



Northern Ireland
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Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann
um Staitisticí agus Taighde

Cost to Business of Completing Statistical Surveys issued by Northern Ireland Departments, 2019/20

Statistics Bulletin

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Summary of Key Findings

- In 2019/20, the estimated cost to businesses in Northern Ireland (NI) of complying with Government Statistical Surveys was just over £0.89 million. This represents a decrease of £112,500 (11%) from 2018/19.
- In total, 69% of the overall compliance burden (£615,100) can be attributed to surveys carried out by Economic and Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) Branch, in the Department of Finance, which also includes Office for National Statistics (ONS) surveys of businesses in Northern Ireland used to produce UK economic statistics.
- A total of 89% of the overall compliance burden was attributable to statutory surveys. These surveys accounted for 39% of the total number of surveys carried out.
- 66 of the 125 surveys (53%) were used to produce official statistics. These surveys accounted for 94% of the total compliance cost.
- Over two fifths (43%) of surveys used online/email as their primary method of data collection, with almost a third (32%) of all surveys being solely online/email, and over three fifths (61%) of surveys offering an online or email option.
- The number of surveys using online/email as their primary method of data collection has increased from just under a quarter in 2016/17 (24%) to over two fifths (43%) in 2019/20.

Content:

1. Introduction
2. Compliance Cost to Business
3. Data Collection Methods
4. Change in Data Collection Methods
5. Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes
6. Uses of Surveys
7. Changes to Surveys Issued by Departments
8. Examination of Trend
9. Measures to Reduce Compliance Cost

Appendices:

- A. Methodology, Quality, Use of Publication
- B. Uses of Surveys – EU Exit Analysis
- C. List of PfG Outcomes
- D. Departmental Abbreviations
- E. Further Information

Background

The [Code of Practice for Statistics](#)¹ has a statutory basis² and recognises the importance of monitoring and reducing respondent burden, balanced with the need to produce official statistics that are fundamental to good government and provide a good evidence base to inform public policy³.

V5.5 Statistics producers should be transparent in their approach to monitoring and reducing the burden on those providing their information, and on those involved in collecting, recording and supplying data. The burden imposed should be proportionate to the benefits arising from the use of the statistics.

The burden to businesses due to statutory Government Statistical Surveys is monitored by the [Statistics Advisory Committee](#)⁴. Under the [Statistics of Trade and Employment \(NI\) Order 1988](#)⁵, a Northern Ireland Department is required to consult this committee before carrying out any new statutory survey of businesses⁶.

1. Introduction

This 2019/20 report is the eighth in an annual series detailing the cost to businesses of complying with statutory and voluntary Government Statistical Surveys in Northern Ireland. The report includes information on the number of surveys commissioned, or carried out, by Departments (including their Arm's Length Bodies) and the cost incurred by businesses in complying with regular and ad hoc government surveys, conducted in the financial year ending 31st March 2020. Department names have been abbreviated as shown in Appendix D.

¹ <https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/the-code/>

² Statistics and Registration Service Act (2007) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/18/contents>

³ Information on the purposes for which the data are used is available in the [downloadable data](#) (see Appendix E)

⁴ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/statistics-advisory-committee>

⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1988/595/data.pdf>

⁶ Under this Order, a business is defined as any person(s) carrying out an undertaking by way of trade or business, whether or not the trade or business is carried on for profit; and any other undertaking providing employment in respect of which Class 1 contributions are payable under the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Act 1975.

Useful Links:

- [Previous publications in this series](#)
- [Burden on Households and Individuals](#)
- [Code of Practice for Statistics](#)
- [NISRA publications and datasets](#)

- [Downloadable data](#)

The compliance cost of a survey is defined as the financial cost incurred by the business in responding to the survey. This is estimated using an agreed Government Statistical Service methodology and includes factors such as the time taken to complete the survey, hourly pay rate⁷ of the person completing the survey and any external costs such as accountancy fees.

Businesses include commercial businesses (including self-employed persons surveyed in the context of their business), schools, universities, colleges, voluntary organisations, non-profit bodies, mutual associations etc. Surveys of local councils are also included within surveys to businesses.

The application of the survey control methodology was reviewed prior to the 2016/17 data collection and improved guidance was produced. This has resulted in a discontinuity in the time series as some surveys, and types of surveys, which were excluded prior to 2016/17 are now included, specifically surveys carried out by Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs), and some participant evaluation surveys, customer surveys and surveys which have a secondary operational purpose. Further details are provided in Appendix A3.

The methodology used to calculate compliance costs for surveys carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on behalf of Economic Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) has remained constant for 2019/20, following revisions in previous years. This means that figures for 2018/19 and 2019/20 can be compared directly. Further details are provided in Appendix A3.

In this report, surveys that contribute to National or official statistics are referred to as 'official statistics' surveys, and surveys that do not contribute to National or official statistics are referred to as 'other statistics' surveys.

The ONS no longer produces a report or data for England and Wales, although some Government Departments publish information for their own department.

⁷ Hourly rates of pay are median hourly (£) UK rates of pay (excluding overtime), based on the provisional results of ASHE 2019. This ensures direct comparability with compliance costs for 2019/20 published by other parts of the UK.

2. Compliance Cost to Business

In 2019/20, 125 surveys of businesses were issued by government departments, of which 49 were statutory and 76 were voluntary. The total cost to businesses was £892,200, of which £794,000 (89%) was incurred by statutory surveys, while voluntary surveys accounted for £98,200 (11%). Of the £892,200 total compliance cost, 72% was attributable to DoF and 16% to DAERA.

69% of the total compliance cost (£615,100) can be attributed to Economic and Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) branch⁸ within DoF, which includes surveys carried out by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) on behalf of ELMS. In addition, ELMS surveys accounted for 96% of the total compliance cost within DoF.

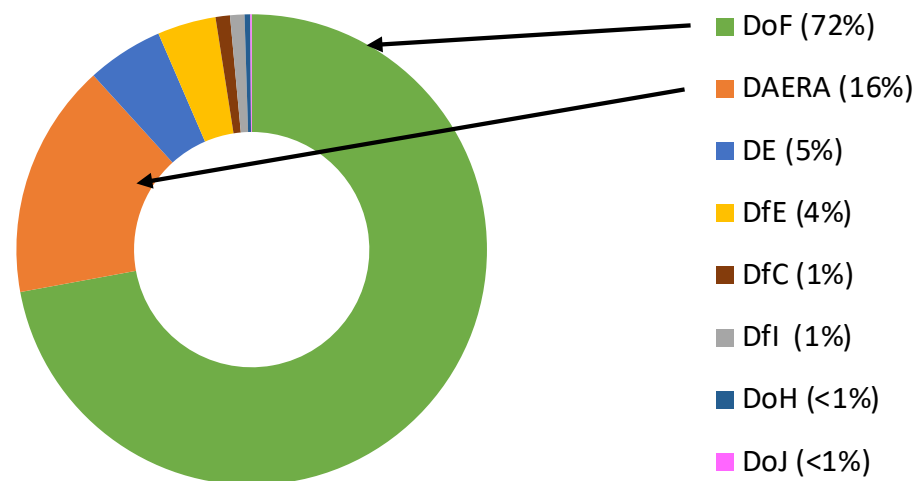
Of the £144,100 compliance cost attributable to DAERA, 96% was incurred as a result of the issue of statutory surveys to farms and businesses within Northern Ireland. Similarly, 96% of the total burden attributable to DoF was incurred by statutory surveys.

Despite the large difference in compliance costs between statutory and voluntary surveys within DAERA, the department only conducted one more

Table 1: Compliance cost by NI department, 2019/20

Department	Number of Surveys	Compliance Cost (£000s)	Total Returns
DAERA	17	144.1	20,062
DE	17	46.9	3,546
DfC	15	8.8	8,939
DfE	22	35.9	6,866
DfI	3	8.8	1,537
DoF	44	643.4	83,295
DoH	6	3.5	622
DoJ	1	0.8	236
TEO	-	-	-
PPS	-	-	-
Total	125	892.2	125,103

Figure 1: Percentage of total compliance cost by NI Department, 2019/20



⁸ Information on the cost attributable to each area within DoF is available in the [downloadable data](#) (see Appendix E).

statutory survey (9) than voluntary (8), whereas DoF conducted 38 statutory surveys, compared to 6 voluntary surveys (Table 2).

DE conducted one single statutory survey⁹ which accounted for 69% of DE’s total compliance burden. Similarly, DfI conducted one statutory survey, which accounted for 97% of the total compliance burden attributed to DfI.

DfC, DfE, DoH and DoJ conducted only voluntary surveys in 2019/20.

In total, 61% of the surveys issued by NI government departments were voluntary. However, voluntary surveys contributed only 11% of the total burden. Statutory surveys accounted for 89% of all compliance burden, but only 39% of the total number of surveys (Figure 2).

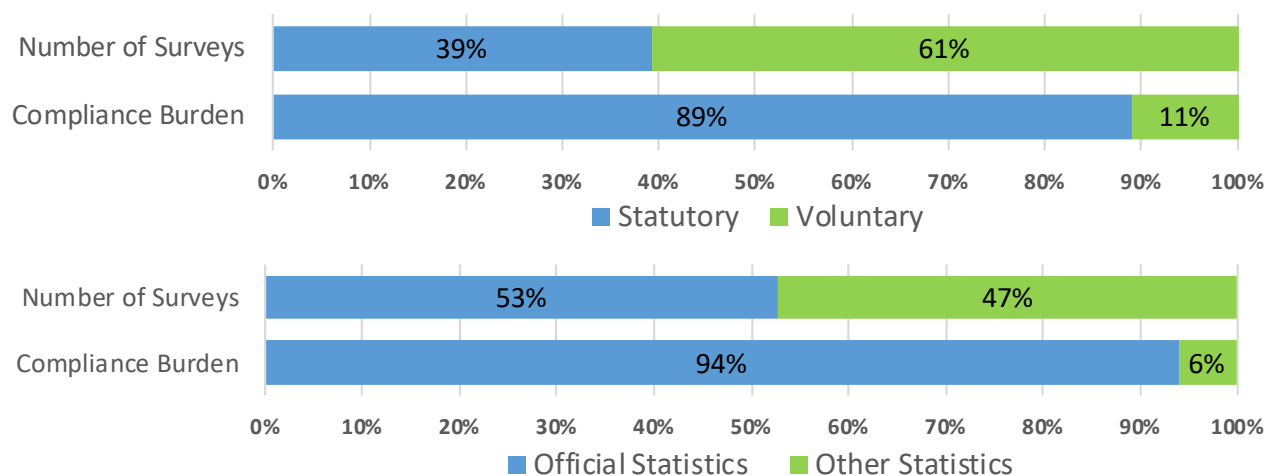
The vast majority of compliance burden (94%; £838,200) was due to surveys that contribute to official statistics (Figure 2 & Table 3).

Of these surveys which contributed to official statistics, 95% (£794,000) of the overall burden was attributable to statutory surveys¹⁰.

Table 2: Compliance cost for statutory and voluntary surveys by NI department, 2019/20

Department	Statutory		Voluntary	
	Number of surveys	Compliance Cost (£000s)	Number of surveys	Compliance Cost (£000s)
DAERA	9	137.9	8	6.1
DE	1	32.5	16	14.3
DfC	-	-	15	8.8
DfE	-	-	22	35.9
DfI	1	8.5	2	0.3
DoF	38	615.0	6	28.4
DoH	-	-	6	3.5
DoJ	-	-	1	0.8
TEO	-	-	-	-
PPS	-	-	-	-
Total	49	794.0	76	98.2

Figure 2: Percentage compliance cost for surveys which are statutory or voluntary and which contribute to official statistics



⁹ This is the part of the School Census that is still collected by a paper return and covers voluntary/private pre-school and independent school returns. The rest of the School Census is collected via an electronic return, facilitated through computerised school records using a standard system.

¹⁰ Further information on individual surveys is available in the [downloadable data](#) (see Appendix E).

Table 3 shows the compliance cost for surveys used to produce official statistics, and other surveys by government departments in 2019/20.

All 17 of the DAERA surveys, 43 of the 44 DoF surveys, all 3 DfI surveys, 2 DE surveys and the single DoH survey contributed to official statistics. In contrast, none of the DfC surveys (15), DfE surveys (22) or the DoJ (1) survey were used to produce official statistics.

Only 2 of the 17 surveys conducted by DE were used in the production of official statistics, however these two surveys accounted for 87% of the compliance cost attributed to DE.

Table 3: Compliance cost for surveys that contribute to official statistics and for surveys that do not contribute to official statistics by NI department, 2019/20

Department	Official Statistics		Other Statistics	
	Number of Surveys	Compliance Cost (£000s)	Number of Surveys	Compliance Cost (£000s)
DAERA	17	144.1	-	-
DE	2	40.8	15	6.0
DfC	-	-	15	8.8
DfE	-	-	22	35.9
DfI	3	8.8	-	-
DoF	43	643.4	1	0.04
DoH	1	1.0	5	2.5
DoJ	-	-	1	0.8
TEO	-	-	-	-
PPS	-	-	-	-
Total	66	838.2	59	54.1

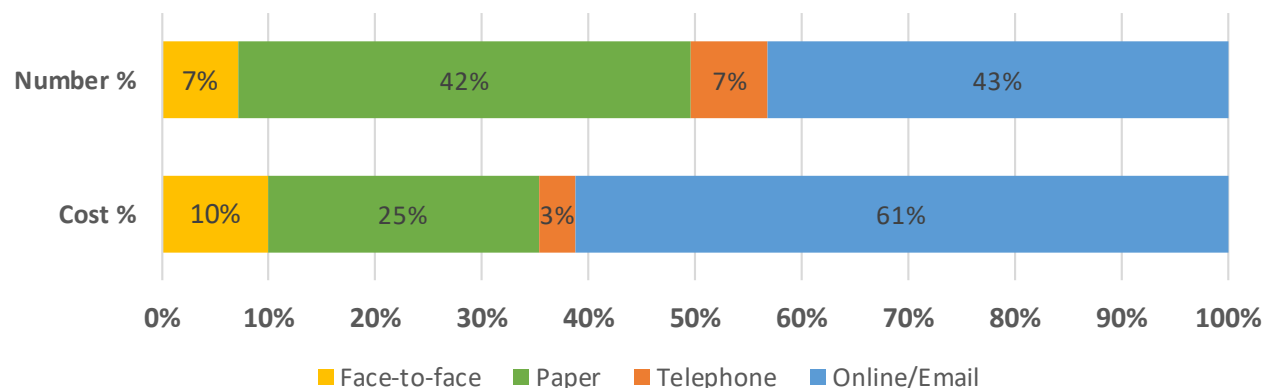
3. Data Collection Methods

The percentage of surveys and compliance cost by primary method of collection is shown in Figure 3.

Over two fifths (43%) of all surveys used online/email as their primary method of data collection, with 32% of surveys being solely online/email. Furthermore, over three fifths (61%) of surveys offered an online/email data collection option (Table 4).

42% of surveys employed paper questionnaires as their primary data collection method (compared to 47% in 2018/19), with just over a quarter of all

Figure 3: Number of surveys and compliance cost by collection method (*using primary method*)



Please note that any implied relationship between method of collection and compliance cost should be treated with caution, as no account has been taken of the complexity and length of the surveys.

surveys using a paper questionnaire on its own (26%). The remaining surveys combined a paper questionnaire, as a primary method, with online/email data collection (13%), or with both online/email data collection and telephone methods¹¹ (3%).

7% of all surveys carried out used face-to-face methods as their primary data collection method, with the vast majority of these surveys (8 out of 9) using solely face-to-face methods. Telephone was used as the primary data collection methods for 7% of all surveys, with 14% of surveys using telephone methods (telephone interview or telephone data entry) to collect data in some capacity.

Table 4: Number of surveys and compliance cost by collection method and department, 2019/20

Dept	Face-to-face		Face-to-face, Telephone & Email		Paper		Paper & Online/Email		Paper, Email & Telephone		Paper, Email & Telephone Data Entry ¹¹		Telephone		Telephone Data Entry	
	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)
DAERA	6	87.4	1	0.4	-	-	7	55.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DE	-	-	-	-	1	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DfC	-	-	-	-	13	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DfE	2	0.6	-	-	-	-	2	2.6	-	-	-	-	6	19.1	-	-
DfI	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	8.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DoF	-	-	-	-	19	108.0	6	11.8	3	28.3	1	11.2	-	-	1	0.6
DoH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.1	-	-
DoJ	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TEO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	8	88.0	1	0.4	33	109.0	16	78.1	3	28.3	1	11.2	7	19.3	1	0.6

Dept	Telephone & Online		Online/Email		Online/Email & Face-to-face		Online/Email & Paper		Online & Telephone		Online/Email, Paper & Telephone Data Entry		Total	
	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)	N	Cost (000s)
DAERA	-	-	3	1.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	144.1
DE	-	-	13	12.0	-	-	3	34.5	-	-	-	-	17	46.9
DfC	-	-	1	0.4	1	7.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	8.8
DfE	1	10.5	9	1.6	1	0.1	-	-	1	1.3	-	-	22	35.9
DfI	-	-	1	0.02	-	-	1	0.3	-	-	-	-	3	8.8
DoF	-	-	8	68.7	-	-	3	211.4	1	0.09	2	203.4	44	643.4
DoH	-	-	4	1.1	-	-	1	2.3	-	-	-	-	6	3.5
DoJ	-	-	1	0.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.8
TEO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1	10.5	40	85.9	2	7.9	8	248.5	2	1.3	2	203.4	125	892.2

¹¹ Telephone methods include interviews conducted by telephone as well as telephone data entry (TDE). TDE is a data collection method where the requested data are entered using the telephone keypad.

By department, DoF had the most surveys offering an online/email option, with 24 in total, accounting for 55% of all surveys conducted by DoF. Similarly, DE offered an online/email option for 16 of its 17 surveys. 65% of surveys carried out by DAERA (11) and 64% by DfE (14) employed online/email data collection in some capacity. Five of the six DoH surveys, all three surveys conducted by DfI, the single survey carried out by DoJ and offered an online/email option. In contrast, 87% (13) of the surveys conducted by DfC were paper-based, with only two offering an online/email option.

4. Change in data collection methods over time (2016/17 to 2019/20)

There has been a gradual change in the primary data collection methods used in government surveys of NI businesses in recent years. While the number of surveys employing face-to-face and telephone interviews has largely remained consistent, the number of surveys using online/email methods has increased since 2016/17. In contrast, the number of surveys employing paper questionnaires as their primary method has decreased year-on-year. For the first time in 2019/20, online/email was the most commonly used primary method of data collection.

A similar pattern has been observed in the compliance burden for each primary method in recent years¹². The number of surveys using face-to-face and telephone interviews as a primary method has remained consistent, as has the compliance burden from these surveys, with little variance between years. Compliance burden for surveys with paper questionnaires as their primary method was highest in 2016/17, contributing 79% (£881,100) of the total burden. This reduced to 51% (£483,000) in 2017/18 and has further reduced to 25% (£226,600) in 2019/20.

Figure 4: Number of surveys by primary method employed, 2016/17 – 2019/20

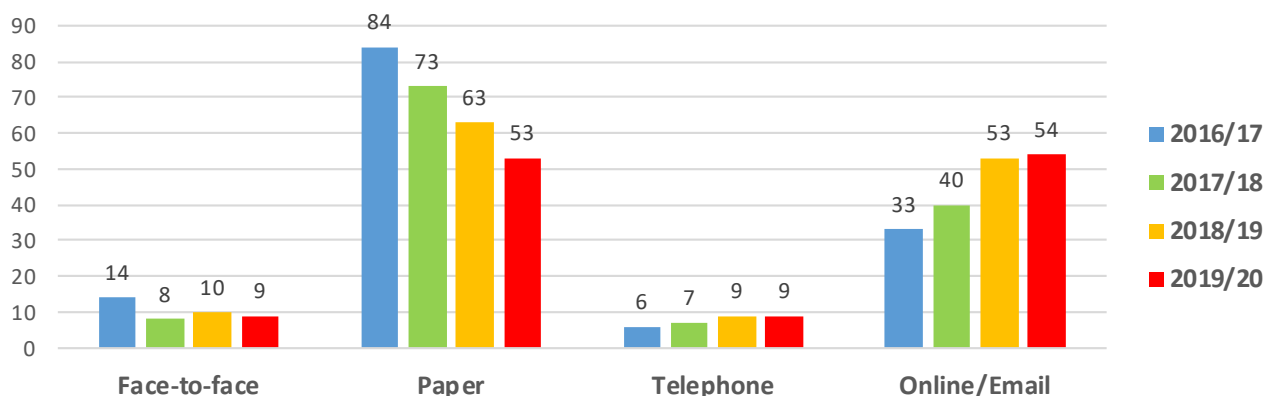
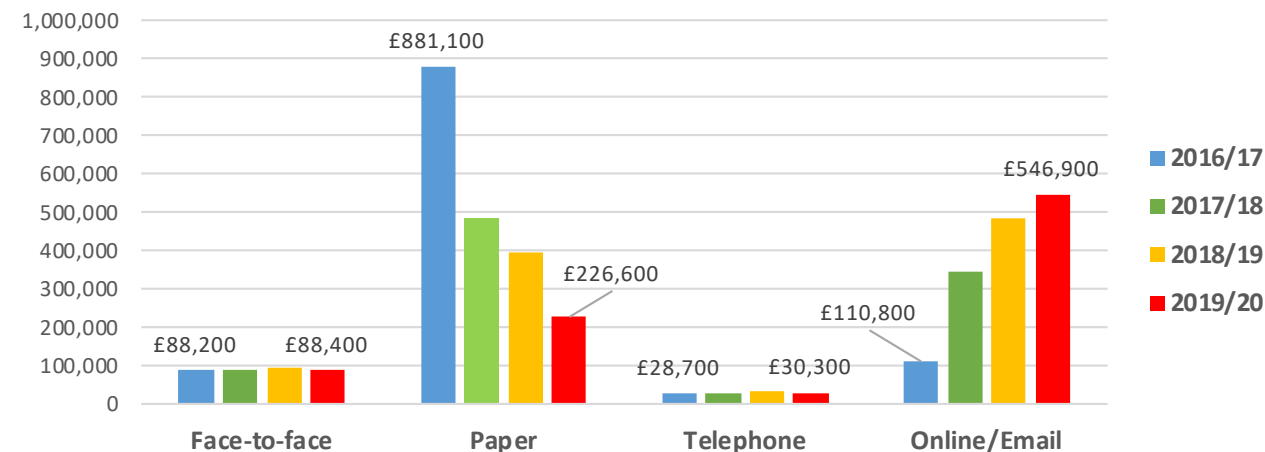


Figure 5: Compliance burden by primary method employed, 2016/17 – 2019/20



¹² The figures used in Figure 5 do not take into account change in rates of pay (staff costs) over time. However, the pattern is similar when compliance costs based on 2019/20 rates of pay are used (see [downloadable tables and charts](#), details in Appendix E).

in 2019/20. In contrast, the contribution to the compliance burden from surveys which use online/email as their primary data collection method has gradually increased from 10% (£111,800) in 2016/17 to 61% (£546,900) in 2019/20.

Note: As the nature and complexity of the surveys carried out each year varies, with a large number of ad-hoc, multiennial and irregular surveys, it is not possible to establish a relationship between the change in the number of surveys and the change in compliance burden for each primary data collection method.

5. 2016-21 Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes

In 2016, the Northern Ireland Executive released the draft Programme for Government (PfG), which laid out the ambition the Executive had for society in Northern Ireland. The draft PfG was consulted on and refined during 2016/17, and forms the basis for the [2018/19 Outcomes Delivery Plan](#)¹³ and [Outcomes Delivery Plan \(December 2019\)](#)¹⁴. The draft 2016-21 PfG comprised 12 strategic outcomes outlined by the Executive to represent the society we wish to have. These 12 outcomes were supported by 49 indicators which showed how the Northern Ireland Government and wider public sector were performing in relation to the outcomes, providing a basis to monitor progress and take appropriate action. Details of the 12 outcomes and 49 indicators are provided in Appendix C.

In 2019/20, data suppliers were asked to identify to which PfG outcome each survey carried out by their Department or ALB contributed¹⁵. Figure 7 shows that those surveys of NI businesses carried out in 2019/20 which contributed to a single outcome contributed to 10 of the 12 PfG Outcomes, with four surveys contributing to more than one PfG Outcome¹⁶

Figure 7 also shows that surveys of businesses carried out by certain departments often contribute to one specific outcome. For example, DAERA conducted 17 surveys all of which contributed to *Outcome 2: We live sustainably – protecting the environment*. Similarly, DfC conducted 15 surveys, 13 of which contributed to *Outcome 10: We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest*, and DE conducted 14 surveys which contributed to *Outcome 12: We give our children and young people the best start in life*, alongside three surveys which contributed to *Outcome 5: We are an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential*.

In contrast to these departments, there was more variation in the outcomes to which DfE surveys contributed, with the majority of DfE surveys contributing to the *Outcome 1: We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy*.

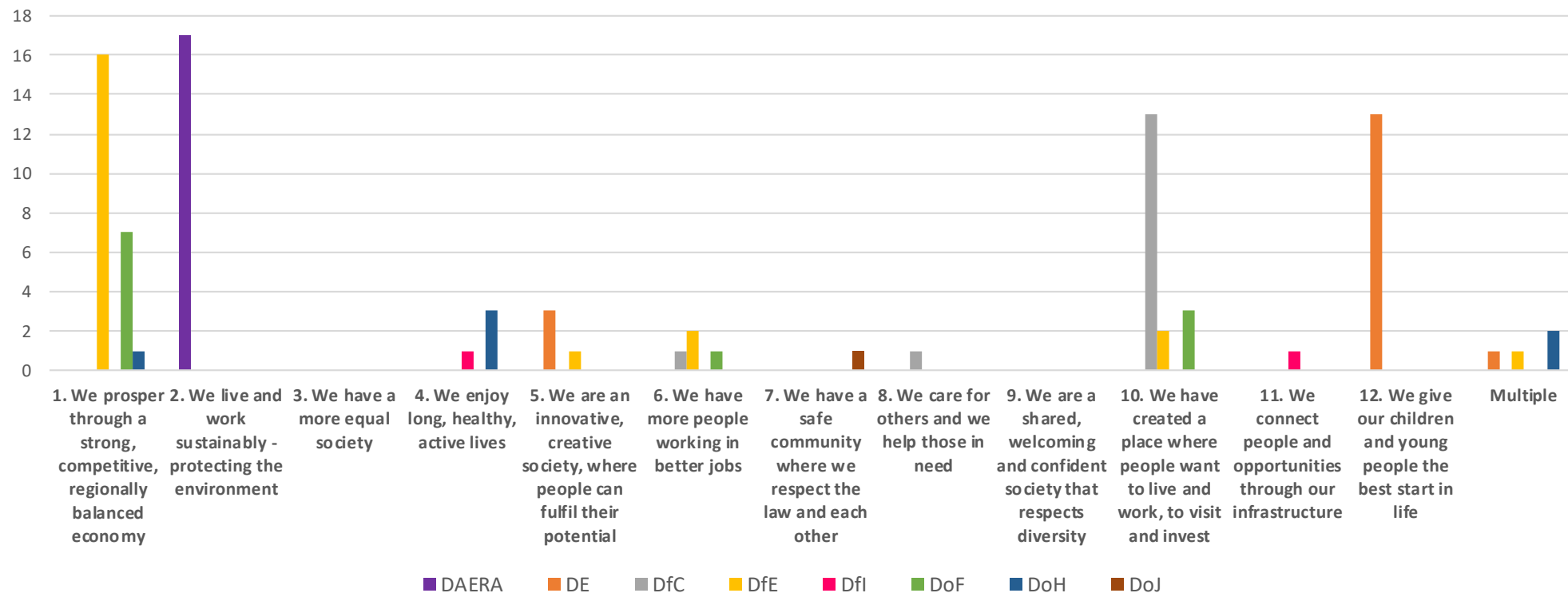
¹³ <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/outcomes-delivery-plan-201819>

¹⁴ <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/outcomes-delivery-plan-december-2019>

¹⁵ Further information on individual surveys is available in the [downloadable data](#) (see Appendix E).

¹⁶ Two DoH surveys contributed to Outcomes 1 & 11. One survey carried out by DfE contributed to Outcomes 4 & 7 and one survey carried out by DE contributed to Outcomes 3 & 12.

Figure 7: Programme for Government outcomes for surveys carried out by each NI department



There were 34 surveys which did not contribute to any PfG outcome. 27 of these surveys were carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), five by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), one by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and one by the Department of Transport (DfT) on behalf of DfI. These are UK-wide surveys of businesses and the information collected is only used to produce UK Statistics, such as the [UK National Accounts and Balance of Payments](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts)¹⁷, [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp)¹⁸ and the [Producer Prices Index](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/producerpriceinflation/previousReleases)¹⁹.

¹⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts>

¹⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp>

¹⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/producerpriceinflation/previousReleases>

6. Uses of Surveys

The data collected through government surveys of Northern Ireland businesses are used for a range of purposes including the

- production and development of official statistics (see Figure 2 & Table 3);
- development, monitoring and evaluation of government policy;
- design, monitoring, refinement and evaluation of programmes;
- improvement and refinement of government services.

For example, Analytical Services Division in DfE uses the wide range of [ELMS official statistics publications](#)²⁰ to provide briefing and analysis on the local economy to a wide range of stakeholders. This includes a [monthly economic update](#)²¹ and a more detailed [economic commentary](#)²² produced three times per year, which are published on the DfE website and disseminated to the Minister for the Economy and senior departmental officials as well as a wide range of interested parties. Figures from the [NI Composite Economic Index](#), [Labour Force Survey](#) (Household Survey), [Quarterly Employment Survey](#), [Index of Production](#), [Index of Services](#), [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings](#) and [NI Construction bulletin](#) are used to provide a regular overview of the local economy. Analytical Services Division also uses the findings from these surveys to brief the Minister and senior officials on the latest issues affecting the NI economy, providing them with the context required to put more informed policies in place.

To support decision-making during the pandemic, data from the [Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry](#)²³, [Business Register and Employment Survey](#), [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings](#), [Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics](#) and [Labour Force Survey](#) were used by Analytical Services Division in DfE to establish the potential scope and characteristics of the impacts of the March 2020 and October 2020 Covid-19 Regulations on those businesses and business activities impacted by the Regulations.

Another important use of the Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics (BESES) data has been to support and inform decision-making around EU Exit. Data are collected on trade in both goods and services within NI, as well as trade between NI and GB, this being the only source anywhere for this information. Exports data are also available for trade to each member state of the EU and to approximately 50 individual non-EU countries. These data have been an invaluable resource for government officials over the last number of years, whereby they have been used by departments to inform important and high level EU Exit policy documents and negotiations/discussions at the highest level. A detailed case study “Use of Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics – informing EU Exit discussions and policy development” is included in Appendix B.

²⁰ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/nisra-economic-and-labour-market-statistics-elms/economic-overview>

²¹ <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/monthly-economic-update>

²² <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/economic-commentary>

²³ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/business-statistics/annual-business-inquiry>

ELMS also supplies bespoke analysis to DfE. One example is the evidence base provided on the Geoscience Industry in Northern Ireland (using data from the Annual Business Inquiry, Business Register and Employment Survey, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Research and Development Survey, Broad Economy Sales and Exports Survey). The subsequent report '[Economic Impact of Geosciences 2018](#)'²⁴ highlighted the importance of the Geoscience sector in relation to other sectors and has been used to inform local councils as part of the local development plan process. This sets the economic context of the sector and informs both policy development regarding the use of our geological resources and the development of a Science Strategy for the Geological Survey of NI.

Information from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is used by the Low Pay Commission as part of its evidence base for recommending to Government the level of the national minimum wage.

Further information on the purpose of each survey is available in the [downloadable data](#) which accompany this bulletin.

7. Changes to the Surveys Issued by Departments: 2015/16 to 2019/20

Due to the biennial, triennial or quinquennial nature of several surveys, as well as the large number of ad-hoc and programme specific surveys, the number of surveys and resultant compliance burden fluctuates from one year to the next. Furthermore, due to the cyclical nature of some of the larger statutory surveys compliance costs can vary significantly year-on-year. An example of this is the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) carried out by DoF which alternates a larger and smaller sample year to year. In 2018/19, approximately 12,500 businesses were sampled (9,367 responses; £34,500 compliance costs), while in 2019/20 around 33,500 businesses were sampled (23,496 responses; £62,300 compliance costs).

Additionally, NISRA statisticians are continually working towards improving the efficiency of the statistical process and minimising the burden on survey respondents, in accordance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. Details of steps taken to reduce respondent burden are provided in Section 9.

It should be noted that there is also a discontinuity in the series between 2015/16 and 2016/17. Prior to the 2016/17 data collection exercise, a review was conducted of the guidance provided to data suppliers to provide greater clarity around the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of surveys. As a result of this review, a number of additional surveys have been included in departmental returns from 2016/17, specifically surveys carried out by Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) and some surveys which were previously omitted due to being considered part of the operational management of a public service.

²⁴ <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/economic-impact-geosciences-ni-economy.PDF>

Examples are participant evaluation surveys, customer surveys and surveys which have a secondary operational purpose. Further refinements were made to the surveys included in 2017/18, but the impact is much less and limited to DE and DfE (see Appendix A3).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) also carried out a review of its methodology in 2016/17, moving away from calculating stratified compliance costs based on business size; including an estimate of re-contact burden and reviewing median completion times in conjunction with survey managers. In 2017/18, ONS reviewed median completion times for another ten surveys and median re-contact times (which previously had been assumed equal to the median completion time) were revised. In 2018/19, estimated staff costs for respondents were revisited. These changes resulted in a large increase in compliance costs for surveys carried out by ONS (on behalf of ELMS) in 2016/17, a smaller decrease in 2017/18 offsetting some of the increase, and a relatively small increase in 2018/19. This impacts the overall compliance costs and the compliance costs for DoF but not the number of surveys or number of responses. Further details are provided in Appendix A3.

Table 5: Number of surveys, forms returned and compliance cost by NI department, 2015/16 to 2019/20²⁵

Dept	Number of Surveys					Number of Forms (000s)					Compliance Cost (£000s)				
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
DAERA	19	17	17	18	17	30.6	21.0	20.7	24.8	20.1	199.3	141.8	145.0	162.1	144.1
DE	8	46	16	24	17	2.6	11.3	3.8	6.9	3.5	19.8	70.9	52.2	64.9	46.9
DfC	17	16	22	17	15	0.7	8.4	10.3	9.0	8.9	4.0	12.5	10.1	9.0	8.8
DfE	10	11	25	26	22	6.4	4.8	7.0	8.3	6.9	40.2	29.4	29.4	37.8	35.9
DfI	3	1	1	1	3	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5	9.7	8.2	8.6	8.9	8.8
DoF	47	43	45	46	44	112.9	73.5	91.1	77.4	83.3	828.9	841.7	698.5	715.2	643.4
DoH	-	2	2	2	6	-	0.2	0.1	1.9	0.6	-	2.6	1.7	6.4	3.5
DoJ	1	1	-	1	1	0.2	0.3	-	0.1	0.2	3.1	1.7	-	0.4	0.8
TEO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	105	137	128	135	125	154.8	120.9	134.5	129.9	125.1	1,105.1	1,108.8	945.4	1,004.8	892.2

The estimated compliance burden for NI businesses in 2019/20 was £892,200, representing a decrease of over £112,500 (11%) on the previous year. This represents the lowest estimated compliance burden since first reported, using the current method of calculation, in 2012/13, despite an increase in staff costs (see Section 8).

²⁵There is a discontinuity in the time series affecting 2016/17, 2017/18 and to a lesser extent 2018/19. This means that the Totals and figures for DoF, DE & DfE for 2016/17 and 2017/18 (and DfC for 2016/17) cannot be directly compared with each other, and with earlier years; figures for 2018/19 are comparable with 2017/18, apart from a small discontinuity for DoF. Further details are provided in Appendix A3.

DAERA

DAERA carried out 17 surveys in 2019/20, consistent with 2016/17 and 2017/18, but one fewer than in 2018/19. Overall, the DAERA compliance burden decreased by £18,100. The ad-hoc Farm Safety Survey, which did not run in 2019/20 and had a compliance burden of £13,200 in 2018/19 largely accounts for this reduction.

The majority of other surveys conducted by DAERA remained relatively consistent in terms of their compliance burden, with larger reductions seen in the Pesticide Usage Survey (£1,500), the Farm Business Survey (£1,800) and the December Agricultural & Horticulture Survey (£1,100).

DE

DE conducted 17 surveys in 2019/20, a decrease of 7 from 2018/19. The compliance burden also decreased by £18,000 (28%) from £64,900 in 2018/19 to £46,900 in 2019/20 and the number of forms returned reduced by 49% (3,347). A key reason for the reduction in the compliance burden was the non-inclusion of several large biennial, triennial and quadrennial surveys that ran in 2018/19 but not in 2019/20. The reduction in the number of forms was mainly due to the annual variation in the one-off surveys run by DE.

DE consistently runs a high proportion of ad-hoc surveys (8 in 2019/20; 11 in 2018/19; and 12 in 2017/18), thus variation in the number of surveys, forms and compliance cost year-on-year is to be expected. In 2019/20, there were eight ad-hoc surveys (seven of which were one-off surveys, the remaining survey is run on an irregular basis) which accounted for 32% of the forms returned and 6% of the compliance cost attributed to DE.

In 2018/19, the biennial School Omnibus survey accounted for £4,200 (6%) of the total DE compliance burden. The two quadrennial Principals' and Teachers' surveys within the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Survey (TIMSS) 2019 survey, and the triennial Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 survey accounted for £3,400 (5%) of the burden, while the triennial CSSC Membership Survey accounted for £1,200 (2%) of the burden. Overall, these five surveys explain £8,700 (13%) of the 2018/19 burden.

The School Census continues to be the largest contributor of compliance burden in DE, due to the length of the survey, which has an average completion time of 240 minutes (the longest survey in DE) and the large number of respondents (386 in 2019/20, accounting for 11% of the total number of DE forms). In 2019/20, this survey contributed a compliance cost of £32,500, which represents 69% of the total compliance attributed to DE.

DfC

The number of surveys carried out by DfC decreased from 17 to 15. As in previous years, the majority of these surveys were one-off surveys of small businesses, linked to revitalisation projects 'to gauge perception of an area'. These 13 one-off surveys contributed 7% of the burden attributed to DfC.

The annual UU/NIHE Quarterly House Price Index (carried out by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive) was the primary source of the compliance burden for DfC with an estimated burden of over £7,700 (88%), an increase of approximately £380 on the previous year.

The remaining survey was a one-off adhoc survey: the Employability NI – Employer Survey which accounted for £450 (5%) of the DfC compliance burden.

DfE

DfE conducted 22 surveys in 2019/20, four fewer than in 2018/19. In addition, the compliance burden due to DfE surveys decreased by £1,900 (5%) to £35,900 and the number of forms returned decreased by 1,394 (17%) to 6,866.

Three of the four largest surveys were commissioned by Invest NI. These surveys were the Purchasing Managers Index (£10,500); the BIS Small Business Survey (£7,000); and the Quarterly Customer Satisfaction Survey (£4,200). The two latter surveys remained consistent in terms of compliance burden, while there was a 15% decrease in the burden due to the Purchasing Managers Index relative to 2018/19. These three surveys accounted for 60% of the DfE compliance burden and 48% of the responses attributed to DfE. The other large survey carried out by DfE was the All-Island Business Monitor, conducted by InterTradeIreland, which had a compliance burden of £5,200, accounting for 15% of the DfE compliance burden and 22% of the responses attributed to DfE.

In recent years, the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) have conducted a large proportion of surveys (often ad-hoc surveys), carrying out 13 surveys in both 2018/19 and 2017/18 – whereas in 2019/20, CITB ran only seven surveys (five of which were ad-hoc); which in part accounts for the reduction in DfE surveys, forms returned and compliance cost.

While the majority of surveys that ran in both 2018/19 and 2019/20 remained relatively consistent in terms of compliance burden, there were larger reductions in the Purchasing Managers Index (as above) and the Tourism Industry Barometer, which saw a decrease of £2,500 (66%). This survey is typically run in three waves, however due to ongoing industry issues (including the UK Exit from the EU and the impact of the emerging Coronavirus pandemic), two waves of data collection did not take place in 2019/20, resulting in a lower number of forms returned and accounting for the decrease in compliance burden. In addition, the Industry Engagement Survey was discontinued in 2018/19, which had previously contributed £2,000 of compliance burden.

DfI

DfI ran three surveys in 2019/20, compared to one survey conducted in the previous three financial years.

The Continuing Survey of Road Goods Transport, Northern Ireland (CSRGT NI) has been run every year since 2012/13 and is the major contributor of compliance cost within DfI, accounting for 94% of the forms returned and 97% of the compliance cost in DfI.

The Active School Travel Programme – School Survey is a new annual survey, which contributed £270 of compliance burden, while the NI Planning Statistics User Survey will be carried out on a biennial basis and contributed £20 of compliance cost.

DoF

DoF carried out two fewer surveys in 2019/20 than in 2018/19. However, there was an increase of 5,935 forms returned – an 8% increase on the previous year. Despite the increase in forms, there has been a £71,700 reduction in the compliance burden - a 10% decrease on the previous year.

Economic Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) conducted the same seven surveys as in 2018/19. While the Annual Coal Inquiry, a small survey of four businesses, has remained consistent, there have been larger variations in the compliance burden arising from the remaining six ELMS surveys. There was an increase of £2,100 (4%) in the compliance burden due to the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings and an increase of £27,800 (80%) in the compliance burden due to the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). The BRES alternates yearly between a larger and a smaller sample, employing a larger sample in 2019/20, meaning that there was an increase of over 14,100 forms returned in the current year. There was also an increase of £4,300 in the compliance burden due to the Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry; however this increase is solely due to the increase in estimated staff costs^{26, 27}

These increases in burden are largely offset by significant decreases in the burden for the other ELMS surveys. The Northern Ireland Research Development Survey and the Business Register Inquiry (IDBR) saw reductions in compliance costs of £4,700 (19%) and £4,800 (30%) respectively. The decrease in burden for the Business Register Inquiry (IDBR) is a result of 1,500 fewer forms being returned – while there is typically a yearly fluctuation in the sample for this survey, 1,000 initial forms did not go out in March 2020 (due to the pandemic) and approximately 460 reminder prompts were not issued, which may account for the decrease in responses.

The largest reduction in compliance burden for ELMS surveys however, was observed for the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS), where there was a decrease of over £14,200, a result of 3,402 fewer forms returned in 2019/20. In an effort to reduce the burden imposed upon businesses, the survey managers moved to monitoring coverage, rather than response rate, with a targeted approach focused on getting returns from priority businesses and

²⁶ 2018 ASHE data was used in 2018/19, whereas 2019 ASHE data was used in 2019/20. See Appendix A2 – Methodology.

²⁷ Due to a reporting error in the 2018/19 return the 2019/20 data were returned for 2018/19. This means that the NI Annual Business Survey returns for 18/19 and 19/20 are the same.

reducing response chasing on smaller businesses. In addition, a data sharing exercise took place with data obtained from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), meaning that businesses that appeared in both samples would only receive a BRES form, and this data would be shared with the QBS to reduce the burden. This data sharing exercise alone accounts for approximately 1,400 fewer responses in the QBS in 2019/20.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) also surveys NI businesses, on behalf of ELMS, as part of UK-wide surveys. In this analysis, these surveys are included under DoF, as are surveys of NI businesses carried out by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

The number of surveys carried out by BEIS reduced from two in 2018/19 to one in 2019/20, as the biennial UK Innovation Survey, which took place in 2018/19, did not take place in 2019/20. This survey contributed 614 responses and a compliance burden of £12,800 in 2018/19. The number of surveys reported by DEFRA increased from two in 2018/19 to five in 2019/20. These DEFRA surveys and the remaining BEIS survey are relatively small, and accounted for a combined 28 returns and £680 of compliance cost, contributing 0.1% of the total cost attributed to DoF.

ONS conducted 27 surveys of NI businesses in 2019/20, four fewer than in 2018/19. In addition, there were 1,881 fewer forms returned and a reduction of £63,800 (25%) in the compliance burden due to surveys conducted by ONS.

The Quarterly Survey of Pension Funds: Income and Expenditure, Quarterly Survey of Pension Funds: Transactions and Balances and Annual Survey of Pension Funds: Balance Sheet were replaced by the single Financial Survey of Pension Funds survey in 2019/20. In addition, the Recruitment for Monthly Survey for Index Number of Import Prices and Recruitment for Monthly Survey for Index Number of Export Prices did not run in 2019/20.

There were small reductions (of less than £1,000) in the compliance burden for 16 of the surveys conducted by ONS. In addition, larger reductions were observed for the Low Carbon Survey (£1,200; 17%); the E-Commerce Survey (£1,300; 22%); and the UK Manufacturers' Sales by Product (Prodcom) (£2,900; 14%). The largest reduction however, was observed for the Annual Purchases Survey, where the compliance burden reduced from £117,800 in 2018/19 to £60,500 in 2019/20 – representing a reduction of 49%. This was due to a fall in the response rate from around 70% (in previous years) to just under 40% in 2019/20, and 1,041 fewer forms being returned.

Of the four remaining DoF surveys, one is a new, small Client Satisfaction Survey carried out by Land & Property Services, while the other three were carried out by Tourism Statistics and Staff Surveys Branch (TSSSB) in DoF. These three surveys: Northern Ireland Hotel, Guest House and Bed & Breakfast Occupancy survey; Northern Ireland Self Catering Occupancy Survey and Northern Ireland Visitor Attraction Survey contributed £28,300 (4%) to the overall burden due to DoF surveys. This is a reduction of £5,500 compared to 2018/19, reflecting the closure of these establishments in mid-March 2020 and the unavailability of staff to return forms. This will also have impacted the issue and receipt of reminders and re-contacts.

DoH

DoH conducted six surveys in 2019/20, which is four more than in each of the three previous financial years²⁸.

The 2020 Northern Ireland Sight Test and Ophthalmic Public Health Survey accounted for 65% (£2,300) of the compliance burden attributable to DoH. This survey previously took place in 2017 and in 2014. The Dental Working Patterns Survey carried out by NHS Digital contributed £1,000 (30%) of the compliance burden due to DoH²⁹.

In 2019/20, there were four new small surveys carried out by DoH. Three of these were conducted by Business Services Organisation (BSO), while the Public Health Agency (PHA) conducted one. These four surveys had a total compliance burden of £170.

DoJ

As in previous years, DoJ carries out very few and infrequent surveys of businesses, with no more than one survey per year since 2015/16. In 2019/20, the only survey conducted by DoJ was the AccessNI Customer Survey, which was last run in 2016/17. Due to a reduction in respondents (104 fewer) and a completion time that was 5 minutes shorter than the 2016/17 run of the survey, this survey resulted in £820 of compliance burden – a 52% decrease on its previous run.

TEO & PPS

Neither TEO nor PPS conducted any surveys of businesses during the period presented in Table 5.

²⁸ The annual Pharmaceutical Margin Survey has not been included for 2019/20, as it is deemed out of scope due to the information being integral to the operational management of a public service. This survey had 72 respondents and a compliance burden of £1,700 in 2018/19.

²⁹ This biennial survey had not previously been included in the DoH return.

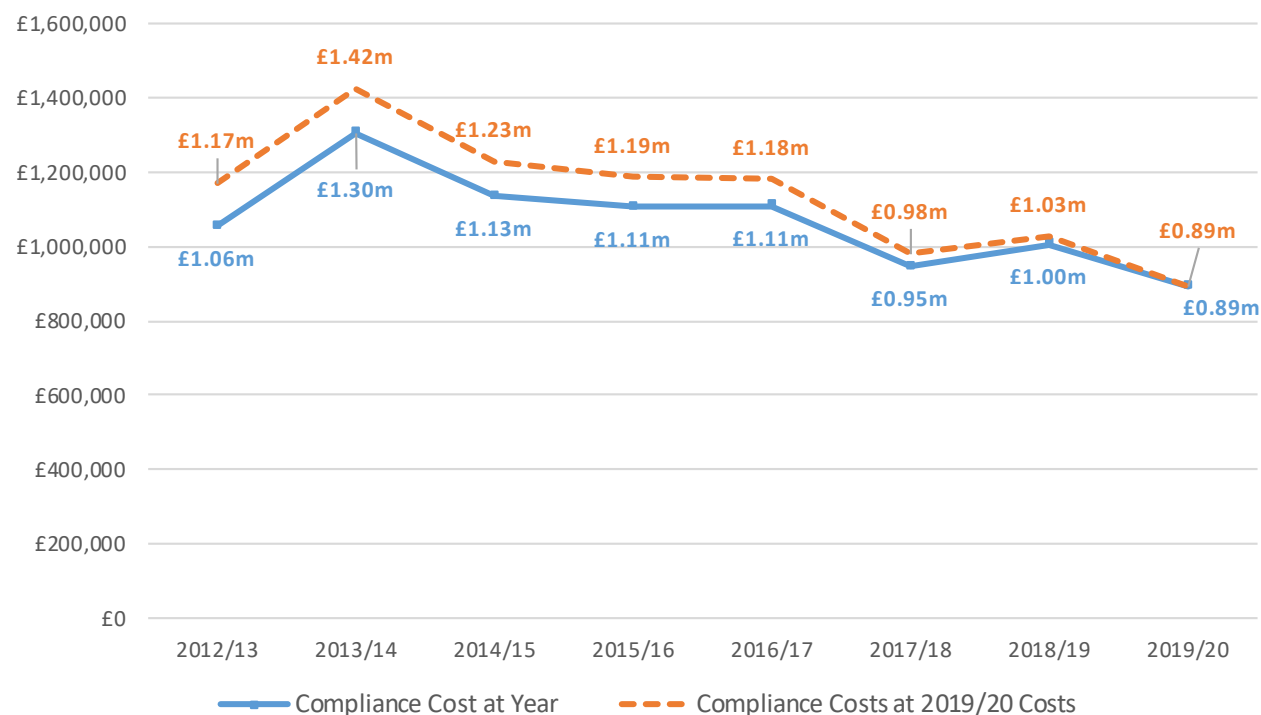
8. Examination of the Trend, 2012/13 to 2019/20

Figure 8 illustrates the change in the estimated cost to businesses of complying with Government Statistical Surveys from 2012/13 to 2019/20³⁰.

The blue line shows the cost in terms of raw or current prices; that is in terms of staff cost at the time of the survey, without allowing for the effects of changes to levels of pay. The dashed orange line shows the cost after wage growth has been taken into account. External costs incurred by businesses have not been adjusted. The base staff cost are the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) costs used for 2019/20.

Aside from a slight increase between 2017/18 and 2018/19³¹, the estimated compliance cost to businesses based on staff costs at the time of the survey has gradually reduced from a peak of £1.30m in 2013/14 to a new low of £0.89m in 2019/20³². This is 5% lower than the previous low of £0.95m in 2017/18, and 31% lower than the peak in 2013/14; and represents a decrease of 11% on 2018/19 compliance costs.

Figure 8: NI compliance cost from 2012/13 to 2019/20



When the impact of changes in staff costs is removed (i.e. compliance costs are based on 2019/20 costs), a more pronounced downward trend is observed between 2013/14 and 2017/18. Furthermore, there is a 12% decrease in compliance costs between 2018/19 and 2019/20.

³⁰ The figures in the time series have not been adjusted for the discontinuity. See Appendix A3.

³¹ Over a quarter (1.8%) of the (6.3%) increase between 2017/18 and 2018/19 was due to a change in the way compliance costs were estimated for surveys carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on behalf of ELMS.

³² The absence of a decrease between 2015/16 and 2016/17 was due to the discontinuity in the time series (i.e. the inclusion of additional surveys, and an increase in compliance costs for ONS surveys). The figures presented in Figure 8 have not been adjusted for this discontinuity. There was also some over-estimation in the compliance costs for 2016/17 which was removed in 2017/18. Further details are provided in Appendix A3.

9. Measures being taken to Reduce Compliance Cost

A few of the specific initiatives employed by departments in trying to reduce respondent burden include:

Department	Survey	Step taken to reduce compliance burden
DAERA	December Agricultural & Horticulture Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraged more respondents to use the online system. Use of administrative sources.
	June Agricultural & Horticulture Census	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraged more respondents to use the online system. Use of administrative sources.
	Horticultural Surveys	Encouraged more respondents to use the online system
	Survey of fertiliser deliveries	Smaller firms reporting quarterly.
DAERA (AFBI)³³	Pesticide Usage Survey	Increased use of email, digital technologies and recording software when available.
DOF (ELMS)³⁴	Quarterly Business Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased usage of electronic data collection, including a move to a web-form portal rather than PDF returns. Reduced the number of follow-up calls made in the Telephone Response Chasing process to a maximum of 3 per business. Data obtained from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) was shared with the QBS to prevent businesses having to return the same information twice. Survey managers moved to monitoring coverage, rather than response rate, with a targeted approach to getting returns from priority businesses.
	NI Research and Development Survey	Survey has been moved to largely web-based forms.
	Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry	Increased usage of e-forms.
	Business Register Inquiry (IDBR)	Increased usage of e-forms.
	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings	Increased usage of e-forms.
	Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)	Increased usage of e-forms.

³³ AFBI (Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute)

³⁴ ELMS (Economic and Labour Market Statistics)

Department	Survey	Step taken to reduce compliance burden
DE	ETI Post-inspection Evaluation 2019/20	The questionnaire was reviewed and refined.
	School Census – voluntary/private pre-school and independent school returns	Paper forms were only sent on request to encourage use of the online app with validation checks built in. Fewer schools required follow up calls for validation.
DE (Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta)	Special Educational Needs in the Irish-medium Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The survey was made as succinct as possible. ▪ Respondents were also able to answer via phone call if easier.
DfI	Active School Travel Programme – School Survey	Included electronic/email completion option.
DfI (InvestNI)	Purchasing Manager’s Index (PMI)	In 2019/20, the PMI included an online option for the first time, having previously been a telephone based survey. It is planned to move to solely online in the future.
DoJ	AccessNI Customer Survey	A small number of questions were removed from the survey in 2019/20.
DoH	Northern Ireland Sight Test and Ophthalmic Public Health Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The number of questions was reduced to elicit only essential information. ▪ The electronic method was revised, following feedback that the previous system was too cumbersome, and was replaced with a spreadsheet tool.

Appendix A: Methodology, Quality and Use of Publication

A1. Rationale for publication

The collection of data by government departments and their arm's length bodies (ALBs) causes a burden on data suppliers. It is important to keep this burden to a minimum and hence the practice of survey control has been developed and practiced within Northern Ireland since the 1980s.

The [Code of Practice for Statistics](#)³⁵ recognises the importance of monitoring and reducing respondent burden, balanced with the need to produce official statistics that are fundamental to good government and provide a good evidence base to inform public policy. It emphasises the importance of **transparency**, ensuring respondent **burden is proportionate to benefits** and making **use of existing data** before undertaking a new data collection:

V5.5 Statistics producers should be transparent in their approach to monitoring and reducing the burden on those providing their information, and on those involved in collecting, recording and supplying data. The burden imposed should be proportionate to the benefits arising from the use of the statistics.

V5.3 The suitability of existing data, including administrative, open and privately-held data, should be assessed before undertaking a new data collection.

V5.1 Opportunities for data sharing, data linkage, cross-analysis of sources, and the reuse of data should be taken wherever feasible. Recognised standards, classifications, definitions, and methods should be applied to data wherever possible.

V5.6 Statistics producers should analyse the impact of new data requirements or extending existing collections on those involved in the collection, recording and supply of data, against the potential value of the statistics in serving the public good.

V5.4 Voluntary participation in statistical data collection should be sought, rather than using statutory powers, wherever possible.

The burden to businesses due to statutory Government Statistical Surveys is also monitored by the [Statistics Advisory Committee](#)³⁶ (SAC). Under the [Statistics of Trade and Employment \(NI\) Order 1988](#)³⁷, a Northern Ireland Department is required to consult this committee before carrying out a statutory survey of businesses. This publication is provided to SAC annually and provides an overview of the overall cost to businesses due to NI Government Statistical Surveys³⁸.

³⁵ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/the-code/>

³⁶ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/statistics-advisory-committee>

³⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1988/595/data.pdf>

³⁸ Under this Order, a business is defined as any person(s) carrying out an undertaking by way of trade or business, whether or not the trade or business is carried on for profit; and any other undertaking providing employment in respect of which Class 1 contributions are payable under the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Act 1975.

A2. Methodology

Data collection

Data were 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). Respondents were provided with guidance notes and asked to provide details on the Government Statistical Surveys which their department/ organisation had commissioned or carried out in 2019/20. This information was returned to NISRA Survey Control Unit for quality assurance.

Coverage

All statistical surveys to businesses carried out by, or on behalf of, Northern Ireland Government Departments (including Arm's Length Bodies) are included, as well as statistical surveys carried out by NI Departments (or ALBs) on behalf of GB Government Departments (or ALBs) where the data are used directly by the NI Department (or ALB) or feed into UK Statistics.

A separate [publication](#)³⁹ is produced for surveys to households and individuals and is published alongside this publication. The scope of survey control was extended to households and individuals in 2014/15. For surveys of households and individuals, survey burden is calculated on the basis of the time taken to respond to the survey.

Definition of Business

For Survey Control purposes, businesses include commercial businesses (including self-employed persons surveyed in the context of their business), schools, universities, colleges, voluntary organisations, non-profit bodies, mutual associations etc. Surveys of local councils are also included under surveys to businesses.

Definition of Statistical Survey

A statistical survey is any structured inquiry designed to obtain aggregated data (which may be qualitative or quantitative) where the individual or corporate identities of the respondents are in themselves of little significance.

This includes both regular and ad hoc surveys; both voluntary and statutory surveys that may be required to determine, evaluate or monitor policy and/or action, provide social or economic indicators or measure customer satisfaction. Statistical surveys conducted by, or on behalf of, non-departmental public bodies are also covered. Arm's length bodies are included under their parent departments.

³⁹ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/government/ni-statistical-surveys-assessment-burden>

Statistical surveys in scope are not limited to those conducted by statistics branches and include all modes of data collection: completion of a questionnaire; telephone data entry; face-to-face interview; online/email data collection etc.

Surveys that contribute to official statistics and those that do not are both in the scope of survey control.

The following are examples of statistical surveys **covered** by these controls:

- Surveys designed to obtain aggregated data;
- Surveys where responses are solicited by means of a direct approach to potential respondents;
- Surveys carried out for departmental sponsors by consultants or private organisations;
- Customer satisfaction surveys designed to identify overall success of a product or service.

The following are examples of surveys **excluded** from survey control:

- Surveys where there is no direct approach made and where respondents clearly select themselves (e.g. web sites, readership surveys, some types of consultation exercises where there is an invitation to comment);
- Where information is required as an integral part of the operational management of a public service. Such returns will often be regulated under specific departmental controls;
- Surveys relating to the contractual obligations of potential respondents to the department or agency concerned;
- Surveys to respondents in central government and its agencies.

Where part of a survey falls outside scope, the part of the survey within scope has been included where possible.

Compliance Cost

Compliance costs are the estimated financial burden placed on businesses as a result of completing government statistical surveys. Where the actual or estimated completion time is not available for each business, an overall completion time for the survey is estimated using the median time to complete the survey. The median time to complete the survey is estimated based on: information from the survey, paradata, historical data (within the last five years), a pilot survey, reviews or survey manager expertise. Only those completing the survey are included; nonresponse is assumed to place no burden on respondents. Any time spent establishing eligibility for businesses that are subsequently deemed out of scope is included.

Where a business survey uses a number of different form types, or data collection methods e.g. electronic/postal, and these vary in terms of completion time then the calculations may be conducted separately for each form type/ data collection method and summed for an overall compliance cost. Similarly, if there are different types of businesses with different completion times then the calculations for each type of business may be carried out separately and summed.

Validation procedures may require a re-contact with the business. The burden due to re-contact is also calculated. If actual or estimated re-contact times are not available then the median time taken to complete the full questionnaire may be substituted on the assumption that a respondent may need to review the entire questionnaire.

SCLOs are provided with a choice of five rates of pay taken from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)⁴⁰. SCLOs must select the most appropriate rate of pay for the person most likely to have completed the survey. The rates of pay used in compliance cost calculations are the UK median hourly pay (excluding overtime)⁴¹ for the following grades:

Grade	ASHE Code
Chief Executive and Senior Officials	1115
Managers and Senior Officials	1
Professional Occupations	2
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	3
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	4

Any external costs incurred by businesses (e.g. accountant's fees) when complying with government survey requests are also included in the calculation of compliance cost.

The Compliance Cost (£) is a simple **addition** of Response Cost (£), Re-contact Cost (£) and External Cost (£), which are calculated as:

Response Cost (£) = No. of responses x Median time (hrs) x Hourly rate (£/hr)

Re-contact Cost (£) = No. re-contacted x Median time (hrs) x Hourly rate (£/hr)

External Cost (£) = No. with external cost x Median external cost (£)

⁴⁰ The provisional 2019 ASHE results have been used for 2019/20. These figures have been used to ensure direct comparability with 2019/20 compliance costs published for other parts of the UK (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/regionbyoccupation4digitsoc2010ashtable15>).

⁴¹ Table 15.6a: Earnings and hours worked, region by occupation by four-digit SOC: Hourly pay - Excluding overtime 2019

If a survey is carried out on behalf of a number of government departments, then each government department will only include the compliance costs for the questions/ modules commissioned by them⁴².

Compliance costs at current year staff costs (constant prices)

The method used for calculating compliance costs at current year staff costs (or constant prices) is to use the rates of pay for the current, or base year, instead of the rates for previous years. This removes the effect of wage growth (changing staff costs) and adjusts the overall cost making it directly comparable to the current year. Any external costs incurred by businesses have not been adjusted as these represent a small proportion of the overall total.

Grade ⁴³	2012 (for 2012/13)	2013 (for 2013/14)	2014 (for 2014/15)	2015 (for 2015/16)	2016 (for 2016/17)	2017 (for 2017/18)	2018 (for 2018/19)	2019 (for 2019/20)
Chief Executives and Senior Officials (1115)	£42.50	£43.17	£41.35	£42.42	£43.82	£43.82	£46.00	£44.08
Managers, directors and senior officials (1)	£18.57	£19.04	£19.25	£19.42	£19.71	£20.51	£20.60	£20.95
Professional occupations (2)	£18.99	£19.23	£19.31	£19.45	£19.71	£20.00	£20.44	£21.08
Associate professional and technical occupations (3)	£14.53	£14.74	£14.81	£15.00	£15.00	£15.33	£15.63	£15.73
Administrative and secretarial occupations (4)	£9.92	£10.00	£10.12	£10.28	£10.51	£10.71	£11.07	£11.44

Statutory and Voluntary surveys

Where the status of a survey is statutory there is a legal obligation on the respondents to provide the information that will be collected, for example, under the Statistics of Trade and Employment (NI) Order 1988. The Code of Practice for Statistics encourages official statistics producers to seek voluntary participation in statistical data collection rather than using statutory powers, wherever possible.

Official Statistics and Other Statistics surveys

Surveys that contribute to National or official statistics are referred to as 'official statistics' surveys, and surveys that do not contribute to National or official statistics are referred to as 'other statistics' surveys.

Data collection method

The data collection method is recorded for each survey. Prior to 2016/17 SCLOs were asked to write-in the data collection method(s) used for each survey. This meant that there was substantial variation in the descriptions used and it was not always easy to identify the primary data collection

⁴² The number of forms however will be the same as for the complete survey, which means that the forms and surveys will be counted more than once in aggregated figures.

⁴³ Hourly rates of pay are (median) Hourly (£) UK rates of pay (excluding overtime)

method. In 2016/17, this was replaced with a drop-down menu (Paper questionnaire; Paper diary⁴⁴; Telephone interview; Face-to-face interview; Email data collection; Online questionnaire/ data collection; Online/electronic diary⁴⁴; Telephone data entry; and Digital Voice Recognition Survey). SCLOs are asked to identify the primary, secondary, tertiary, etc. method of data collection. As a result, groupings and analysis from 2016/17 onwards will be more accurate than in previous years.

Rounding

In most tables the compliance costs have been rounded to the nearest hundred. Thus figures may not add exactly due to rounding.

A3. Discontinuity (affecting 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19)

The application of the survey control methodology was reviewed prior to the 2016/17 data collection and improved guidance was produced. This has resulted in a discontinuity in the time series as some surveys, and types of surveys, which were excluded prior to 2016/17 are now included.

The methodology used to calculate compliance costs for surveys carried out by ONS, on behalf of ELMS, was also revised in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19. This has resulted in a substantial increase in the estimated compliance costs for some surveys in 2016/17, a smaller decrease for 2017/18 offsetting some of the 2016/17 increase, and a relatively small increase for 2018/19.

This discontinuity is noted when presenting the between year comparisons and examining the trend over time.

Reason for Discontinuity – Improved Coverage

Prior to the 2016/17 data collection exercise, a review was conducted of the guidance provided to Survey Control Liaison Officers (SCLOs) to provide greater clarity around the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of surveys. As a result of this review, a number of surveys that were not included in previous years have been included from 2016/17, specifically surveys carried out by Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) and some surveys which were omitted due to being considered part of the operational management of a public service. These are primarily participant evaluation surveys, customer surveys and surveys which have a secondary operational purpose.

Due to these coverage changes, from 2016/17 there is an increase in the total number of surveys, forms and compliance costs. For DE and DfE, there is also an impact from 2017/18. For DE, the impact from 2017/18 is a decrease which offsets some of the increase in 2016/17.

⁴⁴ This option was first introduced in 2017/18. As paper diaries usually accompany face-to-face interviews, these have been grouped with face-to-face interviews in the analysis. This maintains consistency with what was done in 2016/17 and earlier years. Online/electronic diaries have been grouped with online questionnaire/data collection.

Assessment of Impact of 2016/17 coverage changes

In 2016/17, including those surveys and types of surveys that were not previously included potentially increased the number of surveys by 46, the number of forms by around 17,000 and the overall compliance burden by around £61,000.

The impact was most notable for DE where this potentially increased the number of surveys by 41, the number of forms by around 8,000 and the compliance burden by around £47,000. DfC was the next most affected department overall, where including these surveys potentially increased the number of surveys by one, the number of returns by 6,300 and the compliance burden by almost £12,000. There was also an impact in DfE, increasing the number of surveys by three. However, these were very small surveys with few returns and low levels of compliance burden.

While these figures gives an indication of the potential size of the discontinuity, it is difficult to say with certainty what surveys would have been included had the guidance not been reviewed and additional training provided.

Assessment of Impact of 2017/18 coverage changes

In 2017/18, surveys of teachers which had been incorrectly included in the 2016/17 data for DE were removed⁴⁵. These surveys were mostly ad-hoc training or event evaluation surveys, carried out by CCEA (Council for Curriculum, Examinations & Assessments), and accounted for 18 of the additional 41 DE surveys in 2016/17, around 1300 of the additional forms and £2,100 of the increase in compliance costs⁴⁶.

For DfE, surveys carried out by the Construction Industry Training Board NI (CITB NI) and Insolvency Service, were included for the first time in 2017/18. CITB NI conducted 13 surveys of businesses in 2017/18 which accounted for 235 forms and compliance costs of £1,600; the Insolvency Service conducted a single survey which had 5 responses with a compliance cost of less than £1.

Reason for Discontinuity – Change in Methodology used by ONS

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) also carried out a major review of its methodology in 2016/17, with further improvements in 2017/18 and 2018/19. This resulted in a large increase in compliance costs for ONS surveys in 2016/17, a smaller decrease in 2017/18 which offset some of the earlier increase, and a relatively small increase in 2018/19. This change in methodology impacts the compliance costs but not the number of surveys or number of responses.

In 2016/17, ONS moved away from calculating stratified compliance costs based on business size; included an estimate of re-contact burden and reviewed median completion times in conjunction with survey managers.

⁴⁵ Surveys of teachers are excluded from survey control as the majority of teachers are employees of the Education Authority (EA) or the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) which are both ALBs of the Department of Education and surveys of government employees are excluded from survey control (see Section A2).

⁴⁶ This has been estimated based on the information returned for CCEA (and other DE) surveys in 2016/17.

In 2017/18, median completion times were reviewed for a further ten surveys and median re-contact times (which had been assumed to be equal to median completion times) were revised. This assumption, while allowable under the survey control methodology (see Section A2), inflated the compliance cost estimates for these surveys in 2016/17.

In 2018/19, ONS revisited the staff costs used in calculating compliance burden and moved away from a single occupation code applied to all surveys (ASHE Code 1) to a weighted calculation based on the breakdown of the profession of respondents obtained from survey compliance reviews⁴⁷

Assessment of Impact of 2016/17 ONS methodology changes

The change to the methodology used by ONS in 2016/17 resulted in a large increase in the compliance costs for surveys carried out by ONS on behalf of ELMS. While the total number of responses remained approximately constant, at around 12,000, for the 27 surveys carried out by ONS that were common to both 2015/16 and 2016/17, the compliance costs increased by 61% (from £213,100 to £342,600). Salary costs based on ASHE Code 1 (used for ONS surveys) increased by 1.5% between 2015/16 and 2016/17. It is not possible to say what proportion of the change is due to what part of the change in methodology.

Assessment of Impact of 2017/18 ONS methodology changes

The impact of the change in the methodology used by ONS in 2017/18 has been assessed by applying the revised median completion times, and revised median re-contact times to the 2016/17 data and re-calculating the compliance costs for those surveys where comparable information is available for both years. Applying the revised median re-contact times to the 2016/17 data, reduces the compliance costs by £81,900; this equates to 62% of the increase observed between 2015/16 and 2016/17 for these 22 surveys. Although this does not cover all surveys, it provides an indication of how much of the change between 2015/16 and 2016/17 may have been due to the use of the median completion time as a proxy for the median re-contact time. This over-estimation is only present in the 2016/17 data. The review of median completion times affected ten surveys in 2017/18. Applying the revised medians to the 2016/17 data would have reduced the compliance costs by £57,500 and reduced the compliance costs in 2017/18 by £59,300.

Assessment of Impact of 2018/19 ONS methodology changes

The change in the methodology used by ONS to estimate staff costs has resulted in an increase of £16,700 in the estimated compliance costs for 2018/19. This has been assessed by comparing compliance costs for ONS surveys calculated using the revised approach (a weighted calculation based on all five ASHE Codes) with compliance costs calculated using the previous approach (a single ASHE Code 1).

⁴⁷ Compliance reviews of ONS surveys are carried out every three or five years (depending on the frequency of the survey). A subsample is sent a separate survey, asking questions to more accurately calculate respondent burden. Questions are also added to the end of a new surveys or survey with substantial changes to allow ONS to assess the impact.

A4. Main uses of these statistics

These statistics are used by business and industry, by the Statistics Advisory Committee (SAC), by Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), by the media and by the general public. Under the Statistics of Trade and Employment (NI) Order 1988, a Northern Ireland Department is required to consult SAC before carrying out a statutory survey of businesses⁴⁸. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) also consults SAC before carrying out voluntary surveys of businesses. This publication is provided to SAC annually and provides an overview of the overall cost to businesses of completing NI Government Statistical Surveys⁴⁹.

Information in this publication has previously been used to investigate the cost to Northern Ireland businesses in completing government surveys; to respond to MLA questions; and to provide briefing for the Minister of Finance. The information has also been used by NISRA branches to identify their contribution to the overall burden on businesses, and to assess the impact of alternative methods of data collection on the compliance burden resulting from their surveys.

A5. Data quality

Data are derived from returns provided by other government departments and ALBs. Although the compliance cost is an estimate, the quality of the underlying data has improved greatly since the pre-2016/17 review, and is now considered to be of a good standard. The improvements include:

- Improved coverage of non-NISRA branches within Departments; and improved coverage of ALBs.
- Better application of the criteria to determine whether surveys should be included or excluded from the return.
- Better estimation of median completion times, re-contacts and median re-contact times.
- More use of separate calculations for different subgroups where the compliance costs vary across different modes of data collection and/or type of business.
- Improved quality assurance, with the introduction of local quality assurance by SCLOs.

There have also been improvements in the coherence and comparability of the returned data, both within and between departments, due to improved and expanded SCLO guidance, annual training for SCLOs and an improved data collection workbook, including standardised options for e.g. data

⁴⁸ Under this Order, a business is defined as any person(s) carrying out an undertaking by way of trade or business, whether or not the trade or business is carried on for profit; and any other undertaking providing employment in respect of which Class 1 contributions are payable under the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Act 1975.

⁴⁹ The most recent feedback from SAC indicates that the report meets their needs both in terms of coverage and content. In particular, the feedback from SAC identified that the breakdown of survey costs for statutory and voluntary surveys was particularly useful.

collection methods; automatic calculation of compliance costs; built-in guidance and basic validation checks. These changes will result in improved comparability over time.

The data collection process means that individual SCLOs are the key decision makers in terms of including or excluding surveys from the returns. While there is communication between SCLOs and NISRA Survey Control Unit to clarify any queries, there is the potential for individual interpretations of the inclusion and exclusion criteria to lead to small inconsistencies in individual returns.

The quality assurance checks carried out by Survey Control Unit focus on ensuring that the data returned are complete and internally consistent for the current year, and also consistent with returns from previous years. Where data are missing or there are large changes or inconsistencies, explanations are sought from the data supplier, and if necessary the data are re-supplied.

Changes in the methodology used by ONS - as well as the data quality improvements outlined above - have resulted in discontinuities in the time series, which are discussed in section A3 above.

Further information on the quality of the data used to produce these official statistics can be found in the [Background Quality Report – Cost to Business of Completing Statistical Surveys issued by Northern Ireland Departments](#)⁵⁰.

A6. User Engagement

User engagement is on-going between the publication of one report and the production of the next. Following the pre-2016/17 review of the guidance and methodology a specific programme of engagement was carried out. This has resulted in some minor changes to the publication e.g. referencing the Statistics Advisory Committee and Statistics of Trade and Employment (NI) Order 1988.

We would welcome your feedback, on what you use this report for, any tables/ charts or commentary you find particularly helpful and any additional analysis you would like to see. Feedback can be provided by emailing garbhan.mckevitt@nisra.gov.uk.

⁵⁰ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/background-quality-report-cost-business-completing-statistical-surveys-issued-by>

Appendix B: Case Study – Use of Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics – informing EU Exit discussions and policy development

Economic and Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) Branch, in the Department of Finance, publish official statistics on imports and exports in their [Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics](#) (BESES) publications⁵¹. Recent publications include:

- Northern Ireland Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics: 2019 ([report](#) and [data tables](#)) - published 28 April 2021
- Northern Ireland Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics: Imports and Purchases 2018 ([report](#) and [data tables](#)) - published 21 May 2020
- Northern Ireland Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics: Goods and Services 2018 ([report](#) and [data tables](#)) - published 12 March 2020

The BESES data are captured through the [Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry](#)⁵² (NIABI), which collects both financial and employment information from businesses and other establishments and covers about two thirds of the economy.

Data are available for trade in both goods and services at the Local Government District Level within NI and importantly data are also collected on trade between NI and GB. This is the only source anywhere for this information. Exports data are also available for trade to each member state of the EU and to approximately 50 individual non-EU countries.

The BESES data have been an invaluable resource for government officials over the last number of years, whereby they have been used by Departments to inform important and high level EU Exit policy documents and negotiations/discussions at the highest level.

Officials in the Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU) (now defunct), Cabinet Office, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), HM Treasury (HMT), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and the Department for the Economy (DfE) in Northern Ireland have all used the BESES data to inform their EU Exit analyses. HMRC, HMT and DfE also have access to more detailed (unpublished) microdata via a data sharing agreement with NISRA.

BESES data have formed the input to numerous trade/EU Exit related reports and papers over recent years, a sample of the reports and papers developed or published during 2019/20 is highlighted below; a number of which produced by DExEU and the Cabinet Office directly informed the UK Government's policy response to proposals around the EU Withdrawal Agreement and the NI Protocol, and were used during negotiations with the EU Taskforce 50.

⁵¹ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/business-statistics/broad-economy-sales-and-exports-statistics>

⁵² <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/business-statistics/annual-business-inquiry>

The following sections provide a brief overview of how various NI and GB Government Departments, along with other stakeholders used data from the BESES during 2019/20:

The Department for the Economy (DfE)

The EU Exit Preparation and Transition Group within the Department for the Economy (DfE) has relied heavily upon the trade data available from the BESES statistics to inform EU Exit discussions over recent years. During 2019/20 DfE used BESES data to produce a number of research articles and publications to inform the UK and NI Government's understanding of Northern Ireland's trade situation and potential impacts of EU Exit on NI, an overview is provided below. During this time, DfE also received numerous ad hoc data tables to inform internal policy discussions around EU Exit.

- [DfE: Northern Ireland Retail Study: Value, Volume and Proportion of Goods Sourced from GB or transported via GB from other parts of the world \(March 2019\)](#)⁵³

BESES data were a key input into this paper which provided analysis and information on the estimated overall value and volume of retail goods purchased in NI in 2017 and estimated the proportion of goods in NI which are sourced from GB or are transported into NI via GB from other parts of the world.

The results of this analysis demonstrated that the reliance of the NI consumer on external markets for retail products is very high. GB is by far NI's largest source for the routing of retail goods including acting as the main route for the transportation of goods that come from other parts of the EU and Rest of the World.

- [DfE: Irish land border - existing and potential customs facilitations in a no-deal scenario \(June 2019\)](#)⁵⁴

During 2019 the Department for the Economy commissioned research into customs facilitations that were available in a no-deal scenario as part of the Department's no deal planning. The aim of the research was to identify the facilitations available to businesses trading across the land border in a no deal context, and to identify whether there was any assistance the Department or its arms-length-bodies could offer businesses in a no-deal scenario.

The BESES data were a key data source in this research, and were used to set the context and provide detail on the profile of trade between NI and Ireland.

⁵³ <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-retail-study-value-volume-and-proportion-goods-sourced-gb-or-transported-gb-other>

⁵⁴ <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/irish-land-border-existing-and-potential-customs-facilitations-no-deal-scenario>

- [DfE: Northern Ireland Trade Data - an update \(July 2019\)](#)⁵⁵

In August 2017, the UK Government published an ‘Additional Data Paper’ along with its [Position Paper on Ireland/Northern Ireland](#)⁵⁶. When NISRA released updated data via the BESES the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) led by DfE subsequently revised the data paper to bring it up to date.

The paper set out the evidence for stakeholders to use to help inform policy discussions/decisions in addressing the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland and Ireland in light of the UK's EU withdrawal.

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)

EU Exit analysis

During 2019 DAERA received access to detailed BESES microdata via a Ministerial Direction⁵⁷ to allow them to undertake analysis of NI trade data to provide them with information on the frequency, volume and value of goods and services imported to and exported from NI to inform EU-Exit discussions. The purpose of the research was to allow policy side to better understand the nature of Northern Ireland trade by agricultural and food processing businesses in the context of EU-Exit, and to inform EU-Exit discussions.

Northern Ireland Food and Drinks Processing report

ELMS has a service level agreement with DAERA to provide an annual dataset from the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) and the BESES to facilitate production of their annual [Northern Ireland Food and Drinks Processing report](#)⁵⁸. BESES data are used to provide details of the total sales and imports and exports of food and drinks processing businesses, alongside other information from the ABI such as gross value added and employment.

The Cabinet Office

During 2019 and 2020 ELMS worked closely with key stakeholders involved in EU Exit discussions and provided support and data to inform a number of important policy papers. One such key paper was the Cabinet Office's Policy Paper titled [The UK's approach to the Northern Ireland Protocol \(May 2020\)](#)⁵⁹.

⁵⁵ <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-trade-data-update>

⁵⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-ireland-and-ireland-a-position-paper>

⁵⁷ The [Statistics of Trade and Employment Order \(NI\)](#) allows survey data collected from businesses to be shared with another government department (and some other bodies) under a Ministerial direction, for the purpose of the exercise by that department of its functions. This includes a consultant appointed by the department or body to advise, or report to, the department (or body) on a matter related to its functions.

⁵⁸ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/size-and-performance-ni-food-and-drinks-processing-sector>

⁵⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uks-approach-to-the-northern-ireland-protocol/the-uks-approach-to-the-northern-ireland-protocol>

This Command Paper outlined how the UK Government envisaged how the Protocol could be implemented in a way that would protect the interests of the people and economy of Northern Ireland, ensure the effective working of the UK's internal market, provide appropriate protection for the EU Single Market and uphold the rights of all Northern Ireland's citizens. Integral to this paper was having a clear understand of trade relationships between NI and GB, and NI and the Republic of Ireland.

Department for Exiting the European Union (DExEU)

As part of the EU Exit work stream ELMS provided data and support to the Department for Exiting the European Union around their work on the EU Withdrawal Agreement. As the only source of information on trade between NI and GB the BESES data featured heavily in their work, forming input into ministerial briefing and policy papers. During 2019 the BESES data were a key data sourced quoted in the [European Union \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Bill Impact Assessment \(October 2019\)](#)⁶⁰ which informed the key primary legislation known as The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, and delegated legislation made under it. This would be the primary means by which the Withdrawal Agreement was brought into domestic law in the UK, including in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Bill was a vital tool in delivering a smooth and orderly exit from the EU.

Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)

During 2019 ABI and BESES microdata were provided to ESRI via a Ministerial Direction to produce a report titled [Shock absorption capacity of firms in Ireland and Northern Ireland](#)⁶¹.

This report formed part of a research programme being undertaken on behalf of InterTradeIreland by the ESRI on 'Enterprises and Cross-Border Trade'. This research used statistical data from the NISRA and the Central Statistics Office (CSO). The permission for controlled access to micro datasets was granted for research purposes under strict confidentiality agreements.

This report examined how the capacity of firms to absorb shocks can be assessed using detailed firm-level patterns of risk exposure across Ireland and Northern Ireland. A risk profile of firms based on profit margins and sales growth performance shows smaller firms tend to be more exposed to shocks.

NISRA Supply-Use Tables (ELMS)

The [Supply-Use tables](#)⁶² (SUTs) produced by Economic and Labour Market Statistics, in the Department of Finance, provide a picture of the flows of products and services in the economy for a single year and are used to set the level of annual current price Gross Domestic Product (GDP). They show

⁶⁰ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/841245/EU_Withdrawal_Agreement_Bill_Impact_Assessment.pdf

⁶¹ <https://intertradeireland.com/insights/publications/shock-absorption-capacity-of-firms-in-ireland-and-northern-ireland>

⁶² <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/ni-economic-accounts-project-2015-and-2016-experimental-results>

the composition of uses and resources across institutional sectors and the inter-dependence of industries in order to reconcile the production, income and expenditure approaches to the measurement of GDP.

Data from the ABI and BESES are key inputs to the development of the SUTs. The SUTs in turn have been used to produce Input-Output tables (IOTs) which have been used to inform the development of a number of econometric modelling tools such as a Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model for NI (a [research paper highlighting the DfE CGE work](#)⁶³ was published in August 2019).

⁶³ <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/research-bulletin-19-6-expanding-analytical-toolkit-with-cge-model.pdf>

Appendix C: Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes

The 2016-21 draft Programme for Government (PfG) comprised 12 strategic outcomes outlined by the Executive to represent the society we wish to have. These 12 outcomes were supported by 49 population indicators, which were accompanied by measures (derived from statistics) which monitored performance in relation to the outcomes⁶⁴. The table below lists the 12 outcomes and the indicators used to monitor performance against each outcome.

Detailed descriptions of each of these strategic outcomes can be found in the [Outcomes Delivery Plan \(December 2019\)](#)⁶⁵, including why each of the outcomes matters; what the issues were and how these would be addressed; the relevant indicators for that outcome (with a link to the data sources); and the proposed actions along with the rationale and associated benefits.

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS
1 We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector NI Composite Economic Index • External sales • Rate of innovation activity • Employment rate by council area • % change in energy security of supply margin
2 We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % all journeys which are made by walking/cycling/public transport • Greenhouse gas emissions • % household waste that is reused, recycled or composted • Annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentration at monitored urban roadside locations • Levels of soluble reactive phosphorus in our rivers and levels of Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen in our marine waters • Biodiversity (% of protected area under favourable management)
3 We have a more equal society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gap between highest and lowest deprivation quintile in healthy life expectancy at birth • Gap between % non-FSME school leavers and % FSME school leavers achieving at Level 2 or above including English & Maths • % population living in absolute and relative poverty • Employment rate of 16-64 year olds by deprivation quintile • Economic inactivity rate excluding students • Employment rate by council area

⁶⁴ Detailed Measurement Annexes provided further details of each measure, how they were calculated and the data sources used.

⁶⁵ <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/outcomes-delivery-plan-december-2019>. This replaced the 2018/19 Outcomes Delivery Plan (<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/outcomes-delivery-plan-201819>)

<p>4 We enjoy long, healthy, active lives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy life expectancy at birth • Preventable mortality • % population with GHQ12 scores ≥ 4 (signifying possible mental health problem) • Satisfaction with health and social care • Gap between highest and lowest deprivation quintile in healthy life expectancy at birth • Confidence of the population aged 60 years or older (as measured by self-efficacy)
<p>5 We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of innovation activity • Proportion of premises with access to broadband services at speeds at or above 30Mbps • % engaging in arts/cultural activities • Confidence (as measured by self-efficacy) • % school leavers achieving at least level 2 or above including English and Maths
<p>6 We have more people working in better jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic inactivity rate excluding students • Proportion of the workforce in employment qualified to level 1 and above, level 2 and above, level 3 and above, and level 4 and above • Seasonally adjusted employment rate (16-64) • A Better Jobs Index • % people working part time who would like to work more hours • Employment rate by council area • Proportion of local graduates from local institutions in professional or management occupations or in further study six months after graduation
<p>7 We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence rate (% of the population who were victims of any NI Crime Survey crime) • A Respect Index • % the population who believe their cultural identity is respected by society • Average time taken to complete criminal cases • Reoffending rate
<p>8 We care for others and we help those in need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % population with GHQ12 scores ≥ 4 (signifying possible mental health problem) • Number of adults receiving social care services at home or self directed support for social care as a % of the total number of adults needing care • % population living in absolute and relative poverty • Average life satisfaction score of people with disabilities • Number of households in housing stress • Confidence of the population aged 60 years or older (as measured by self-efficacy)

<p>9 We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Respect Index • % who think all leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres in their areas are “shared and open” to both Protestants and Catholics • % of the population who believe their cultural identity is respected by society • Average life satisfaction score of people with disabilities • Confidence (as measured by self-efficacy)
<p>10 We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence rate (% of the population who were victims of any NI Crime Survey crime) • Total spend by external visitors • % of the population who believe their cultural identity is respected by society • Nation Brands Index • A Better Jobs Index
<p>11 We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average journey time on key economic corridors • Proportion of premises with access to broadband services at speeds at or above 30Mbps • Usage of online channels to access public services • % of all journeys which are made by walking/cycling/public transport • Overall Performance Assessment (NI Water) • Gap between the number of houses we need, and the number of houses we have
<p>12 We give our children and young people the best start in life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % babies born at low birth weight • % children at appropriate stage of development in their immediate pre-school year • % schools found to be good or better • Gap between % non-FSME school leavers and % FSME school leavers achieving at Level 2 or above including English and Maths • % school leavers achieving at Level 2 or above including English and Maths • % care leavers who, aged 19, were in education, training or employment

Appendix D: Departments and their abbreviations

Abbreviation	Department
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DE	Department of Education
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for Enterprise
DfI	Department for Infrastructure
DoF	Department of Finance
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ	Department of Justice
TEO	The Executive Office
PPS	Public Prosecution Service

Appendix E: Further Information

Downloadable data

The data used in this report can be downloaded from the 'NI Statistical Surveys - Assessment of Cost Burden to Business 2019-20' page, which can be accessed from <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/government/ni-statistical-surveys-assessment-burden>.

Information is provided for each individual survey, including the name, purpose of the survey, frequency, statutory/voluntary status, official statistics status, data collection methods (primary, secondary etc.), issued sample, achieved sample, compliance cost, department and ALB/branch. The survey contact and a link to the published statistics (or survey) is also included. This allows more detailed analysis to be carried out for individual surveys and/or additional information sought.

Tables and charts

The tables and charts in this report, including the data used in the charts and some additional analysis, can be downloaded from the 'NI Statistical Surveys – Assessment of Cost to Business 2019-20' page, which can be accessed from <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/government/ni-statistical-surveys-assessment-burden>

Other linked publications

Previous publications in this series, and the equivalent publications for the Burden on Households and Individuals can be accessed at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/government/ni-statistical-surveys-assessment-burden>

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