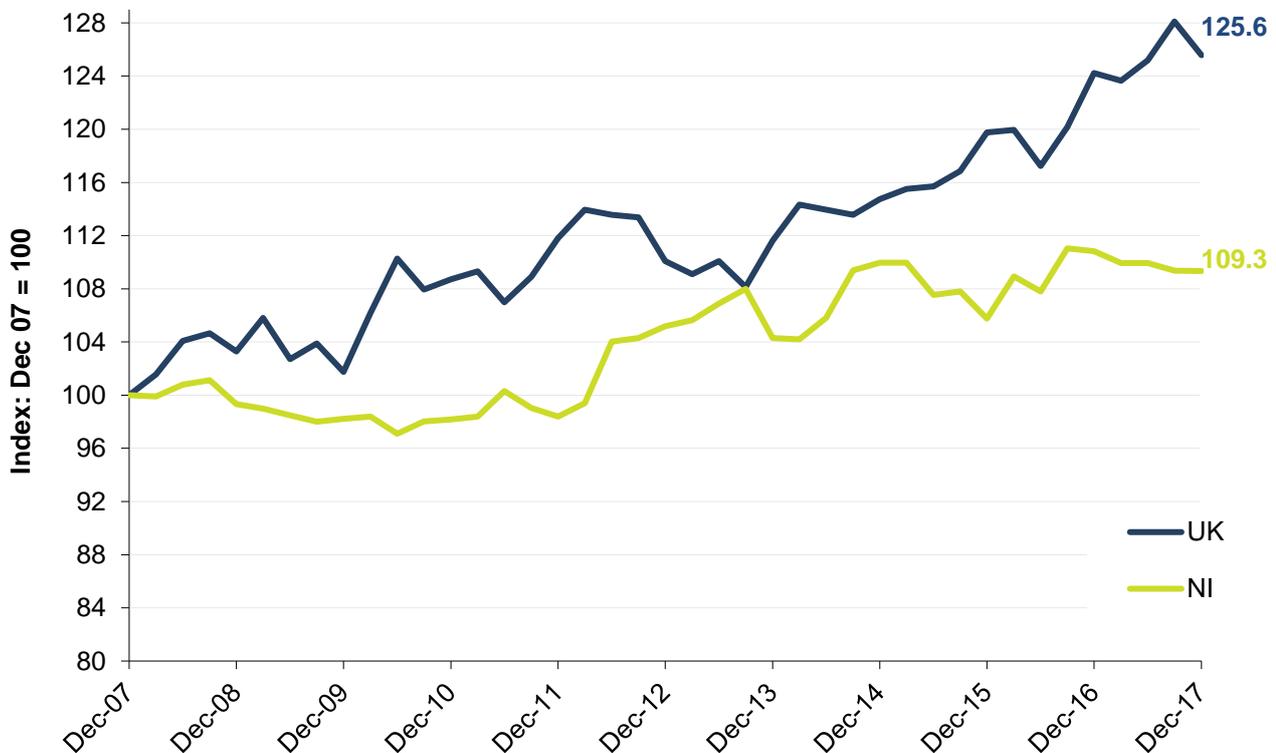
**Other industries sector:** the other industries sector contains businesses with activity in agriculture, forestry and fishing, mining and quarrying, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply and water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (industry sections A,B,D and E).

Estimates from the annual Farm Census are included in industry section A (accounting for 91% of the employee jobs in the section). The Farm Census figures are updated annually.

### Key Findings:

- The other industries sector made up 2.9% of all employee jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted figures showed a decrease of 0.03% in the other industries sector over the quarter to December 2017 and a decrease of 1.4% over the year to 22,080 jobs.

Figure 2.5: Index of other industries sector jobs, December 2007 - December 2017



Figures are indexed to December 2007

[Download in excel](#)

Over the last 10 years the other industries sector in NI and the UK increased overall with NI reaching its peak in September 2016 and the UK reaching its peak in September 2017. The number of employee jobs in the NI other industries sector increased by 1,880 over the 10 year period to December 2017.

## Key Findings

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the other industries sector decreased by 0.03% (-10 jobs) over the quarter and decreased by 1.4% (-300 jobs) over the year to 22,080 jobs.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC other industries data that have not been adjusted for seasonality:

### Changes over the year

Over the year to December 2017 the unadjusted figures showed a decrease of 1.4% (-320 jobs) in the other industries sector. The 3 largest contributors to this decrease over the year were:

- a decrease of 17.2% (-370 jobs) in electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- a decrease of 0.4% (-50 jobs) in crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities
- a decrease of 21.7% (-20 jobs) in mining support service activities

These decreases were partially offset by increases in the services sector, the 3 largest increases over the year being:

- an increase of 23.2% (50 jobs) in forestry and logging
- an increase of 0.8% (40 jobs) in waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery
- an increase of 2.9% (30 jobs) in water collection, treatment and supply.

**For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)**

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 5 – Further Info.

### 3 Public / private sector employee jobs

**Public sector:** The NI public sector can be broken down into five areas:

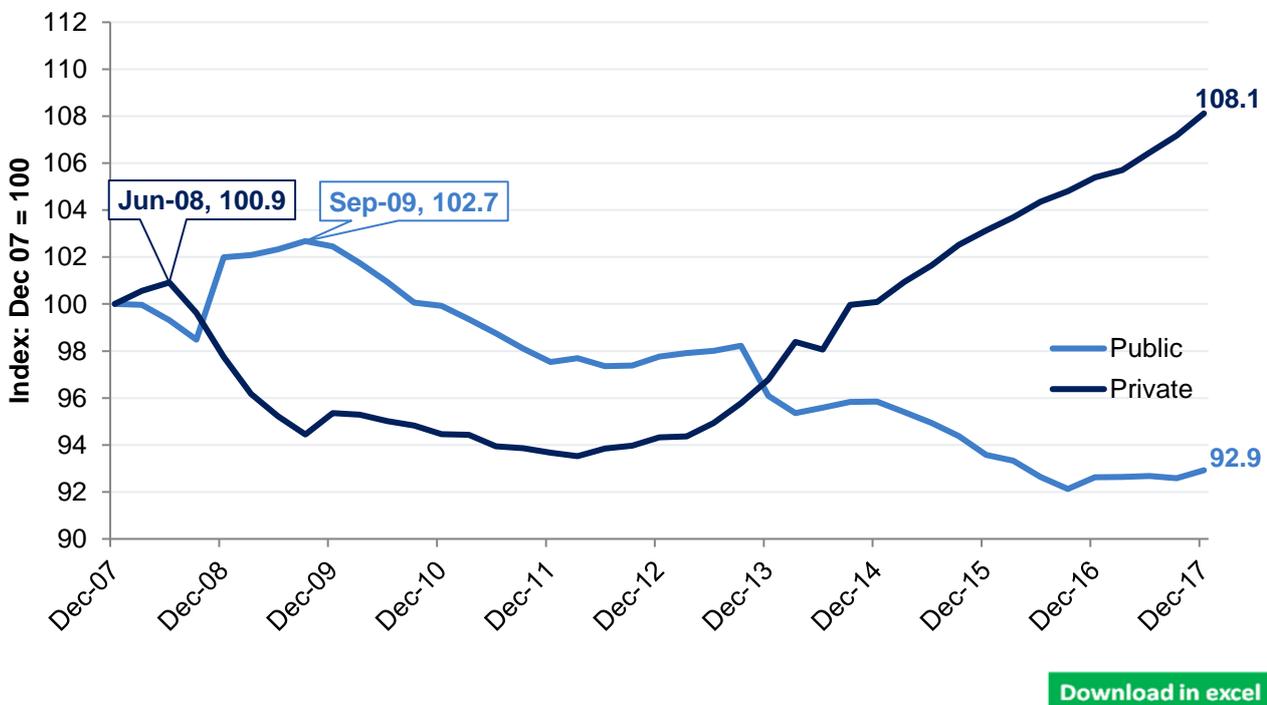
- NI central government
- Bodies under aegis of NI central government
- UK central government employees based in Northern Ireland
- Local government
- Public corporations

**Private sector:** The private sector encompasses all for-profit businesses (that are not owned or operated by the government) and the voluntary sector; which includes charities and other non-profit organisations.

**Key findings:**

- The NI public sector made up 27.1% and the private sector made up 72.9% of all employee jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted employee jobs in the public sector increased over the quarter and increased over the year to 206,430 jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted employee jobs in the private sector increased over the quarter and increased over the year to 549,340 jobs.
- NI Public sector jobs as a proportion of the NI population was 11%. This compares to 8% in the UK (at June 2016 – latest population estimates available).

**Figure 3.1: Index of NI Private and Public Sector Jobs, December 2007 – December 2017**



Figures are indexed to December 2007

**Note:**

<sup>1</sup> Royal Mail plc is included in the public sector for September 2013 and earlier periods, but not for subsequent periods.  
<sup>2</sup> Lloyds Banking Group and its subsidiaries are included in public sector estimates from December 2008 to December 2013 but not in earlier or subsequent periods.  
<sup>3</sup> All registered housing associations in Northern Ireland have been reclassified to public sector from Q3 1992 onwards, more detail on the decision to reclassify can be found on the [ONS website](#).

The latest seasonally adjusted employee jobs figures estimate that there are:

- 206,430 employees in the NI public sector.
- 549,340 employees in the NI private sector.

#### **Changes over the quarter**

The latest seasonally adjusted figures represented:

- an increase of 0.4% (740 jobs) in the public sector.
- an increase of 0.9% (4,820 jobs) in the private sector.

#### **Changes over the year**

The latest seasonally adjusted figures represented:

- an increase of 0.3% (670 jobs) in the public sector.
- an increase of 2.6% (13,840 jobs) in the private sector.

## 4 Composition of employee jobs

Data in this section have not been adjusted for seasonality.

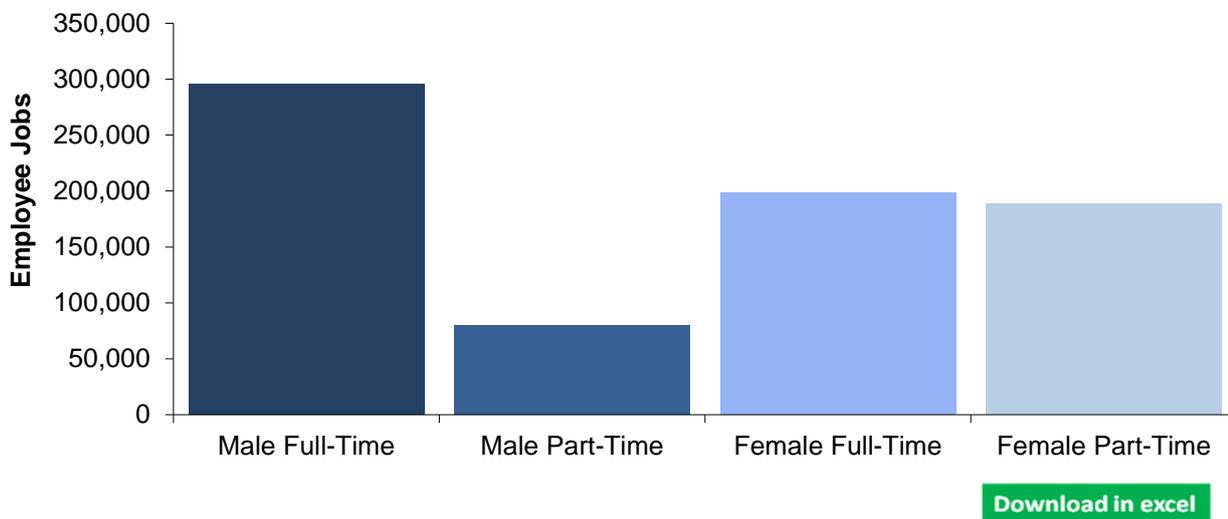
**Part-time:** Part-time means those who normally work 30 hours a week or less.

**Full-time:** Full-time means those who normally work more than 30 hours a week.

### Key Findings

- Over half of employee jobs in NI were occupied by females.
- A higher proportion of female employees worked part-time than male employees.
- An increase in full-time jobs over the quarter and year.
- An increase in part-time jobs over the quarter and year.

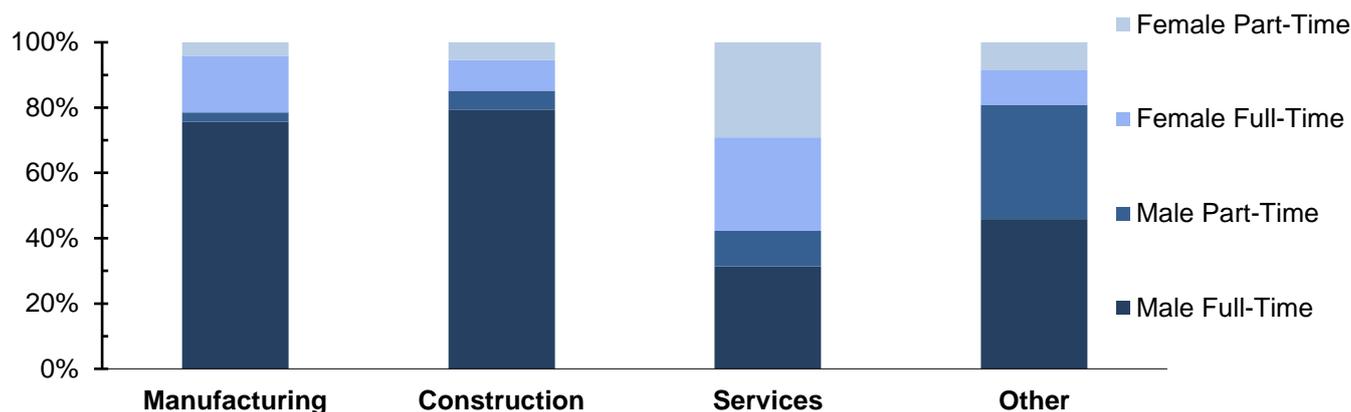
**Fig 4.1: Composition of Employee Jobs, December 2017**



Estimates show there were 761,840 employee jobs in NI at December 2017. Of these:

- 50.7% of employee jobs were occupied by a female and 49.3% were occupied by a male.
- Just under half (48.7%) of female employee jobs were part-time.
- 78.8% of male employees worked on a full-time basis.

**Fig 4.2: Employee jobs composition in broad industry sectors, December 2017**



[Download in excel](#)

The latest estimates showed that:

- A large proportion of employee jobs in the construction (79.4%) and manufacturing (75.6%) sectors were occupied by male full-time employees.
- Females occupied 57.8% of the 620,770 employee jobs within the services sector.
- The composition of female jobs in the services sector is divided fairly evenly between full-time (49.6%) and part-time (50.4%) workers.

### Changes over the year

The following changes occurred over the year:

- an increase of 12,840 full-time jobs and an increase of 2,280 part-time jobs.
- full-time employee jobs accounted for 92.6% of the increase in the manufacturing sector over the year.
- full-time employee jobs increased by 3,400 jobs in the construction sector whilst part-time jobs decreased by 300 jobs over the year.
- full-time jobs accounted for 75.4% of the increase of 9,520 jobs in the services sector over the year.
- full-time employee jobs in the other industries sector decreased by 340 jobs and part-time jobs increased by 30 jobs over the year.

Further information is available on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website: [Quarterly Employment Survey](#)

## 5 Further Information

### Background

Estimates of the number of employee jobs are obtained from the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS). Until March 2016, employee job data was collected in the voluntary QES. From March 2016 onwards the QES, Index of Services (IOS) and Index of Production (IOP) amalgamated into the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS). The QBS is a statutory survey collected under the Statistics of Trade and Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 1988. The QES, IOS and IOP are sampled independently and there is an overlap between QES and IOS/IOP of approximately 2,000 businesses. The change in the collection method has not impacted on the employee jobs methodology.

The QES element of the QBS covers all public sector bodies, all private sector firms with 25 or more employees and a sample of the remainder. The sample is drawn from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR). The QBS collects employee data split by gender and working pattern. The sample size is such that estimates of total employee jobs should be accurate to within +/- 1% of the [Business Register and Employment Survey](#) total. The survey collects information on numbers of persons in full-time and part-time employment. It should be noted that the survey counts the number of jobs rather than the number of persons with jobs. For example, a person holding both a full-time job and a part-time job, or someone with two part-time jobs, will be counted twice.

Employment results are collated into industry classes using the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC07). As a result, there is no breach of confidentiality.

### Revisions Policy

It is normal practice for QES estimates to be revised. Benchmarking to BRES was carried out in December 2016 and so all quarters prior to and including Q3 2015 are now fixed. Subsequent quarters (Q4 2015 onwards) are provisional and subject to revision in light of (a) late responses to surveys and administrative sources, (b) where cross survey congruence checks provide more accurate data and (c) there are revisions to seasonal adjustment factors which are re-estimated every quarter. A common pitfall in interpreting series is that expectations of accuracy and reliability in early estimates are often too high. Revisions are an inevitable consequence of the trade-off between timeliness and accuracy. Early estimates are based on incomplete data.

Very few statistical revisions arise as a result of 'errors' in the popular sense of the word. All estimates, by definition, are subject to statistical 'error' but in this context the word refers to the uncertainty inherent in any process or calculation that uses sampling, estimation or modelling. Most revisions reflect either the adoption of new statistical techniques, or the incorporation of new information, which allows the statistical error of previous statements to be reduced. Only rarely are there avoidable 'errors' such as human or system failures, and such mistakes are made quite clear when they do occur.

QES estimates are revised quarterly to reflect the latest information provided to the Department by employers. The September 2017 seasonally adjusted estimate first published in December 2017 has subsequently been revised down (-0.2%).

Additional revisions to the period December 2015 to September 2017 have been carried out due to the way in which IDBR classify new businesses. If a business does not specify a SIC code it is assigned to SIC 74 or 82, under the assumption it will be correct during proving. This was causing increases in these SIC codes. As a result, the decision was made to remove unproven businesses in SIC codes 74 and 82 from the population for grossing purposes for the period for which revisions apply (December 2015 until December 2017 – subsequent time periods are fixed and cannot be amended). QES uses the frozen

variables on IDBR for sampling and assigning business activity. These variables are updated in January of each year and remain fixed for the remainder of the year.

So another action taken was to take businesses which have been proved and subsequently had a SIC code change were assigned to this new SIC code at the point in time in which it was updated on the IDBR which usually wouldn't come into effect until the January of the next year when frozen variables are updated.

For further details of QES revisions please see link below:

[QES Revisions](#)

### **Annualised or Rolling 4 Quarters**

Annualised growth or rolling 4 quarters figures are calculated by taking the average over the most recent 4 quarters and subtracting the average over the same 4 quarters of the previous year. For example annualised growth of 1.6% for Q4 2017 is the average of jobs figures from Q1 2017 to Q4 2017 minus the average of jobs figures from Q1 2016 to Q4 2016 divided by the average of jobs figures from Q1 2016 to Q4 2016. This measure allows for comparison in growth to previous years and is useful in determining trends in the data.

### **Coverage**

The quarterly survey covers all industrial sections apart from agriculture. Overall employment (i.e. employees and the self-employed) estimates for the agricultural sector are provided, on an annual basis (figures for June are provided in the January of the following year), from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Farm Census. Self-employed agriculture workers are defined as including full-time farmers and partners on all agricultural businesses. Agriculture employees include all workers on agricultural businesses other than (a) part-time farmers and partners and (b) farmers' spouses. They include full-time, part-time and casual workers, both paid and unpaid. Only the numbers of employees from the Farm Census are included in the QES estimates.

Further information is available on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics website:

[Quarterly Employment Survey](#)

### **Public Sector**

Public sector jobs comprise Central Government (including Bodies under the aegis of Central Government), Local Government and Public Corporations. An announcement in April 1993 transferred National Health Service Trusts from 'Bodies under the aegis of Central Government' to 'Public Corporations'. A subsequent announcement by the Public Sector Classification Committee (PSCC) in July 2003 stated that all NHS Trusts should retrospectively be reclassified to Central Government. In addition, following advice from PSCC, Northern Ireland Housing Executive employees were reclassified from SIC 75 to SIC 70 in December 2006. This change applies to each quarter from Quarter 1 2004 onwards. From 1st April 2007, The Water Service became a Government owned company known as "Northern Ireland Water". As a result its employees have been transferred from "NI Central Government" to "Bodies under the Aegis of NI Central Government". In October 2013 the PSCC announced that Royal Mail plc had been reclassified to the private sector. It is therefore included in the public sector for September 2013 and earlier periods, but not for subsequent periods. In December 2013 a further announcement by the PSCC reclassified Lloyds Banking Group and its subsidiaries to the private sector. They are therefore included in public sector estimates from December 2008 to December 2013 but not in earlier or subsequent periods. A further announcement transferred all of the register housing associations in Northern Ireland to the public sector from September 1992 onwards, taking effect from the September 2017 publication which was released on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

### **Seasonal Adjustment**

A seasonally adjusted employment series provides a better indication of underlying trends in employment. Figures by section are shown in the tables on the website ([Quarterly Employment](#))

[Survey](#)) and a time series of main industrial sector from 2005 onwards are also shown in the tables on the website. Section and main industrial sector are seasonally adjusted where seasonality exists. At the latest review of our seasonal adjustment process, it was found that there was no seasonality in sections A, F, J, K, L, S, T or U.

### **Business Register and Employment Survey**

Information on employee jobs at a sub Northern Ireland level (e.g. District Council Area (DCA), Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA), Ward Level) and at the 5-digit SIC07 level are available from the Northern Ireland Business Register and Employment Survey. Details of the Business Register and Employment Survey results are available from NISRA ELMS Tel: (028) 9052 9474 or on the ELMS website [Business Register and Employment Survey](#)

### **Discontinuity**

Users of QES data should be aware that the sample coverage used to derive employee jobs estimates in NI was extended in 2009. This change was introduced to provide more comprehensive estimates of employee jobs and also to ensure a consistency of methodology between the 3 main sources of this information namely the NI QES, the NI Census of Employment and the new NI BRES. The extension in sample coverage has resulted in a discontinuity in the employee jobs series from the reference period Q3 2009 onwards. A more detailed note on these changes and their impact are available at the following link: [Discontinuity](#)

### **Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data**

Please note it is likely that the introduction of sample rotation from March 2014 has contributed to the volatility of the series. To counteract these effects from March 2016 the number of businesses selected in Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) and size bands experiencing the greatest impact of rotation has increased.

Volatility also arises when businesses inform NISRA of SIC code changes via business surveys, ONS and HMRC. This new information helps to improve the industry estimates of employee jobs each quarter but also adds volatility to quarterly and annual changes, particularly at 2 digit SIC level. It is therefore recommended that changes in employee jobs estimates at 2 digit SIC level are considered in the context of a longer time series. The refresh to the IDBR variables as mentioned in the revisions section (source BRES) also effects the SIC code businesses are classified into. For more detail please see information document on the [Revisions](#) web page.

### **Further Information**

For further information on the methodology of the QES, please see link below to the background notes and methodology guide.

### **[Background Information](#)**

Further breakdowns of employee jobs by geography and industry are available from the BRES:

### **[Annual Employee Jobs Surveys](#)**

**AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT WITH ASSOCIATED HYPERLINKS IS AVAILABLE ON THE [NISRA – ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET STATISTICS WEBSITE](#)**

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