



Office of the
**First Minister and
Deputy First Minister**
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Summary Quality Report for the 2013 Labour Force Survey Northern Ireland Religion Report

January 2015

Introduction

This report is intended to provide users with information on how the statistics in the 2013 Labour Force Survey Northern Ireland Religion Report have been compiled and upon the quality of the data on which it is based. The report uses the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which is the largest regular household survey in NI. The LFS is a sample survey carried out by interviewing individuals about their personal circumstances and it provides a rich source of information on the labour force.

Notes for Tables

The tables used in the report use the following conventions where applicable:

- 'P' represents Protestant.
- 'C' represents Catholic.
- Numbers in the relevant tables are rounded to the nearest thousand.
- Totals may not add to the sum of the constituent categories due to rounding.
- Percentages are based on unrounded figures unless otherwise stated.
- The use of [] brackets reflect percentages where the total adds to 100% for Protestants and Catholics only.
- * indicates a number or percentage based on a small sample size below the publication threshold (less than 6,000 grossed for the annual dataset) and will therefore not be released.

Summary of Quality

Relevance

The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs for both coverage and content.

The statistics published in the LFS Religion Report are intended to compare the labour market outcomes of Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland.

The data are primarily used by OFMDFM, statutory organisations such as the Equality Commission, and by researchers. The users are interested in a variety of indicators relating to religious affiliation and the labour market, including the employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and economic activity rates (defined according to the International Labour Organisation - ILO). They also sometimes require more detailed analysis of these series by age groups and gender, which the report provides.

Accuracy and Reliability

The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.

Estimates from the LFS are subject to various sources of error that can be categorised into sampling and non-sampling error. The errors encountered in the LFS are described in detail in the Labour Force Survey User Guide Volume 1: Background and Methodology. This is available at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/labour-market-statistics/index.html>.

Further information can also be found in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment's (DETI) Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey Performance and Quality Monitoring Report (2006) which can be found at http://www.detini.gov.uk/lfs_quality_report_-_march_2006.pdf.

Sampling Error

Labour market outcomes derived from the LFS are subject to sampling error. This occurs because the estimates are based on a sample rather than a census of all individuals. Sampling error is minimised on the LFS through the use of high quality sampling methodology.

The sample of addresses for the LFS was chosen at random from the Rating Valuation list of domestic properties with an achieved sample of approximately 2,000 households. The sample was stratified by region to ensure proportional representation across Northern Ireland. The strata used were Belfast (District Council area), East of the Province and West of the Province. Within these strata a systematic random sample of addresses was chosen. The population covered was all persons resident in private households and young people living away from the parental home in a student hall of residence or similar institution during term time. The weighting process used on the LFS reduces standard errors because it ensures that the weighted dataset is representative of the population.

Because the LFS results are subject to sampling error the actual proportion of the population in private households with a particular characteristic may differ from the

proportion of the LFS sample with that characteristic. Accordingly, the percentages in tables and commentary are rounded and caution is required regarding the degree of accuracy of the figures reported.

The following tables show the proportions obtained from the 2013 LFS survey for some key LFS variables and indicate their sampling accuracy. The confidence intervals represent the ranges either side of the LFS proportions which are 95% certain to include the true values of the quantities estimated e.g. the 95% confidence interval for economic activity for working age Protestant males is interpreted as follows:

'We can be 95% certain that the true level of economic activity for working age Protestant males is between 76.0% and 81.2%.'

Table 1: Confidence intervals for working age economic activity rates, 2013

	Rate	Confidence Interval	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
P Males	78.6%	+/- 2.6%	76.0%	81.2%
C Males	78.5%	+/- 2.8%	75.7%	81.3%
P Females	67.4%	+/- 2.9%	64.5%	70.3%
C Females	65.0%	+/- 3.0%	62.0%	68.0%
P both sexes	73.0%	+/- 2.0%	71.0%	75.0%
C both sexes	71.5%	+/- 2.1%	69.4%	73.6%

Table 2: Confidence intervals for religious composition of the working age economically active, 2013

	Rate	Confidence Interval	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
P Males	51.9%	+/- 2.6%	49.3%	54.5%
C Males	48.1%	+/- 2.6%	45.5%	50.7%
P Females	50.3%	+/- 2.7%	47.6%	53.0%
C Females	49.7%	+/- 2.7%	47.0%	52.4%
P both sexes	51.2%	+/- 1.9%	49.3%	53.1%
C both sexes	48.8%	+/- 1.9%	46.9%	50.7%

Table 3: Confidence intervals for unemployment rates (16+), 2013

	Rate	Confidence Interval	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
P Males	8.0%	+/- 1.9%	6.1%	9.9%
C Males	12.7%	+/- 2.5%	10.2%	15.2%
P Females	3.8%	+/- 1.4%	2.4%	5.2%
C Females	5.5%	+/- 1.8%	3.7%	7.3%
P both sexes	6.0%	+/- 1.2%	4.8%	7.2%
C both sexes	9.3%	+/- 1.6%	7.7%	10.9%

Table 4: Confidence intervals for unemployment differential (ratio of rates), 2013

	Ratio	Confidence Interval	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
C Males	1.59	+/- 0.50	1.09	2.09
C Females	1.46	+/- 0.73	0.73	2.19
C both sexes	1.54	+/- 0.41	1.13	1.95

Table 5: Confidence intervals for unemployment differential (gap measure), 2013

	Gap	Confidence Interval	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Males	4.7%	+/- 3.2%	1.5%	7.9%
Females	1.7%	+/- 2.3%	-0.6%	4.0%
Both sexes	3.2%	+/- 2.0%	1.2%	5.3%

Table 6: Confidence intervals for religious composition of those in employment (16+), 2013

	Rate	Confidence Interval	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
P Males	53.5%	+/- 2.7%	50.8%	56.2%
C Males	46.5%	+/- 2.7%	43.8%	49.2%
P Females	51.4%	+/- 2.8%	48.6%	54.2%
C Females	48.6%	+/- 2.8%	45.8%	51.4%
P both sexes	52.5%	+/- 1.9%	50.6%	54.4%
C both sexes	47.5%	+/- 1.9%	45.6%	49.4%

Sampling error needs consideration in relation to differences in survey estimates between the two communities. For example, when overall (both male and female) unemployment rates for Protestants and Catholics and the subsequent derivation of the unemployment differential measures (ratio and gap) are considered and the confidence intervals of the survey estimates do not overlap, we can be fairly certain that the differences reflect a 'real' difference.

However, if these unemployment-related estimates overlap we can be less certain that the differences reflect a 'real' difference. However, in considering in the round, whilst confidence intervals may result in overlapping estimates and for these estimates to overlap over time, weight should also be given to the stability of any inter-relationship and trends in this inter-relationship over time.

Non-sampling Error

Coverage Error

The population covered was all persons resident in private households and young people living away from the parental home in a student hall of residence or similar institution during term time. However, most of the population living in communal establishments (CE) and non-private households such as residential care homes are not included in the LFS.

The LFS User Manual Volume 1 states that comparisons between the LFS and Census estimates of the residents of communal establishments suggest that residents of CEs tend to differ from the rest of the population in terms of their demographic characteristics. The main differences are:

- There are proportionately more women in CEs.
- The population is generally older in CEs, especially for women.
- The economic activity rate is considerably lower amongst CE residents.¹

Non-response Error

A total of 5,930 interviews were achieved across the four quarters in the 2013 annual dataset. Due to the fact that the 2013 LFS Religion Report is comprised of two fifths of the households surveyed each calendar quarter, response rates relating specifically to the households included in the LFS religion report are not available.

Given that the annual 2013 dataset was constructed from the relevant respondents across four calendar quarters, the response rates for each of these quarters are presented in the table below to give the reader an indication of the response rate for 2013.

Table 7: Response rates in each quarter

	Jan-Mar 2013	Apr-Jun 2013	Jul-Sep 2013	Oct-Dec 2013
Fully and partially responding households	1,487	1,492	1,466	1,485
Eligible sample	2,023	2,188	2,048	2,030
Response rate	73.5%	68.2%	71.6%	73.2%

Using a stated religion question compared to a religion brought up in question

During their LFS interview, respondents were asked what their religion was. In each of England, Scotland and Wales, respondents were asked “*What is your religion?*”, with the responses from all three countries amalgamated to form a derived variable for the whole of Great Britain. Respondents in Great Britain were shown a showcard and allowed time to answer. If they did not answer immediately they were prompted for responses if required. However, this was not a forced question in Great Britain and the interview continued if the individuals did not give a response.

¹ Office for National Statistics, Labour Force Survey User Guide: Volume 1 – LFS Background and Methodology 2011, August 2011, p.10 <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/labour-market-statistics/index.html>

In Northern Ireland, respondents were asked “*What is your religious denomination?*” Unlike in Great Britain, individuals were not shown a showcard, but instead they were categorised based upon the response given. While this is a voluntary question in Northern Ireland, individuals who did not answer the stated religion question were recorded as unwilling to answer in order to enable the interview to continue.

The responses were coded by the interviewer based on the interviewee’s response. There were differences in how the responses were coded across the UK. In England and Wales, Christians were categorised as one group. In Scotland they were categorised into three groups (‘Church of Scotland’, ‘Roman Catholic’ and ‘Other Christian’). In Northern Ireland, Christians are classified as either ‘Catholic’, ‘Presbyterian’, ‘Church of Ireland’, ‘Methodist’, ‘Other Protestant’ or ‘Other religion’.

In Northern Ireland, analysis of responses to this stated religion question over time reveals a slow but inexorable rise in the proportion of those surveyed who indicated another religion other than Protestant or Catholic, no denomination, or were unwilling to answer. For the working age population particularly, this has been reflected by a rise in the proportion who could not be assigned a Catholic or Protestant religion from 6% of the sample in 1990 to 12% in 2013.

In addition, there was evidence in the 2001 and 2011 Censuses that a higher proportion of individuals from a Protestant community background stated that they had no religious denomination compared to individuals from a Catholic Background². In order to overcome these issues, from 2010 onwards individuals who reported no religious denomination in the stated religion question were asked about the community background in which they were brought. The question asked was “May I just check then, what religious denomination, if any, where you brought up in?” The community background data have not been incorporated into this report, as further analysis and consultation is required in order to determine how best to do this. An analysis of the 2013 community background data is outlined below.

Using the Community Background question to examine those persons who stated ‘no religious denomination’ in the religion question

The Community Background question has been used to examine those persons who stated ‘no religious denomination’ in the religion question. There were 161,000 individuals aged 16 and over in the ‘other/non-determined’ group in 2013. This category comprised 113,000 (70%) individuals of no religious denomination, 31,000 (19%) of other (neither Protestant nor Catholic) religions and 17,000 (10%) individuals who were either unwilling to answer or whose response was missing.

² Data on stated religion and community background in the 2001 census are available at <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/Census/2001%20Census%20Results/Key%20Statistics/KeyStatisticstoOutputAreaLevel.html>. Data from the 2011 Census is available at: <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=136&themeName=Census+2011>

Of the 113,000 individuals who stated no religious denomination, 27,000 (24%) reported a Protestant community background, 9,000 (8%) reported a Catholic community background, and 30,000 (26%) reported no religious community background. The numbers who reported another religion as their community background were not sufficient to meet the threshold for publication. For 45,000 (40%) of those who stated no religious denomination, the respondent either refused to answer the community background question or the data were missing.

Because the numbers of individuals with no religious affiliation with either a Protestant or Catholic community background is small, limited analysis could be completed.

Further analysis and consultation is required to determine whether to incorporate the community background data into future editions of the Religion Report. It is anticipated that a separate analysis relating to community background may be produced in the future.

Table 8 below gives a breakdown by gender of the community background of those individuals aged 16 and over with no religious denomination in 2013. Overall, a higher proportion of individuals aged 16 and over of no religion denomination were male (55%) compared to the population of this age group as a whole (49%).

Table 8: Community background by gender (aged 16+), 2013

	Male		Female		Total (=100%)
	Number	%	Number	%	
Protestant	15,000	54%	13,000	46%	27,000
Catholic	6,000	*	*	*	9,000
No denomination	16,000	53%	14,000	47%	30,000
Other religion	*	*	*	*	*
Missing/not stated	24,000	54%	21,000	46%	45,000
Total	62,000	55%	51,000	45%	113,000

Table 9 shows the breakdown by age group of the community background of those individuals aged 16 and over with no religious denomination in 2013. Breaking the information down by age is difficult as many of the categories do not meet the minimum threshold for publication requirement.

Table 9: Community background by age group, 2013

	Protestant		Catholic	
	Number	% of all aged 16+	Number	% of all aged 16+
Working age	22,000	82%	8,000	89%
Aged 16-24	7,000	27%	*	*
Aged 65+	*	*	*	*
Aged 16+	27,000	100%	9,000	100%

Table 10 and 11 show that for both the population of those age 16 and over and the working age population those who stated a Catholic community background were more likely to be in employment and economically active than those who stated a Protestant community background. This contrasts with the results for the stated religion question, where Protestants were more likely to be in employment and economically active than Catholics.

Table 10: Economic status by community background, 16+ population, 2013

	Protestant		Catholic	
	Number	% of all aged 16+	Number	% of all aged 16+
Employed	15,000	57%	6,000	69%
ILO Unemployed	*	*	*	*
Economically active	17,000	62%	7,000	73%
Inactive	10,000	38%	*	*
Total	27,000	100%	9,000	100%

Table 11: Economic status by community background, working age population, 2013

	Protestant		Catholic	
	Number	% of working age	Number	% of working age
Employed	15,000	68%	6,000	78%
Unemployed	*	*	*	*
Economically active	17,000	75%	7,000	82%
Inactive	*	*	*	*
Total	22,000	100%	8,000	100%

Combining the stated religion and community background into one category

Using the stated religion question only, Protestants comprised 48% of the population aged 16 and over, Catholics comprised 41% and 11% were 'other/non-determined' in 2013. By combining the stated religion and community background question, 49% of the population aged 16 or over were Protestants or had a Protestant community background, 42% were Catholic or had a Catholic community background, and 9% were classed as 'other/non-determined'.

Table 12: Composition of population aged 16+ by religion and community background, 2013

	Protestant		Catholic		Other/non-determined		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	(=100%)
Religion only	680,000	48 [54]	588,000	41 [46]	161,000	11	1,429,000
Religion and background	707,000	49 [54]	598,000	42 [46]	124,000	9	1,429,000

A similar effect is found in the working age population (Table 13).

Table 13: Composition of working age population by religion and community background, 2013

	Protestant		Catholic		Other/non-determined		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	(=100%)
Religion only	518,000	45 [51]	505,000	43 [49]	141,000	12	1,163,000
Religion and background	540,000	46 [51]	513,000	44 [49]	110,000	9	1,163,000

Community Response Rates

Possible difference in response rates among the two main religious communities could be evidenced in one of three ways.

Firstly an individual or household could refuse to provide any information in the interview. Over a quarter of households sampled in 2013 did not provide a partial or full response (Table 7). There has been no analysis completed to determine whether there is a difference in the response rates between the two communities.

Secondly an individual can refuse to answer the stated religion question, but complete the rest of the interview. This would be recorded in the stated religion question in the LFS dataset as a refusal or missing data. Again, there is insufficient data available to suggest whether a difference exists between the two main communities in relation to this.

Thirdly an individual raised in or belonging to one of the main communities may state that they have no religious affiliation. There is evidence that there is a difference in the community response rate between the two communities. This has been discussed in the previous section.

In the LFS Religion Report, individuals who refuse to answer the stated religion question and those who state that they have no religious affiliation are combined, along with individuals belonging to other (non-Protestant or Catholic) religions, to form the 'other/non-determined' group.

Table 14 shows the composition of the 'other/non-determined' group for those aged 16 and over, for 1990 and 2013. The number of respondents with no denomination has increased by 91,000 (411%), from 22,000 in 1990 to 113,000 in 2013. Similarly, the number of those from the 'other' religion category (i.e. neither Protestant nor Catholic) has increased by 20,000 (191%) to 31,000 over the same period. There has been a decrease of 12,000 (43%) in the number not stating their religion between 1990 and 2013.

Table 14: Composition of the 'other/non-determined' group (aged 16+), 1990-2013

	1990		2013		Change 1990-2013 ¹	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
No denomination	22,000	36%	113,000	70%	+91,000	+411%
Other religion	11,000	17%	31,000	19%	+20,000	+191%
Missing/not stated	29,000	47%	17,000	10%	-12,000	-43%
Total	62,000	100%	161,000	100%	+99,000	+160%

¹ These calculations are based on unrounded figures.

Response types

Labour Force Survey data are gathered through interviews. Information is sought from all those living in the households sampled for the survey. In order to maximise response in the short fieldwork period available and to contain the cost of recall interviews, interviewers are allowed to accept information by proxy for those household members not available when the interview takes place.³ If no members of the household were present for the interview, but they had supplied information in a previous quarter, then this data would be brought forward. It should also be noted that economically inactive individuals aged 70 years and over were not asked all the questions in the interview (e.g. highest level of qualification obtained). Table 15 shows the response type by religion for the 2013 annual dataset.

³ For further information see: 'Section 11 – Report on Proxy Response Study Based on LFS Questions' in 'Labour Force Survey: User Guide: Volume 1 – LFS Background and Methodology 2011' (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/labour-market-statistics/index.html>)

Table 15: Response type by religion (all aged 16+), 2013

	Protestant		Catholic		Other/non-determined	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Personal response	295,000	43%	271,000	46%	87,000	54%
Proxy response	249,000	37%	247,000	42%	56,000	35%
Data brought forward from previous quarter	25,000	4%	20,000	3%	7,000	5%
Economically inactive 70+	111,000	16%	50,000	8%	11,000	7%
Total	680,000	100%	588,000	100%	161,000	100%

Overall there was a higher proportion of personal responses and proxy responses in the Catholic community, and a higher proportion of responses from economically inactive individuals aged 70 years and over in the Protestant community. This would have limited impact on the overall report as the economically inactive aged 70 years and over were not included in the analysis relating to the working age economic activity and inactivity rates, or employment and unemployment rates.

Some analysis of LFS data may be particularly affected by proxy responses, e.g. subjective questions. The Labour Force Survey User Guide - Volume 1: Background and Methodology (available at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/labour-market-statistics/index.html>) contains a section outlining the effects of proxy responses. This section looked at the proxy responses in Great Britain - there has been no comparable work based on the Northern Ireland LFS. The agreement levels between information given by proxy informants and the same information given by the subjects themselves were found for many key variables to be above 80%, with several above 90%. Taking account of the proportion of LFS responses given by proxy, this implies overall gross error rates of around 1-5% for these variables. Those variables requiring less straight-forward information (such as training in the last week and highest qualification obtained) and those requiring very detailed numerical information (such as hours worked and income) showed a less satisfactory match between proxy and subject responses, meaning higher gross error rates.

Timeliness and Punctuality

Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.

The aim is to publish the LFS Religion Report within eight weeks from the date of receiving the LFS Annual Dataset from DETI. The annual dataset covers the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December. Allowing time for the data to be compiled and validated by ONS and DETI this means that the report should be published within 11-12 months of the end of the reference period of the report. This is an improvement compared to the 2003–2007 Religion Reports which were published between 15 and 24 months after the end of the reference period.

Table 16: LFS Northern Ireland Religion Report release date, 2003-2013

Year covered	Month published
2013	December 2014
2012	January 2014
2011 (revised)	March 2013
2011	December 2012
2010	December 2011
2009	November 2010
2008	November 2009
2007	March 2009
2006	March 2008
2005	June 2007
2004	December 2006
2003	June 2005

Prior to the release of the 2013 LFS Northern Ireland Religion report, the scheduled release date was published on OFMDFM's website and the Gov.uk website. The release was delivered on time.

Accessibility and Clarity

Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.

The LFS Religion Report is available for free on OFMDFM's website and through the Gov.uk website. The report is also available in alternative formats upon request. Tables contained in the report are also available in Excel format in a separate document, again available on OFMDFM's website.

The report contains a summary, commentary and graphs of the main findings for the main demographic and labour market outcomes of the two largest religious communities in Northern Ireland. This includes changes from previous years, where appropriate, and a 'Technical Notes' section which provides summary background information about the survey and links to other relevant sources of information.

Coherence and Comparability

Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar.

Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.

As far as is practical the LFS Religion Report adopts common definitions and methodology to other similar Government surveys using the LFS. The definitions of labour market concepts such as working age and unemployment applied in the LFS Religion Report are consistent with the definitions used by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and DETI in their respective Labour Market Bulletins. The definitions used can be found in the LFS user manuals, which are located at the following link:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/labour-market-statistics/index.html>

Most of the labour market outcomes can be compared over time. There are some exceptions due to revisions in the classification used. An example is the industrial

classification of jobs, which was updated with effect from 2009. In 2010 the working age definition was revised to take account of the change in the female pension age. The 2013 Religion Report includes, where appropriate, the figures using both definitions in the tables. This allows a comparison to be made with previous reports.

Comparing Northern Ireland with Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland

Labour market statistics relating to the religious communities in Northern Ireland cannot be compared to statistics in either Great Britain or the Republic of Ireland. As outlined previously, the stated religion in Great Britain differs from the stated religion question in Northern Ireland and the responses are categorised differently. The Republic of Ireland does not provide a breakdown of the labour market statistics based on a person's religious affiliation.

Output Quality Trade-offs

Trade-offs are the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.

It is an aim of the branch to publish the figures as soon as possible. OFMDFM's Statistics and Research Branch has improved the turnaround time for producing the report. The report, which is produced on an annual basis, takes account of any reweighting exercise undertaken by ONS relating to previous LFS Annual Datasets. While the effect of this re-grossing process is relatively minor, it should be noted that it will have some effect on the estimates of change over time and figures in the most recent LFS Religion report may not replicate figures in previous reports. A note regarding this is included in the technical notes section of the report.

For the 2014 report (due to be published in Winter 2015), LFS datasets from 2002 onwards will undergo a reweighting process, taking into account the mid-year population estimates for 2014, based on the 2011 Census. As a result of this process timescales for publication may be affected.

Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions

The processes for finding out about users and uses and their views on the statistical products.

There is an ongoing feedback facility on OFMDFM's LFS Religion Report website which allows all users to give their views on the LFS Religion Report in the form of a survey. This survey can be accessed via the following link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LFS_Religion_feedback_form

Users are also consulted directly for feedback and the LFS religion report has also been presented to the NI Statistics Advisory Committee for review. All feedback has been positive with most users being satisfied with the current reporting format.

A peer review, by a group of statisticians from across NISRA, was carried out on the 2011 LFS Religion Report with the central purpose of improving the commentary, interpretation and presentation of the data in the report.

As a result of this, there have been some presentational changes to the 2013 LFS Religion Report, although the overall content remains unchanged.

Performance, Costs and Respondent Burden

The effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical product.

DETI commissions the LFS in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), an agency of the Department of Finance and Personnel, carries out the data collection and database creation. The questionnaire is designed to mirror the one used for other parts of the UK. The estimated annual cost to DETI was £510,000 in 2010⁴.

Confidentiality, Transparency and Security

The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.

The LFS datasets received from DETI have been anonymised. The variables that could be used to identify the participants such as the date of birth, postcode and the local district council area in which they live have been removed. The variables included in the datasets OFMDFM receives mainly include sufficient detail for the LFS Religion Report to be produced. The datasets are stored on a secure network which is only accessible to staff working on the survey who are trained on the protocols for protecting and maintaining the confidentiality of the data.

NISRA follows the 'National Statistician's Guidance: Confidentiality of Official Statistics' in the collection and dissemination the LFS Religion Report statistics. This can be found at: <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-reports--reviews-and-guidance/national-statistician-s-guidance/index.html>.

Standard disclosure control methodology is applied to the data. This ensures that information attributable to an individual is not identifiable in any published outputs and that the outputs are only seen by authorised staff prior to their publication.

⁴ UK Statistics Authority, 'Assessment of Labour Market Statistics for Northern Ireland – produced by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland,' March 2010 (<http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/stats-national-statistics.htm>)