



**Public Appointments:  
Annual Report for Northern Ireland, 2018/19**

**Published: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

## Key findings of Public Appointments in Northern Ireland: 2018/19



**1337**

Applications received from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 (Gender is known for 77%)



**163**

Appointments made from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 (Gender is known for 82%)



**995**

Appointments held at 31st March 2019 (Gender is known for 53%)

### Members



45% female

### Chair



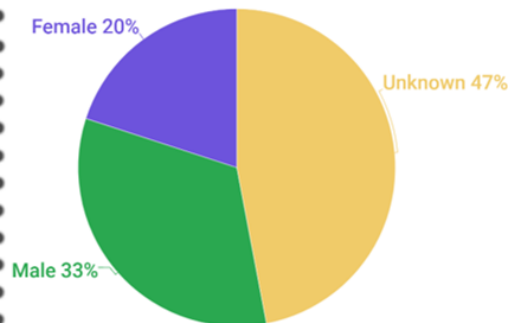
35% female

### All appointments made

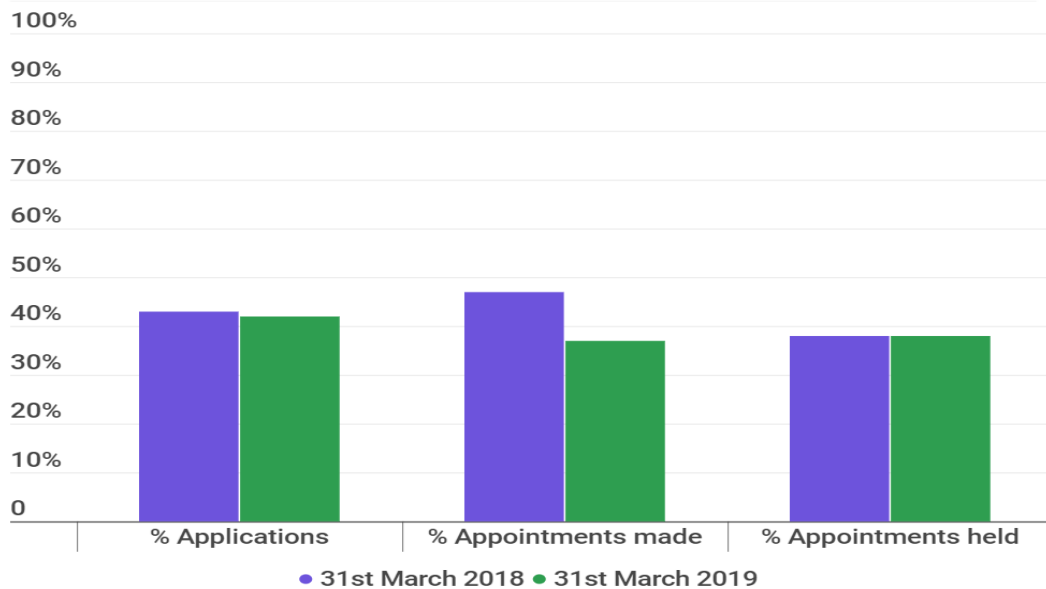


36% female

### All appointments held



## Female representation (where gender is known): 2017/18 - 2018/19



Made with infogram

\*Figures above for Applications, Appointments made and Female representation do not include unknowns.

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## Introduction

### Background

This report presents data on Public Appointments between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019. The report has been prepared using information provided by the nine Government Departments and the Food Standards Agency. Data on multiple appointments have been derived separately from the Public Appointments Database as this information cannot be derived from the information provided by individual departments.

This report includes information on:

- **Applications received** between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019 for public appointment competitions;
- **Public Appointments made** between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019; and
- **Public Appointments held** (including multiple appointments, reappointments and extensions) as at 31st March 2019.

This report covers the applications received in response to vacancies advertised with a closing date within the 2018/19 financial year. If the subsequent appointments were not made within the 2018/19 year, the data for these appointments will appear in the Public Appointments report for 2019/20. Similarly, for any public appointments made in 2018/19, where the applications were received prior to 1st April 2018, the application data will have been included in the 2017/18 report.

Therefore, care should be taken when considering the numbers of applications received and appointments made within a given financial year, as these figures are not directly comparable.

On 8th May 2016 the number of Northern Ireland Executive Departments reduced from twelve to nine. It is therefore not possible to directly compare the Departmental breakdown with the reports previous to the 2017/18 report.

Copies of this report and the underlying data tables are available online at The Executive Office (TEO) website: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/public-appointments-annual-report-201819>.

This report also refers to the 2017/18 report and data tables, these are available online at:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/public-appointments-annual-report-201718>

## What is a public appointment?

A public appointment is generally an appointment, made by a government Minister, to the Board of a public body. Public Bodies are not part of Government Departments, but carry out their functions, to differing extents, at arm's length from their sponsoring Department.

Ministers of the Northern Ireland Executive are ultimately accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly for the activities of the Public Bodies, which their Department sponsors. In most cases – unless, for instance, there is separate statutory provision – Ministers make the appointments to the boards of Public Bodies.

In the absence of Executive Ministers, Departments must give consideration to the public body's founding legislation to determine what action can be taken in relation to appointments; and also seek advice from the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI).

The CPANI regulates the public appointment process to ensure that appointments are made in accordance with the principles set out in the Commissioner's Code of Practice.<sup>1</sup> Public appointments falling within the Commissioner's remit are shown in this Report as "CPANI Regulated"; all other public appointments are shown as "Unregulated." When Departments make public appointments to unregulated bodies, they still apply the Commissioner's Code of Practice.

The overarching principle for public appointments is that selection should be made on merit, using fair, open and transparent procedures that ensure that the best available candidate is selected and appointed to each post.

## Ministerial targets relating to public appointments

In March 2016, the Northern Ireland Executive introduced official targets relating to public appointments.<sup>2</sup> The two official targets are to achieve gender equality, at the aggregate level, in public appointments:

1. By 2017/18 for all appointments in-year;
2. By 2020/21 for all appointees in post, with gender equality reflected at both membership and Chairperson level.

With no functioning Executive in place for the full period covered by this report, the absence of Ministers to perform their role in the public appointment process has had an adverse impact on the making of appointments. The introduction of the Northern Ireland (Executive and Exercise of Functions) Act in November 2018 and the Northern Ireland (Ministerial Appointment Functions) Regulations 2019 in February 2019 facilitated the making of specific public appointments.

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<sup>1</sup> Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland, '[Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments: December 2016](#)',

<sup>2</sup> Northern Ireland Executive, '[Foster and McGuinness; Gender Equality Targets to Improve Diversity in Public Appointments](#)' 8 March 2016

## Technical notes

### Data quality & assurance

Staff of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), out-posted to The Executive Office, have produced this report and the underlying data tables.

The statistics in this report have been compiled from data provided by the nine Northern Ireland Executive Departments and the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland), both in the form of direct Departmental submissions to NISRA staff and, in the case of multiple appointments, to The Executive Office's Central Appointments Unit database.

Due to a change in the data collection process for the 2016/17 statistics, some data relating to characteristics such as gender, age and ethnicity are unknown. Where there are unknown data, proportions such as male-female are calculated with reference to those individuals for whom the information is known.

The underlying data tables that inform these statistics are available and note where data are unknown.

### Percentages

Percentages in this report and the underlying data tables may not always sum to 100, due to the effect of rounding.

### Disclosure prevention

Statistical disclosure control has been applied to this report: in order to minimise the likelihood of individuals being identified, counts of less than five have been suppressed. Other figures in the report have also been suppressed in order to prevent values of less than five from being calculated. It is not possible to identify those who are unknown and therefore, disclosure control has not been applied.

### Contextual figures

Throughout the report, contextual figures are provided for the population aged 18 years and over. Figures for community background, disability and ethnicity have been sourced from the 2011 Census<sup>3</sup>, while figures for age have been sourced from the 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/census/2011-census>,

<sup>4</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2019-mid-year-population-estimates-northern-ireland>

## 1. Applications, 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019

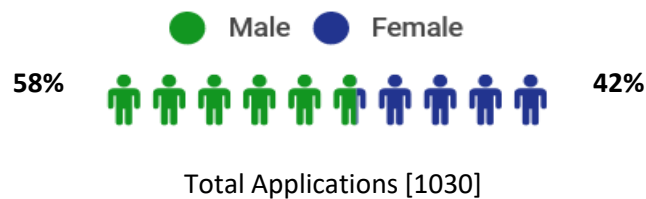
Between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, 1337 applications were received for Public Appointment posts, 1197 of the applications were for CPANI regulated appointments and 105 were for unregulated appointments. Board of Governor (BOG) Appointments are neither regulated nor unregulated (35 applications).

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms are included in the application pack for Public Appointments; however, completion is on a voluntary basis, in line with Equality Commission's guidance.

### 1.1 Gender

Equal Opportunities information was not provided by 23% of applicants. For applications where gender was known, 58% of applications were from males and 42% were from females (Figure 1).

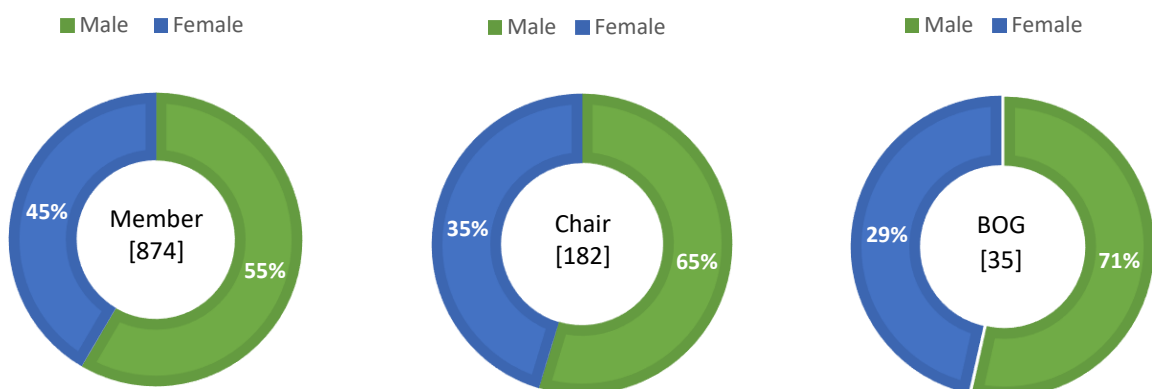
**Figure 1: Public Appointment Applications from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, by Gender**



### 1.1a Board Position

A breakdown of those who applied for each board position (where gender is known) is shown in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Public Appointment Applications, by Gender and Board Position**



\*Please note those who applied for both member and chair positions are included in both charts above.

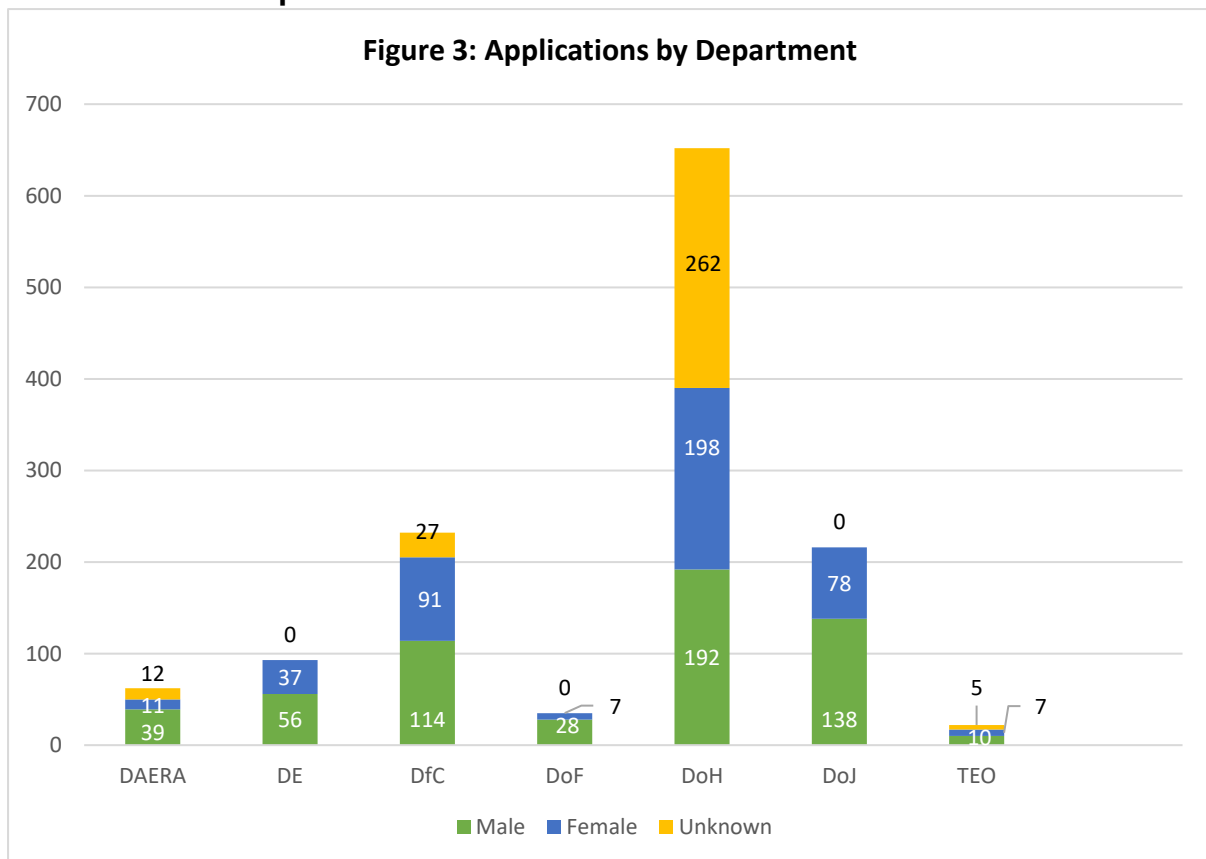


### 1.1b Trends over time

Applications increased by 42% between 2017/18 (942) and 2018/19 (1337).

For applications where gender is known, the percentage of female applicants has dropped by 1 percentage point from 2017/18 (43%) and is equal to the percentage of female applicants from 2016/17 (42%). Comparisons prior to 2016/17 are not possible due to a change in data collection methodology.

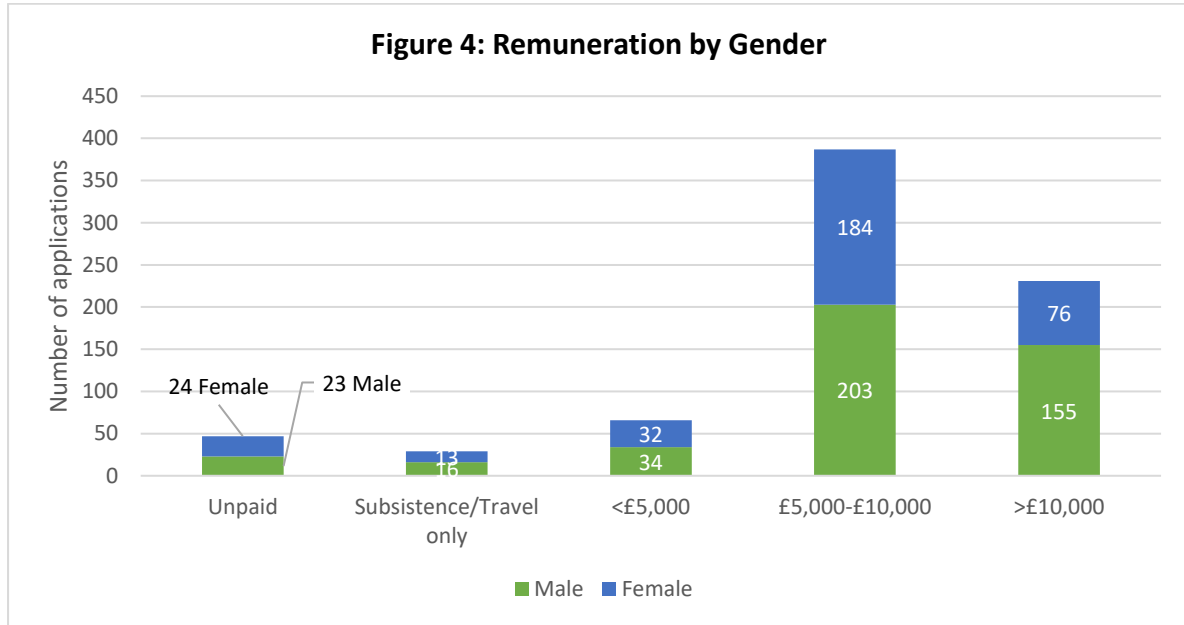
### 1.1c Individual Departments



Due to disclosure control, gender breakdowns of applications can only be provided for 7 departments. At a departmental level, there is much variation in the total number of applications received for Public Appointments in 2018/19. The Department of Health received the most applications (652) of any department and had the largest proportion of applications where gender was unknown (40%).

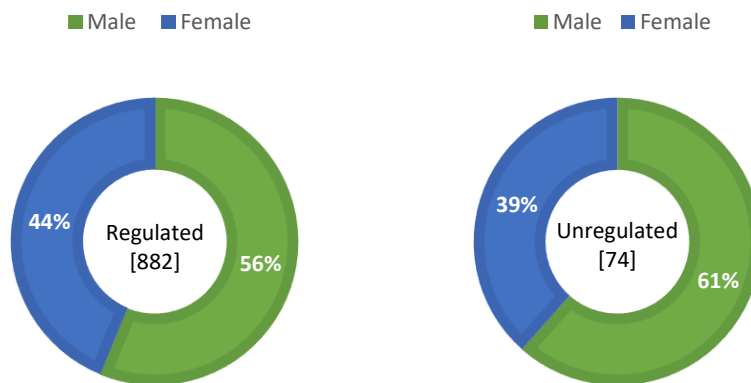
### 1.1d Remuneration

There were 32 new competitions in the 18/19 year. Whilst some were unpaid or Subsistence and Travel only, 25 of the competitions had remuneration of £5,000 or more. The proportion of females applying for Public Appointments with remuneration greater than £10,000 has dropped by 10 percentage points from 43% in 2017/18 to 33% in 2018/19.



### 1.1e CPANI Regulated and Unregulated Appointments

**Figure 5: Regulated and Unregulated Appointments by Gender**



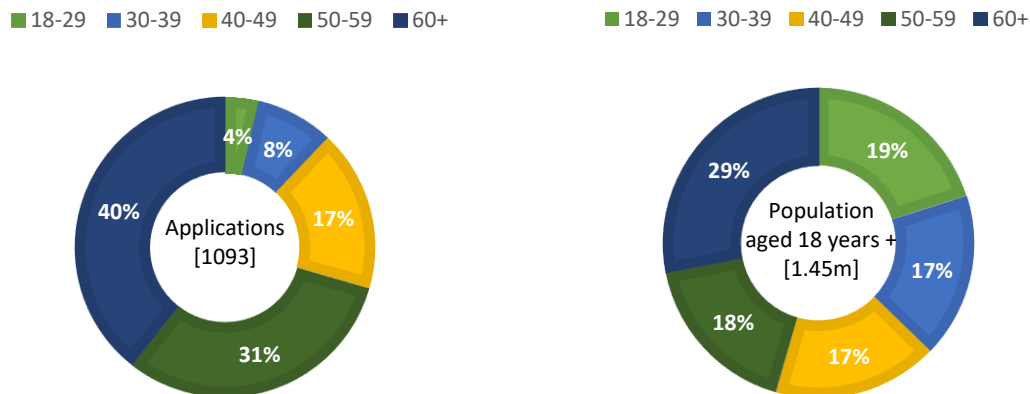
Of the 1302 applications received for CPANI Regulated or Unregulated posts, gender was declared for 73% (956 applications) of applicants. The proportion of female applicants for Regulated appointments increased by 2 percentage points from 42% in 2017/18 to 44% in 2018/19. There was a decrease of 11 percentage points in female applicants for unregulated appointments from 50% in 2017/18 to 39% in 2018/19.

As Board of Governors Public Appointments are neither regulated nor unregulated, the 35 Board of Governors applications are not included in figure 5.

## 1.2 Age

Age is known for 82% of all applications received in 2018/19.

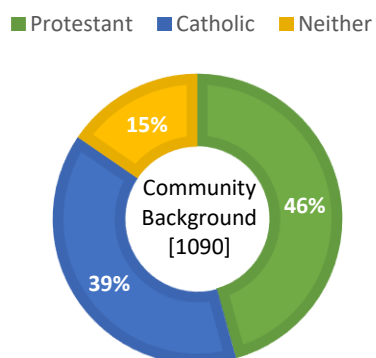
**Figure 6: Applications by Age**



Where age is known, 4% of all applications received were from individuals aged 18-29 years of age, while 8% were aged 30-39 years of age. These figures are significantly lower than the most recent population estimates<sup>5</sup> (of those aged 18 years and older) in Northern Ireland, where 19% of the population are estimated to be in the 18-29 age group and 17% aged 30-39 years. 71% of the applications made in 2018/19 were from individuals aged 50 years and over, this age group represents less than half (47%) of the population aged 18 years and over.<sup>6</sup>

## 1.3 Community Background

**Figure 7: Applications by Community Background**



Community background is known for 82% of all applications in 2018/19. There was a seven percentage point difference in applications from individuals of a Protestant (46%) background and a Catholic (39%) background. This compares to 44% of the population aged 18 years and over who were either Catholic or brought up as Catholic, and 51% who belonged to or were brought up in Protestant, other Christian or Christian-related denominations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2019-mid-year-population-estimates-northern-ireland>

<sup>6</sup> To note, population figures (and breakdown by age) presented are for those aged 18 years and over; population figures are not affected by unknowns.

<sup>7</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20\(s\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20(s).zip)

## 1.4 Ethnicity

Ethnicity is known for 81% of all applications in 2018/19; 4% of applicants where ethnicity is known were from a minority ethnic group. In the most recent Census data, 2% of the population of Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over belong to a minority ethnic group.<sup>8</sup>

## 1.5 Disability

Disability is known for 82% of all applications in 2018/19; 7% of applicants where disability is known considered themselves to have a disability. This compares to 25% of the population aged 18 and over who had a long-term health problem or disability, which limits their day-to-day activities.<sup>9</sup>

## 1.6 Marital Status

Marital status is known for 81% of all applications in 2018/19; 81% of these applicants were married or in a civil partnership.

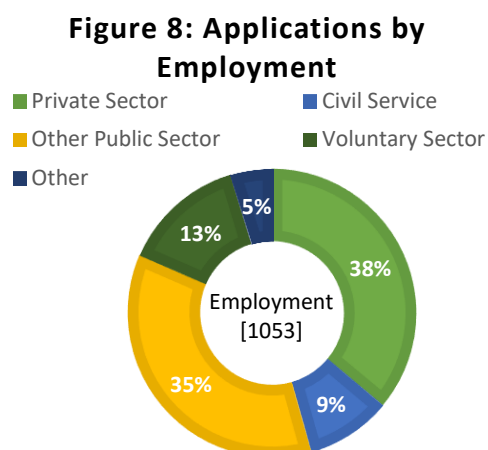
## 1.7 Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is only known for 23% of applicants in 2018/19. Where known, 85% of these applicants identified as heterosexual, 12% gay/lesbian and 3% bisexual.

## 1.8 Dependants

Information on whether applicants had dependants or not is known for 76% of applications, 41% of applicants had dependants and 45% of these applicants were female (both of these figures relate to known data only).

## 1.9 Employment



Employment status is known for 79% of all applications with 38% working in the Private Sector, 9% in the Civil Service, 35% in other Public Sector, and 13% working in the Voluntary Sector.

Females make up 42% of applicants (where gender is known) with most working in the Private Sector, Civil Service or other Public Sector.

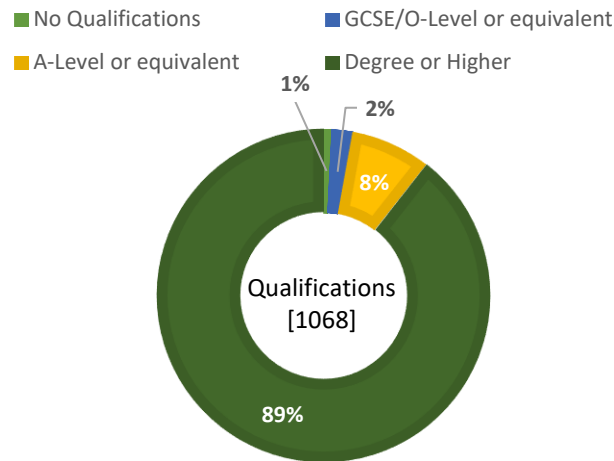
<sup>8</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20\(a\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20(a).zip).

<sup>9</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/CT0251NI.ods>

## 1.10 Qualifications

Qualification information is known for 80% of all applications, 89% of these applicants have a degree qualification or higher.

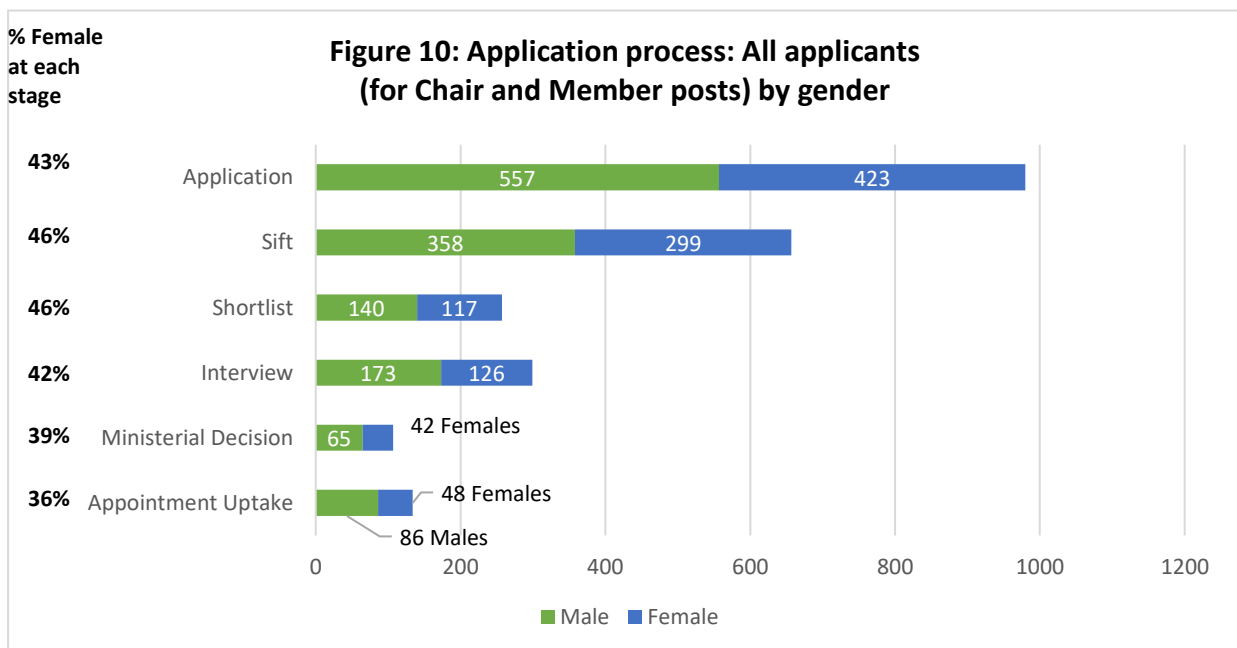
**Figure 9: Applications by Qualifications**



## 1.11 Application Process

There are a number of different stages in the application process before an applicant is successful in taking up an appointment. A breakdown of those who passed each stage (where gender is known) is shown in Figure 10 below.

\*Please note that not all appointments go through the same application process and therefore, not all applications go through each stage shown in figure 10.



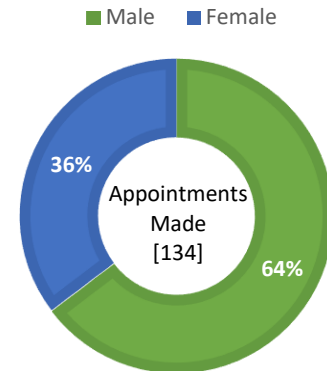
## 2. Appointments Made, 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019

### 2.1 Gender

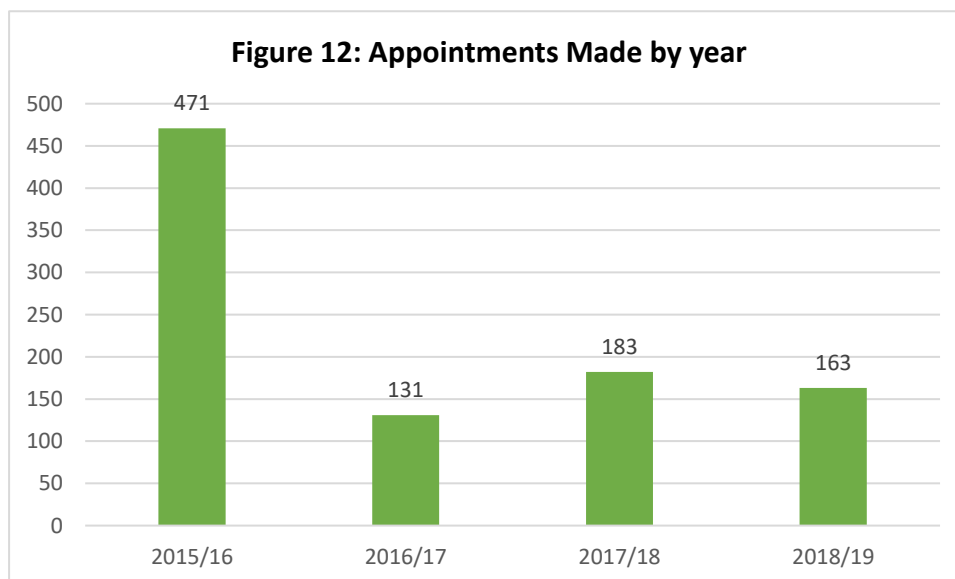
Between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, 163 appointments were made; with gender known for 82% of these appointments.

Of the 134 appointments made in 2018/19, where gender is known, 36% (48 Member, Chair and Board of Governor appointments) were females.

**Figure 11: Appointments Made by Gender**



### 2.1a Trends over time



The absence of Ministers from 9th January 2017 potentially contributed to some of the reductions shown in Figure 12.

There was an 11 percentage point decrease in female appointments in 2018/19 (36%) compared to 2017/18 (47%).

## 2.1b Individual Departments

Due to disclosure control, appointments by gender can only be provided at Departmental level for three Departments. Of the 37 appointments made to the Department of Education, 30% (of those where gender is known) were to females. Of the 66 appointments made to the Department of Health, 43% (of those where gender is known) were to females. Of the 33 appointments made to the Department of Justice, 33% (of those where gender is known) were to females.

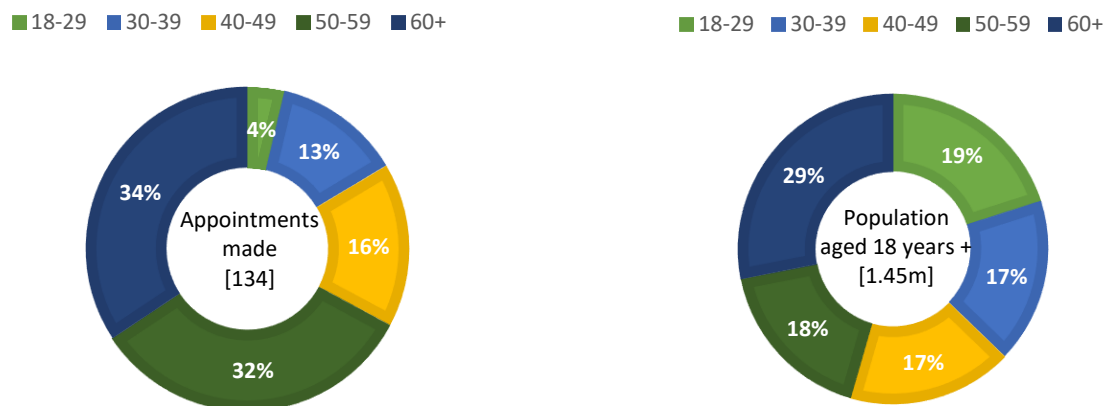
## 2.1c Remuneration

As remuneration data is unknown for 80 of the 163 appointments made in 2018/19, and many groups contain a count of five or fewer, further breakdowns cannot be provided due to disclosure control.

## 2.2 Age

Age data was provided for 134 of the 163 appointments made in 2018/19. Of those appointed in 2018/19, 83% were aged 40 years and older, compared with 64% of that age group in the population aged 18 years and over.<sup>10 11</sup> Disclosure control necessitated merging the 18-29 and 30-39 age groups.

**Figure 13: Appointments Made by Age**



<sup>10</sup> To note, population figures (and breakdown by age) presented are for those aged 18 years and over; population figures are not affected by unknowns.

<sup>11</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20\(s\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20(s).zip)

### **2.3 Community Background**

83% of those appointed provided information on their community background. Where community background is known, 41% of appointments made in 2018/19 were to those from a Protestant background and 43% to those from a Catholic background, with 16% appointees identifying as neither Protestant nor Catholic. In the most recent census data, 44% of the population aged 18 years and over were Catholic or brought up Catholic and 51% belonged to or were brought up in Protestant, other Christian or Christian-related denominations.<sup>12</sup>

### **2.4 Ethnicity and disability**

Of those whose ethnicity is known, five or fewer appointments in 2018/19 were individuals from a minority ethnic group. (The precise figure and percentage cannot be released due to disclosure control.)

Of appointments made in 2018/19 where disability is known, 3% were to individuals who considered themselves to have a disability. This compares to 25% of the population of Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over who have a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20\(s\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20(s).zip)

<sup>13</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/CT0251NI.ods>



### 3. Appointments held, 31st March 2019

At 31st March 2019, 995 Public Appointments were held (904 Board Members and Vice-Chairs; and 91 Chairs).

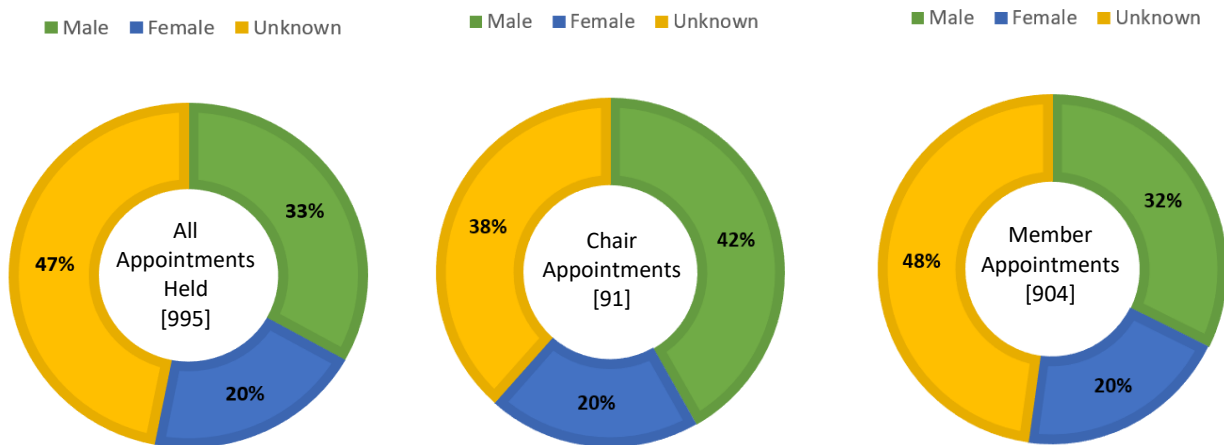
Gender is known for 53% of all appointments held at 31st March 2019; of the 528 appointed where gender is known, 38% were female and 62% were male.

#### 3.1 Gender

With gender unknown for 47% of all appointments held at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, these 'unknowns' are included in the charts below, to provide a more meaningful overall context.

Figure 15 shows the gender breakdown of Appointments held, with Board of Governors included in all appointments held and the Member appointments.

**Figure 14: Appointments held by Gender and Board Position**

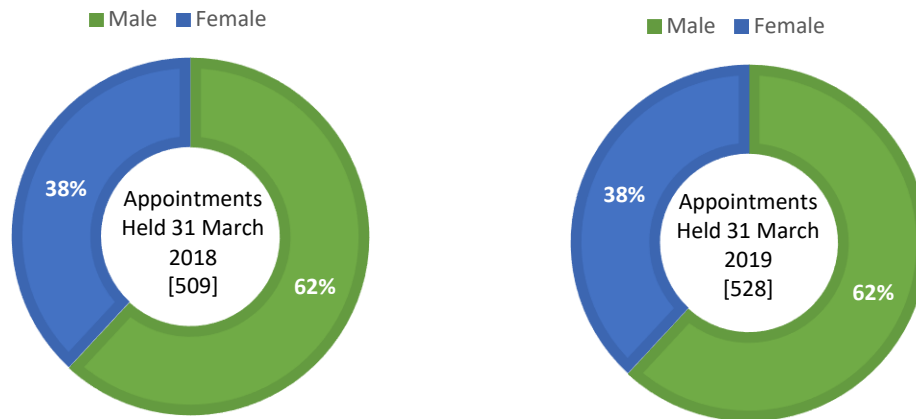


### 3.1a Trends over time

There were 929 Public Appointments held at 31st March 2018 compared with 995 held at 31st March 2019.

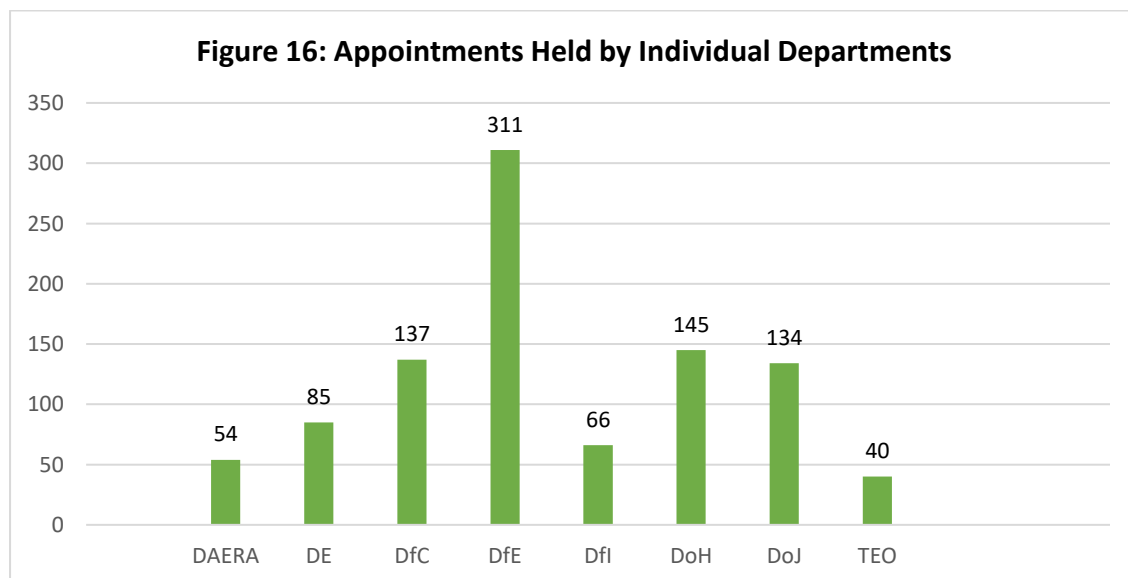
The proportion of public appointments held by females, where gender is known, has remained the same from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (38%).

**Figure 15: Appointments held - trends over time**



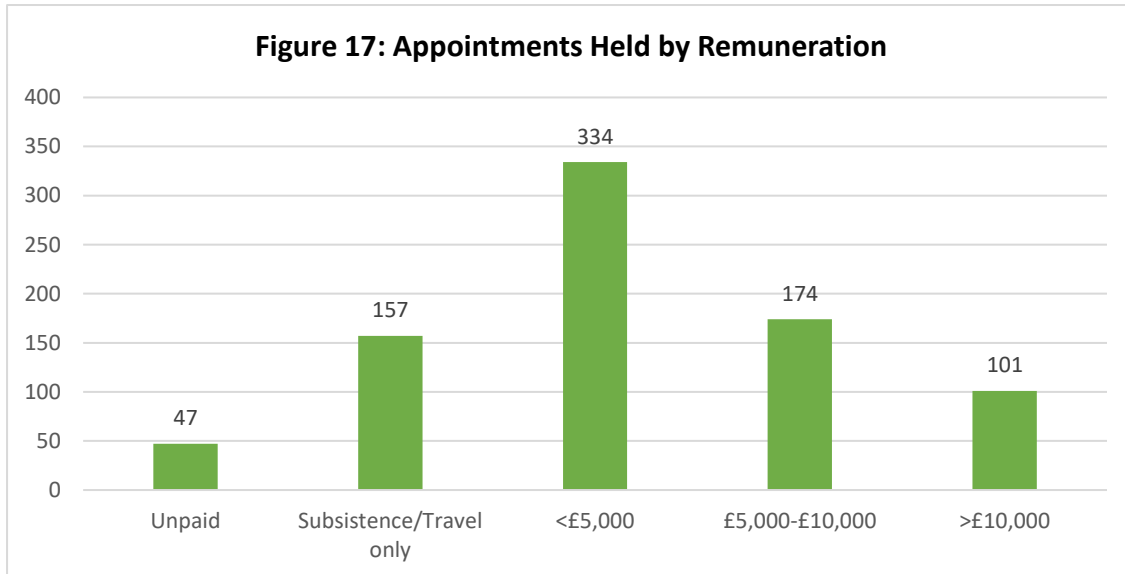
### 3.1b Individual departments

There is much variation across departments in the number of Public Appointments held, ranging from fewer than five to more than 300. Returns from 2 departments are suppressed for disclosure control and thus are not included in figure 16 below.



### 3.1c Remuneration

Remuneration details are known for 82% of appointments held; of these 6% of appointments were unpaid and 34% had remuneration of £5,000 or more.



### 3.2 Age

Age is known for 34% of appointments held at 31st March 2019. Of those appointments (where age is known) held at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 91% were aged 40 years and older; compared with 64% of the population, aged 18 years and over.<sup>14</sup>

### 3.3 Community Background

Community background is known for 42% of appointments held. At 31st March 2019, 45% of the appointments held (where community background is known) were individuals from a Protestant community background and 41% were from a Catholic background. In the most recent Census data, 44% of the population aged 18 years and over were Catholic or brought up Catholic and 51% belonged to or were brought up in Protestant, other Christian or Christian-related denominations.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2019-mid-year-population-estimates-northern-ireland>

<sup>15</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20\(s\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2117NI%20(s).zip)

### 3.4 Ethnicity

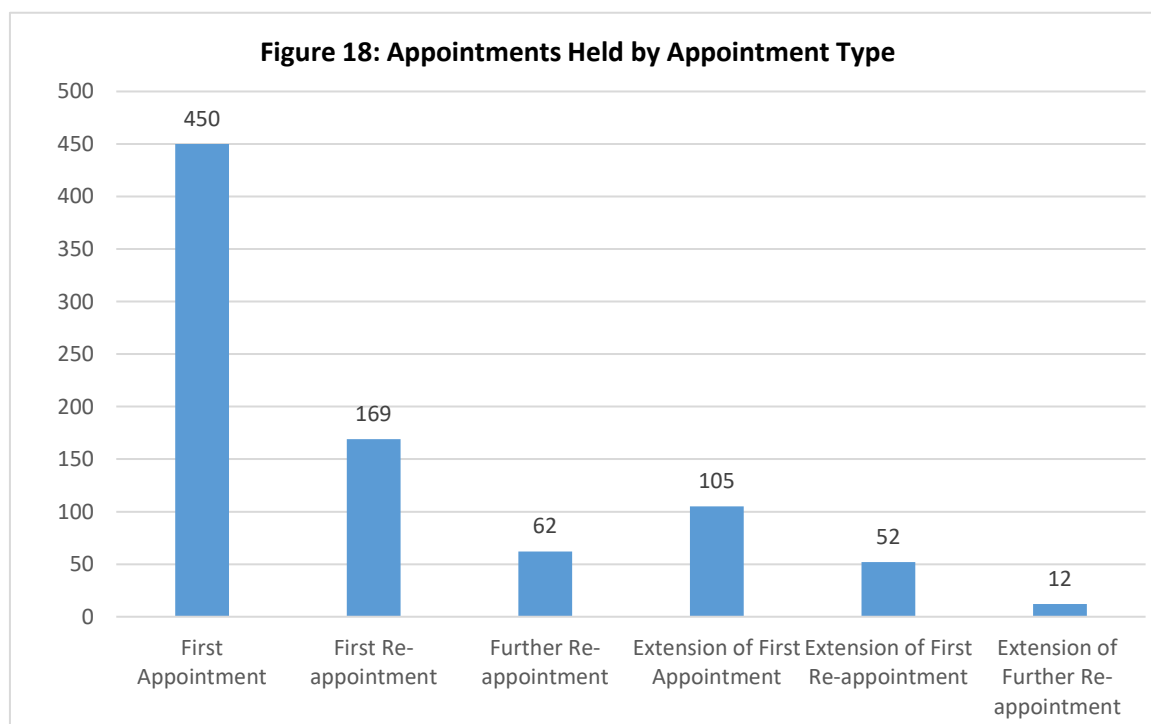
Ethnicity is known for 42% of all appointments held at 31st March 2019. Of the appointments held in 2018/19 where ethnicity is known, 2% were from individuals from a minority ethnic group. In the most recent Census data, 2% of the population of Northern Ireland aged 18 years and over belong to a minority ethnic group.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.5 Disability

Disability is known for 43% of appointments held at 31st March 2019, with 4% of appointees where disability is known stating that they had a disability. This compares to 25% of the Northern Ireland population aged 18 years and over with a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities.<sup>17</sup>

### 3.6 Appointment type

Of appointments held at 31st March 2019, where appointment type was known, 53% were first appointments and 20% were first re-appointments. The lowest proportion of all appointments held were extensions of further re-appointments (1%).



\*Appointment type is unknown for 145 appointments of the appointments held at 31st March 2019.

<sup>16</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, [https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20\(a\).zip](https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/DC2101NI%20(a).zip)

<sup>17</sup> See Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/CT0251NI.ods>

### 3.7 Multiple Appointments

There is currently no limit on the number of Public Appointments an individual can hold at one time. A judgement is made by the appointing department on a candidate's availability for a new appointment in light of the time commitment involved in his/her existing appointments. The table below shows that at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 18% of those holding Public Appointments held more than one appointment.

The total number of appointments held at 31st March 2019, detailed in section 3.1, are based on departmental returns; whilst the total number of appointments given in Figure 19 below are extracted from the Public Appointments Database. Data from the two sources are not comparable.

**Figure 19: Number of Appointments Held**

Number of Appointments held	Number of people	Number of appointments
1	750	750
2	150	300
3 or more	20	63
Total	920	1113

## Glossary & definitions

1. Government Departments and agencies:
  - **DAERA** – Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs
  - **DE** – Department of Education
  - **DfC** – Department for Communities
  - **DfE** – Department for the Economy
  - **DfI** – Department for Infrastructure
  - **DoF** – Department of Finance
  - **DoH** – Department of Health
  - **DoJ** – Department of Justice
  - **TEO** – The Executive Office
  - **FSA (NI)** – Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland)
2. **“CAU”**: The Central Appointments Unit.  
A unit of The Executive Office with policy responsibilities including encouraging best practice across Departments in public appointments; and advertisement of vacancies.
3. **“CPANI”**: The Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland.  
The role of the Commissioner was created in 1995 and regulates, monitors and reports on the process for making public appointments. Not all public appointments fall within the Commissioner’s remit – see page 6.
4. **“Community Background”**: Data from Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms were used to determine an individual’s community background. Individuals chose either: ‘I have a Protestant community background’; ‘I have a Roman Catholic community background’; or ‘I have neither a Protestant or Roman Catholic community background’.
5. **“Disability”**: Data from Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms were used to determine the proportion of individuals who considered themselves to have a disability. The definition of disability used on the Form is derived from the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which defines disability as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”
6. **“Minority ethnic”**: Data from Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms were used to determine the proportion of individuals from a minority ethnic background. Individuals were classified as being minority ethnic if they self-classified as any ethnic group other than “white”.
7. **“NISRA”**: The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.  
This statistical report and underlying data tables are produced by NISRA staff out-posted to The Executive Office.