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# An Overview of the Local Labour Market Insight Dashboard

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**NICS**  
**ECONOMIST PROFESSION**

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The Labour Market Partnership (LMP) is a province-wide approach developed by the Department for Communities (DfC) and aims to address issues with jobs and training through combining resources and delivering a collaborative and flexible approach to employability support. It brings together the private, public, and community and voluntary sectors to respond to the needs of individuals who are looking for work or to progress in work, and the needs of employers with regard to future employment opportunities.

Furthermore, local LMPs have been established in each of the eleven Local Government Districts (LGD) to develop a range of new employability provisions that address the specific labour market needs and challenges of the local areas. The initiative will see action plans created in every LGD to support people towards and into work, including young people and those with disabilities, as well as the long term unemployed and economically inactive who have limited engagement with employability services. Action plans created by each LMP will ensure that local areas have the infrastructure, resource and support required to deliver the most appropriate employment solutions. DfC will provide funding to deliver against the action plans.

### 1.2 Development of the Local Labour Market Insight Dashboard

To assist LMPs in identifying the key labour market challenges and opportunities at the Local Government District (LGD) level and therefore help inform the development of their targeted action plans and interventions, DfC committed to provide evidence on objective need at the local level. Subsequently, the Department's Professional Services Unit has established a pilot local Labour Market Insight (LMI) dashboard.

A data dashboard provides a centralised, interactive means of monitoring, measuring, analysing, benchmarking and extracting relevant insights from different datasets in key areas while displaying information in an interactive, intuitive, and visual way. By taking data from a number of sources and consolidating it, data dashboards offer councils and other users a comprehensive overview of relevant metrics at a glance and empower them to identify issues, monitor progress and measure success.

DfC examined the economic and labour market data available at the LGD level and agreed a set of priority indicators to be included within the local LMI dashboard. Any gaps in the labour market data coverage at the LGD level were identified, and alternative or proxy measures that could provide valuable insight were explored. It is anticipated further indicators will be added in future iterations of the dashboard.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Local LMI Dashboard

Beneath headline national figures, every area has a unique labour market based on a range of factors including sectoral composition, employment rates, qualification levels,

unemployment, economic inactivity and vacancy rates. Local councils therefore require access to data at a local level to identify the distinct mix of labour market and skills challenges, working with their partners to lead local efforts to address these challenges and capitalise on opportunities.

Although there are numerous and diverse sources of labour market data currently available at LGD level, accessing these through the various websites can be complex for councils and other partner organisations to navigate. Furthermore, data is made available in a range of publications, which are published at various times throughout the year and may cover different reference periods. In addition, each dataset has varying levels of breakdowns available for analysis such as age and disability. Therefore, in its unconsolidated format available data may not be fully utilised by councils.

It is anticipated that the local LMI dashboard will help alleviate many of the barriers that users, such as councils, face in accessing and interpreting relevant labour market data for their area.

#### **1.4 Uses of the Local LMI Dashboard**

The local LMI dashboard contains a series of interactive dashboards that provide insight into local labour markets and their broader economies through:

- Tracking labour market trends across LGDs over time;
- Benchmarking labour market performance at the LGD level; and
- Identifying, where possible, breakdowns by age, gender and disability status.

#### **1.5 Content of the Local LMI Dashboard**

The dashboard comprises of four main themes with the following associated indicators:

- Labour market
  - Total employment
  - Employee jobs
  - Economic inactivity excluding students
  - Median gross pay (by place of work and residence)
  - Median total paid hours worked (by place of work and residence)
  - Unemployment
  - Claimant count
  - Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)
  - Employment vacancies notified to DfC
- Qualifications and skills
  - Qualification level
  - Qualifications of school leavers
  - Destination of school leavers
- Economy
  - Gross domestic product (GDP)

- Productivity per filled job
- Enterprise
  - Business count
  - Business births
  - Business deaths
  - Business survival

Annual data is available for each of these indicators from 2016 onwards, with some currently extending to 2019, 2020 or 2021. However, NEET data is presented as five-year average owing to the volatility of single year results, due to small sample sizes.

Many of these indicators are also available by various breakdowns including:

- Local Government District
- Gender
- Age group
- Disability status

To ensure that the local LMI dashboard remains current, the initial set of dashboards will be updated regularly to present the latest available data. Furthermore, an evaluation of the use of the dashboard will be conducted when deemed appropriate.

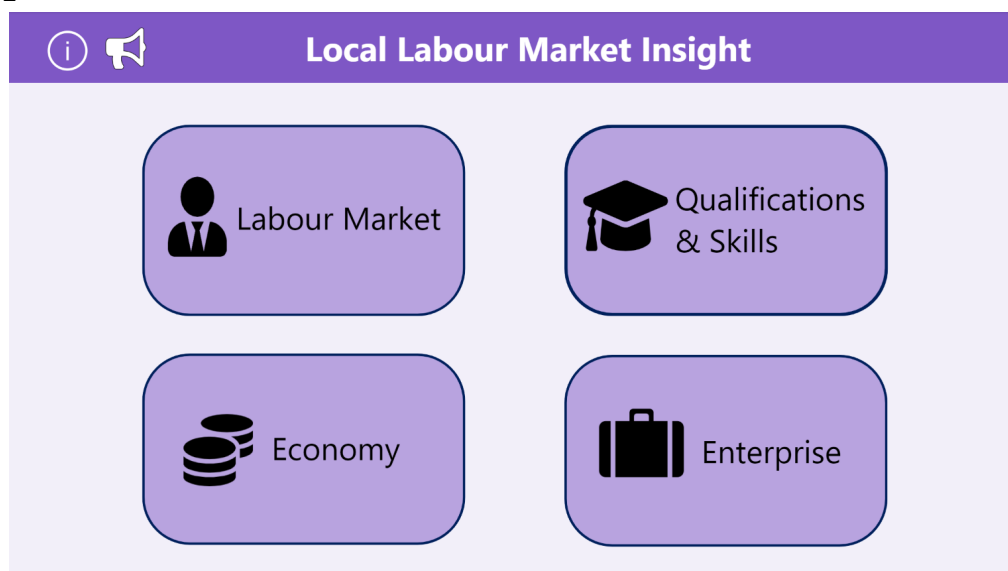
## 2. User Guide

The dashboard is designed to be intuitive and user friendly. It can easily be customised by the user to present the most relevant and useful set of information to meet their needs. Users with minimal technical abilities should quickly be able to take advantage of the features, however some guide notes have been provided.

### 2.1 Home Page

The dashboard will open on the home page shown in Figure 1, displaying the four main themes for which data is available. These include labour market, qualifications and skills, economy and enterprise. The user can then select the desired theme by clicking on the relevant button.

Figure 1



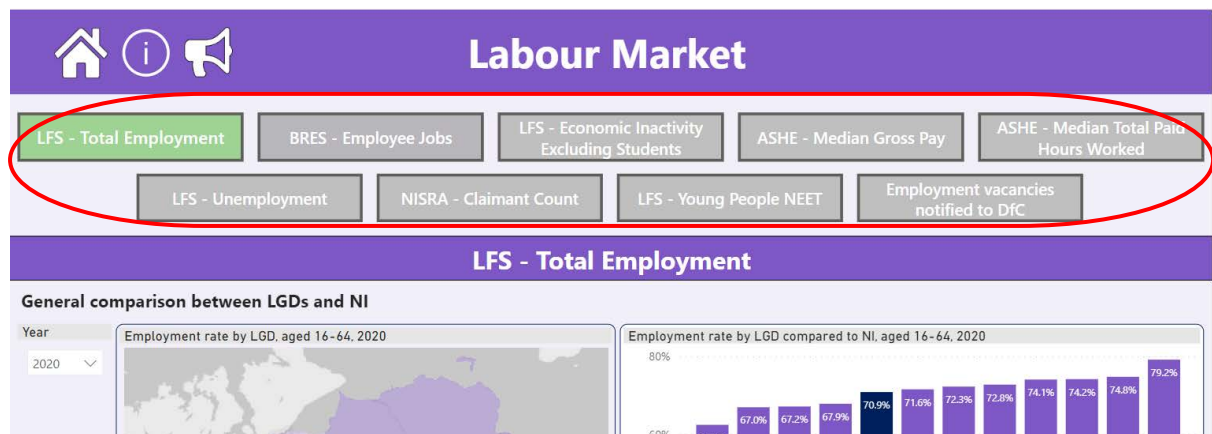
### 2.2 Thematic Page

This will then take the user to the appropriate thematic page, see Figure 2. In this instance, the 'Labour Market' theme has been selected, as indicated by the title on the purple banner at the top of the page.

The user will be presented with the available thematic indicators in a series of buttons along the top. The acronym preceding the indicator name indicates the source of the data.

The indicator currently displayed on the dashboard will be highlighted in green, in this instance 'Total Employment', and will also appear in the purple banner underneath. However, the user can select the desired indicator by clicking on the relevant button.

Figure 2



In particular, the indicators 'Median Gross Pay' and 'Median Total Paid Hours Worked' are slightly different, in that they comprise of two sub indicators, providing data by place of residence and place of work, accessed by clicking on the appropriate button (see Figure 3).

Figure 3



The buttons on the top left corner, highlighted in Figure 3, will direct the user back to the home page or to access the information or data warning pages. The information page contains general dashboard notes together with specific notes relating to the indicators, including data sources and definitions. For each of the data sources, the data warning page presents any quality issues pertaining to them.

### 2.3 Selected Indicator

Once the user has navigated to the chosen indicator, scrolling down the page will display the full range of data available for that particular indicator. This will vary for each indicator, depending on what breakdowns are currently provided. However, in general this will include the following sections and sub sections:

- High level data for the chosen indicator (named in the purple banner), comprising:
  - General comparison between LGDs and NI



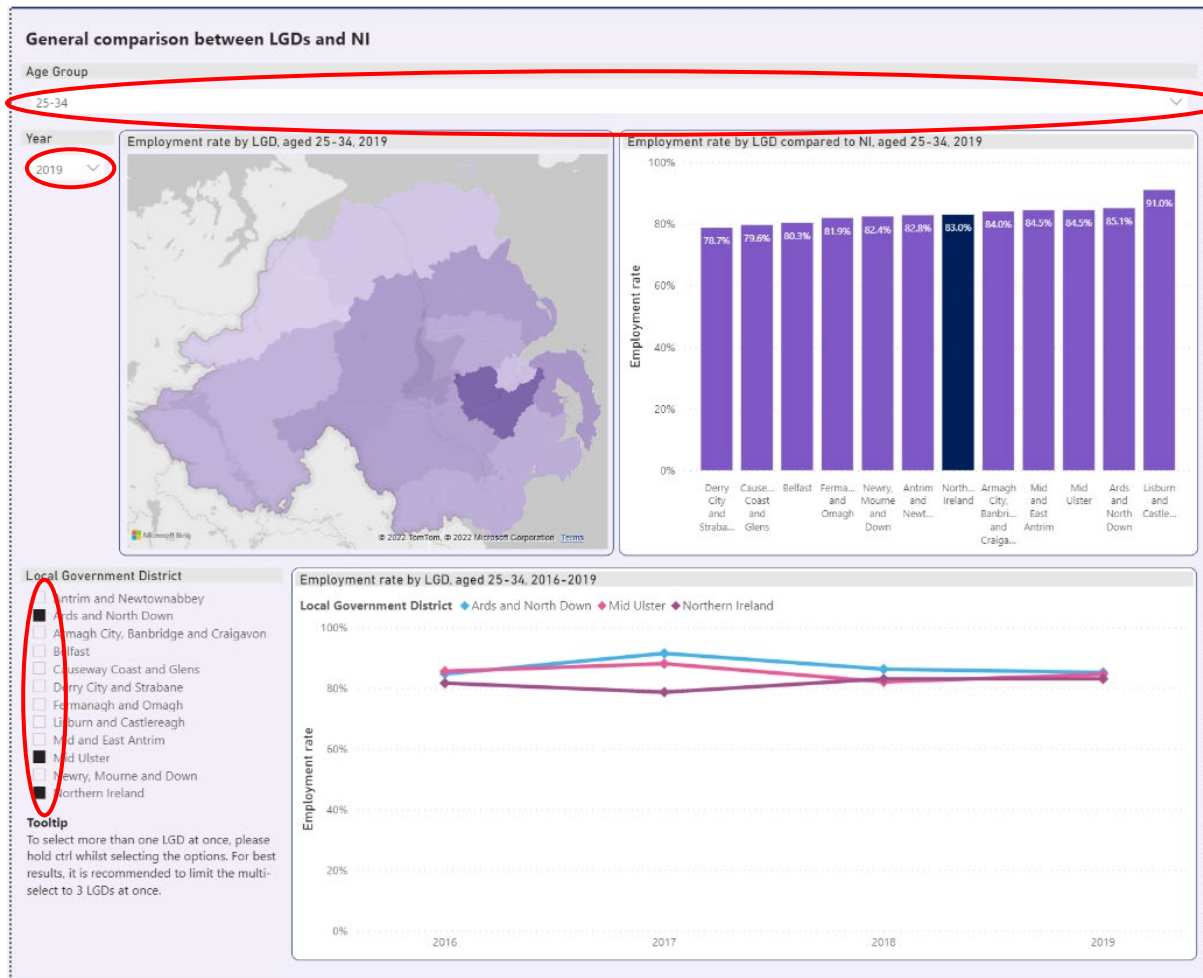
- Map and bar chart depicting the value of the indicator for all 11 LGDs and NI based on a selected year.
  - Line graph presenting the value of the indicator across all available years for a selected LGD, or up to three LGDs.
- Breakdown of the chosen indicator by a relevant characteristic, such as gender (named in another purple banner), including:
    - LGD snapshot
      - Bar chart showing the value of the indicator broken down by the characteristic categories, such as male and female, for a selected LGD and selected year.
      - Line graph displaying the value of the indicator broken down by the characteristic categories, such as male and female, across all available years for a selected LGD.
    - General comparison between LGDs and NI
      - Same graphics as originally produced for the high level indicator, but instead for a selected characteristic category.
    - Gap comparison between LGDs and NI
      - Again, the same graphics as originally produced for the high level indicator, but instead for the gap between two characteristic categories such as male and female.
  - The breakdown section is repeated for each of the available characteristics for the chosen indicator.

Furthermore, some indicators such as 'Median Gross Pay', 'GDP' and 'Business Counts', include an additional sub section exploring the annual change comparison between LGDs and NI.

## **2.4 Refining Displayed Data**

Each of the graphics within the dashboard can be refined by the user to display the relevant information in terms of year, LGD or other breakdowns. This is done using a filter. The function is denoted by a checkbox list which may already be displayed on the dashboard or accessed via a dropdown menu, each of which have been highlighted in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4



Filters are not always applied to all graphics in the sub-section. That is, filters which span the full width of the dashboard (e.g. 'Age Group' in Figure 4), will tailor all graphics underneath it, within that sub-section (i.e. map, bar chart, line chart). However, filters which are positioned on the left hand side of the dashboard (e.g. 'Year' and 'Local Government District' in Figure 4), will only refine the visuals to the right of them. For example, a change to the 'Year' filter in Figure 4 will update only the map and bar chart and a change to the 'Local Government District' filter will only update the line chart. In any case, the titles on the visuals will always indicate what filters have been applied to them.

Filters accessed via a dropdown menu (e.g. 'Age Group' and 'Year' in Figure 4) will only permit one value to be selected, however those which appear as a checkbox list, generally for LGD, will allow the user to select more than one option. This can be done by holding 'Ctrl' whilst selecting the required LGDs. It is recommended to limit the multi-select to three LGDs at once, to avoid overcrowding of the graphic.

In the example above, selecting the age group '25-34' in the top filter has refined all three visuals underneath to this age category. Selecting '2019' in the year filter has updated both graphics to the right of it, to present the employment rate in 2019 for those aged 25-34.

Finally, in the third graphic, selecting Ards and North Down, Mid Ulster and Northern Ireland in the LGD checkbox, displays the employment rate time series for those aged 25-34 in each of these areas.

## 2.5 Tooltips

Hovering over the various locations on the graphics will display a small pop-up window as shown in Figure 5, providing more contextual information and detail to the visual. This may further assist the user with analysis. For some of the graphics this also includes numbers as well as rates, quantifying the scale of any issues in particular areas.

Figure 5



## 2.6 Warnings

In addition to the data warning page, for some breakdowns of indicators, warnings have been included alerting the user to data quality issues due to small sample sizes. These are denoted by the icon shown below in Figure 6. The warning will relate to the whole of the subsequent section.

Figure 6



### 3. Exemplification of Insight

The various elements of the dashboard enable insight to be drawn on the key labour market challenges and opportunities for LGDs. To demonstrate the potential for this, one indicator has been explored to illustrate possible insights. This section will consider the 'Economic Inactivity Excluding Students' indicator within the Labour Market theme. However, this only provides an example of what can be extracted in relation to this indicator and the user should still avail of the dashboard to make their own inferences relevant to their needs.

#### 3.1 Economic Inactivity Excluding Students

The glossary in Chapter 4 of the report provides definitions relating to the indicators presented in the local LMI dashboard. Some of these are also available on the information page of the dashboard.

In particular, those considered to be economically inactive are neither in employment nor unemployed, that is those without a job who have not actively sought work in the last four weeks, and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks. This includes all those who are looking after a home, are long term sick or disabled, are students or are retired.

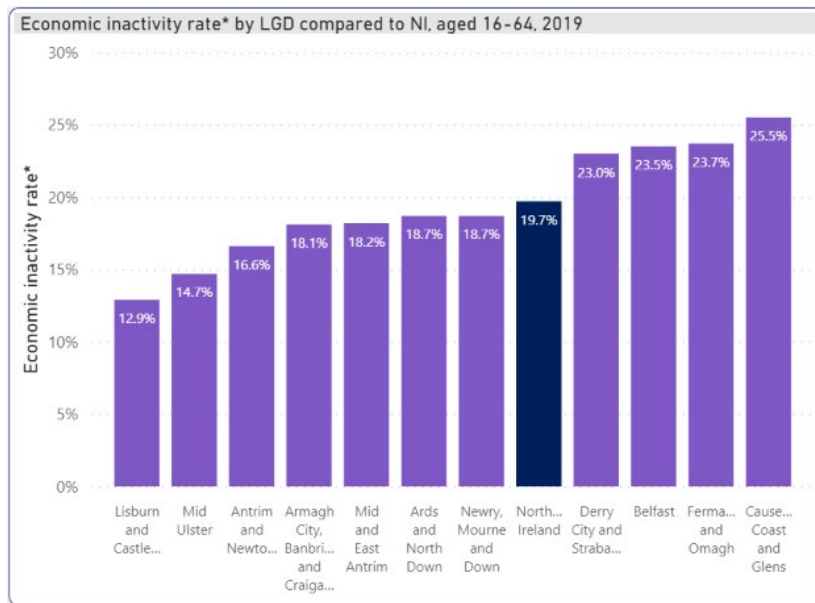
However, students are considered to be investing in their future human capital and therefore seen as a positive form of economic inactivity. For this reason, it is useful to remove students from the analysis on economic inactivity, in order to gain a better understanding of the demographics of the group targeted by the government for policies to assist in accessing employment.

The dashboard currently presents data for economic inactivity excluding students sourced from the Labour Force Survey for the four years from 2016 to 2019, with breakdowns available by gender and disability status.

#### 3.2 Comparison between LGDs and NI

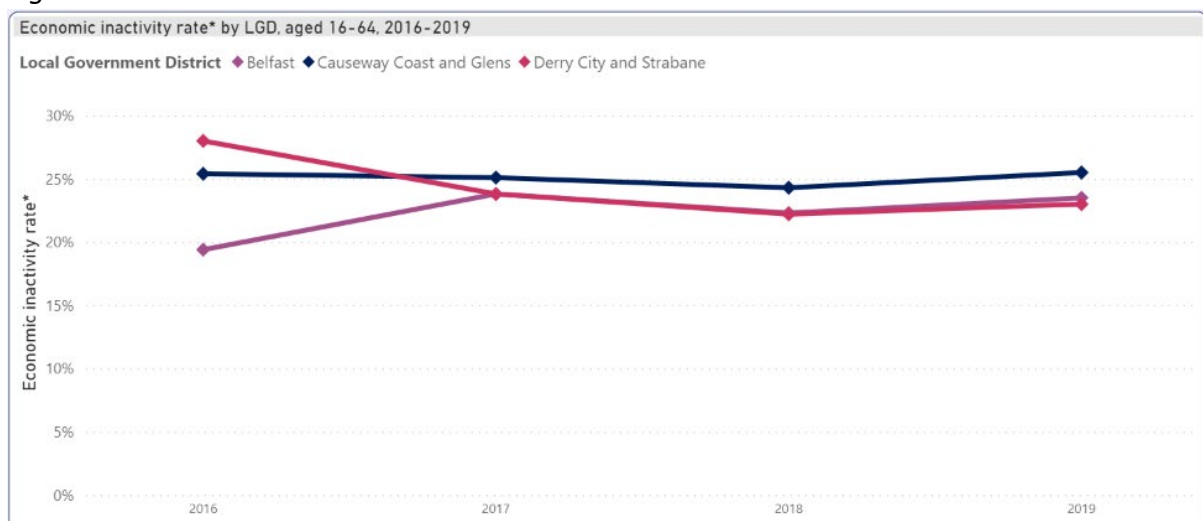
By adjusting the year for the general comparison between LGDs and NI, the dashboard illustrates that Causeway Coast and Glens (CC&G) has generally experienced the highest rates of economic inactivity excluding students across all LGDs, rising to 25.5% in 2019 (see Figure 7). It was most prevalent between 2017 and 2019, exceeded only by Derry City and Strabane (DC&S) in 2016. Conversely, inactivity has continually been lowest in Lisburn and Castlereagh (L&C) for each of the four years from 2016 to 2019. In 2019, the economic inactivity excluding students rate in L&C was approximately half of that in CC&G at 12.9% (also see Figure 7). In comparison to NI, the LGDs Belfast, DC&S and CC&G have consistently been more prevalent for economic inactivity.

Figure 7



Exploring economic inactivity excluding students across the available time series on the dashboard, displays that despite CC&G having the highest rates, it was the most stable. Meanwhile DC&S varied the most during the period, with rates falling from 28% in 2016 to 23% in 2019 (see Figure 8). Mid Ulster along with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon (AB&C) were the only other LGDs to witness an overall decline in their inactivity rates between 2016 and 2019. However, rates in Belfast increased the most, rising from 19.4% in 2016 to 23.5% in 2019 (also see Figure 8). Newry, Mourne and Down (NM&D) along with Fermanagh and Omagh (F&O) also experienced rises of over 5 percentage points in their rates at instances during the four year period.

Figure 8



### 3.3 Breakdown by Gender

Considering the LGD snapshot of Antrim and Newtownabbey (A&NA), the dashboard illustrates that it experienced a prominent rise in economic inactivity amongst its male working age population, rising from 5.1% in 2016 to 14.6% in 2019. Conversely, it has seen a decline in the equivalent rates for females from 22.2% to 18.8% (see Figure 9). This led to a large reduction in the gender economic activity gap. However, DC&S as shown in Figure 10, and to a lesser extent AB&C, are the only LGDs to have experienced an overall fall in rates for both males and females between 2016 and 2019.

Figure 9

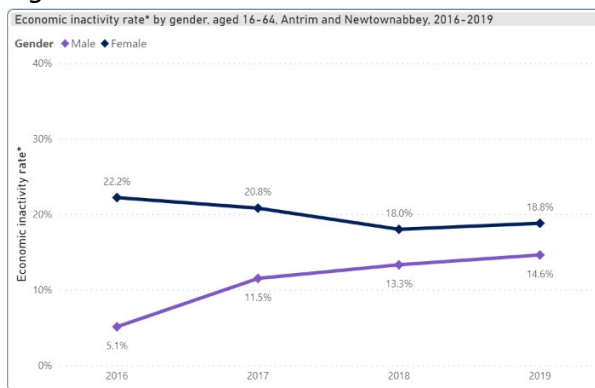
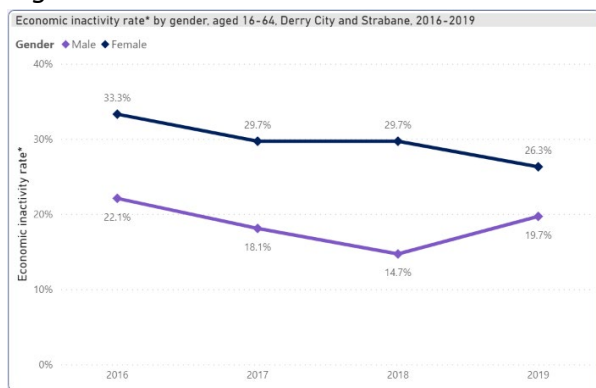


Figure 10



Focusing on Newry, Mourne and Down (NM&D), in 2019 whilst it was below the NI average for economic inactivity amongst males, in particular third lowest across all 11 LGDs, it was above the NI average for females (see Figures 11 and 12). However, the other four LGDs with inactivity rates above the NI average for females were also above the NI average for males.

Figure 11

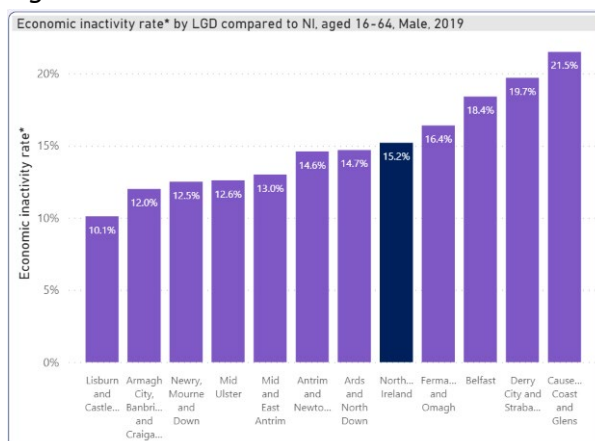
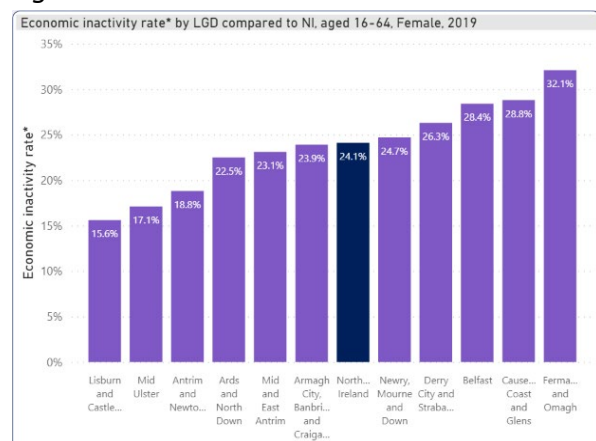


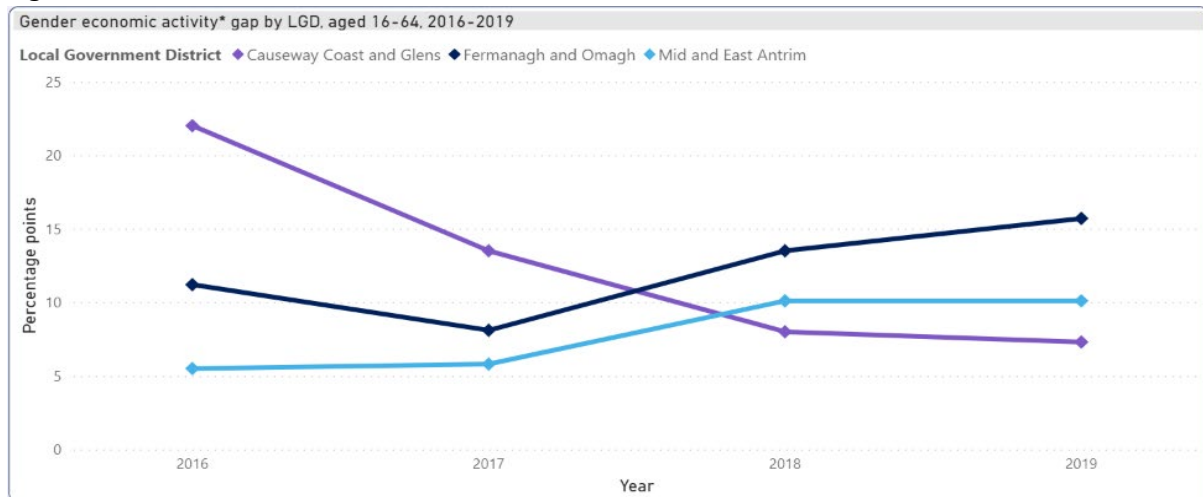
Figure 12



Considering CC&G, although it underwent a decline of 7 percentage points in economic inactivity rates for females between 2016 and 2019, this was offset by an increase of 7.7 percentage points for males. Therefore, this has resulted in the gender gap in CC&G dramatically reducing from 22 percentage points in 2016 to 7.3 in 2019 (see Figure 13).

Comparing F&O with the other LGDs in 2019, the dashboard shows that whilst it had the highest economic inactivity rate for females at 32.1%, it was only just above the NI average for males at 16.4% (see Figures 11 and 12). This resulted in F&O having the largest gap between inactivity rates for males and females. Furthermore, Figure 13 shows this gap has widened since 2016, being the only LGD to do so along with Mid and East Antrim (M&EA) and to a much lesser extent Belfast. The other LGDs have all experienced a narrowing in their gender economic activity gaps.

Figure 13



### 3.4 Breakdown by Disability Status

Exploring the 'Breakdown by Disability Status' section of the dashboard highlights that in 2019, F&O had the highest economic inactivity rate for those with a disability at 67.8% and also the second highest for those without a disability at 12.7%, just behind CC&G (see Figures 14 and 15). Furthermore, F&O had the widest gap between those with and without a disability in terms of economic inactivity in 2019, at 55.1 percentage points (see Figure 17).

Figure 14

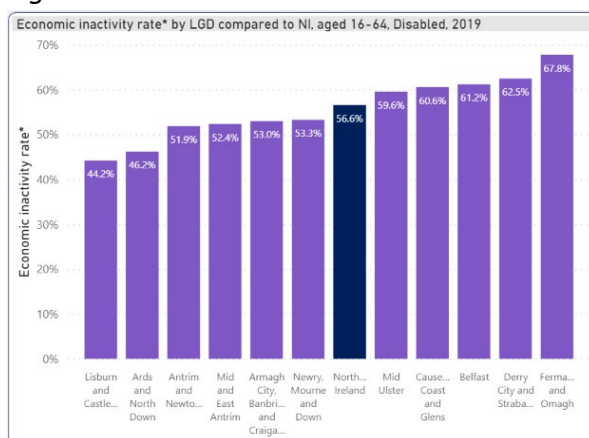
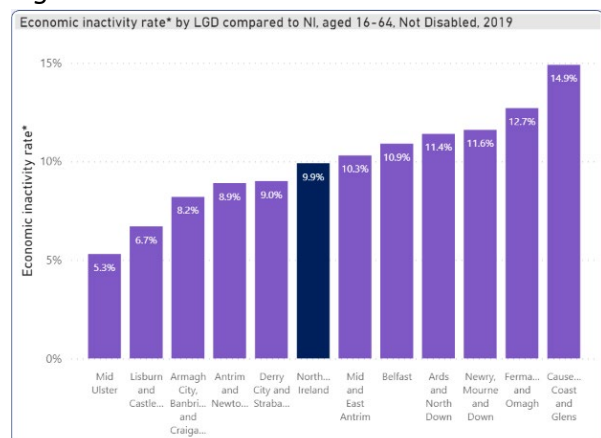
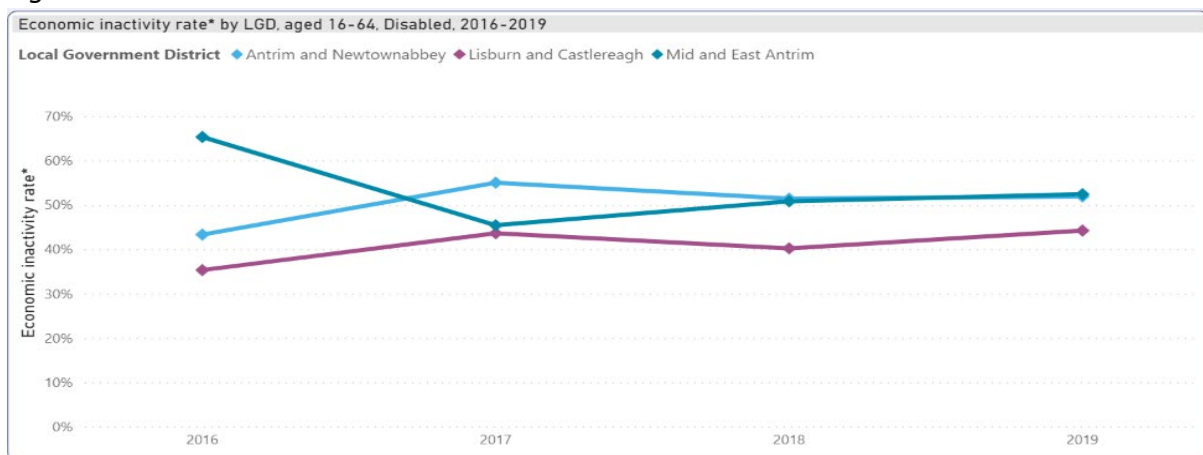


Figure 15



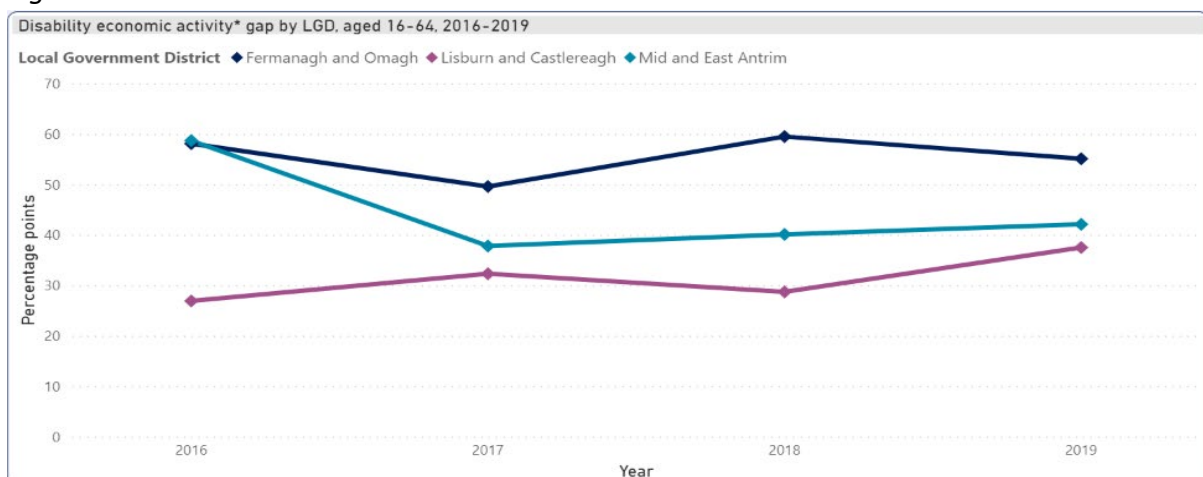
Meanwhile focusing on L&C, the section highlights that in 2019 it had the lowest economic inactivity rate for those with a disability at 44.2% (see Figure 14). This was despite, L&C along with A&NA, having experienced a substantial increase, of almost 9 percentage points, in their rates of economic inactivity for those with a disability between 2016 and 2019 (see Figure 16). In addition, L&C consistently achieved some of the narrowest gaps in economic inactivity between those with and without a disability, during each of the four years. However once again, this was despite the disability gap in L&C having increased more than the other LGDs, from 26.9 percentage points in 2016 to 37.5 in 2019 (see Figure 17).

Figure 16



M&EA witnessed the largest fall in the rate of economic inactivity amongst those with a disability of approximately 13 percentage points between 2016 and 2019 (see Figure 16), and progressed from being third most prevalent for inactivity to fourth least prevalent during this period. However, its rate of inactivity for those without a disability increased and M&EA moved from being lowest across all 11 LGDs in 2016, to just above the NI average in 2019. This resulted in M&EA having the greatest increase in comparison to the other LGDs during the four year period, of almost 4 percentage points. These trends served to greatly reduce the disability economic activity gap in M&EA from 58.7 percentage points in 2016 to 42.1 in 2019 (see Figure 17). This reduction was the largest seen across the LGDs.

Figure 17





## 4. Glossary

### **Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)**

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is a UK wide survey that provides data on hours worked as well as hourly, weekly and annual earnings by gender, work patterns, industry and occupation, including public versus private sector pay comparisons. The sample used comprises approximately 1% of all employees in Northern Ireland who were covered by Pay As You Earn (PAYE) schemes.

### **Business Births**

New business registrations (identified through registration of the administrative units, that is, VAT and PAYE) are referred to as business births. The birth rate is calculated using the number of births as a proportion of the active businesses.

### **Business Deaths**

Businesses that have ceased to trade (identified through de-registration of the administrative units) are referred to as business deaths. The death rate is calculated using the number of deaths as a proportion of the active businesses.

### **Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)**

The Business Register and Employment Survey is a survey of employers in Northern Ireland. The BRES collects employee job figures by gender and working pattern from public and private sector businesses in NI. The BRES collects information at a local unit level that is used to update the Inter-Departmental Business Register.

### **Business Survivals**

A business is deemed to have survived if having been a birth in year  $t$  or having survived to year  $t$ ; it is active in terms of employment and/or turnover in any part of  $t+1$ . The survival rate is calculated using the number of businesses that were born in year  $t$  and survived to year  $t+n$  as a percentage of all businesses born in year  $t$ .

### **Claimant Count**

The number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits including all claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and those Universal Credit (UC) claimants who were claiming principally for the reason of being unemployed.

### **Claimant Count Rate**

The number of claimants as a percentage of the sum of claimants and workforce jobs.

### **Economically Active**

People aged 16 and over who are either in employment or unemployed.

### **Economic Activity Rate**

The number of people who are in employment or unemployed as a percentage of the total population of working age (aged 16 to 64).

### **Economically Inactive**

People who are neither in employment nor unemployed i.e. those without a job who have not actively sought work in the last four weeks, and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks. This economic status includes all those who are looking after a home, are long term sick or disabled, are students or are retired.

### **Economic Inactivity Rate**

The number of people who are neither in employment nor unemployed as a percentage of the total population of working age (aged 16 to 64).

### **Economic Inactivity Excluding Students**

Students are economically inactive as they are not available for work while studying and will most likely become economically active when their studies are completed. As such, it is useful to remove students from the analysis on economic inactivity, in order to gain a better understanding of the demographics of the group targeted by the government for policies to assist in accessing employment.

### **Employee Jobs**

Counts the number of jobs held by employees rather than the number of people in these jobs (as a person can have more than one job), through the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). Includes jobs within businesses with VAT and PAYE registrations. Also includes agriculture jobs provided by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) taken from the Agriculture Census. However, excludes self-employed jobs.

### **Employment**

The definition of employment used in the Labour Force Survey (LFS) is in accordance with that of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The LFS defines employment as those people aged 16 and over who did at least one hour of paid work in the reference week (either as an employee or self-employed); those who had a job which they were temporarily away from (on holiday for example); those participating in government training and employment programmes; and those doing unpaid family work.

### **Employment Rate**

The number of working age people (aged 16 to 64) in employment as a percentage of the total population of working age.

### **Full-time/Part-time**

In the Labour Force Survey, the classification of employees, self-employed, those on government work-related training programmes and unpaid family workers in their main job as full-time or part-time is on the basis of self-assessment. People on Government supported

training and employment programmes who are at college in the survey reference week are classified, by convention, as part-time.

### **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**

Gross domestic product measures the value of goods and services produced by a country or region. It estimates the size of and growth in the economy.

### **Gross Pay**

A measure of the money people receive in return for work done, gross of tax. It includes salaries and, unless otherwise stated, bonuses but not unearned income, benefits in kind or arrears of pay.

### **Gross Value Added (GVA)**

The value generated by any unit engaged in production and the contributions of individual sectors or industries to gross domestic product.

### **Industrial and Occupational Classification**

This is the internationally standardised method for classifying the extensive range of industrial sectors in an economy. At the highest level, the economy can be divided into the private and public sectors. It can also be broken down by industrial sector. The Labour Force Survey uses the Standard Industrial Classification 2007 (SIC 2007) and the Standard Occupational Classification 2010 (SOC 2010) to classify the economic activities of businesses and individuals.

### **Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR)**

The Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) is a database of all businesses in the UK registered for VAT and/or the PAYE Income Tax system. The IDBR is used as a sampling frame for the business surveys. In NI, the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) collects information at a local unit level that is used to update the IDBR.

### **Jobseeker's Allowance**

Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is a benefit for people of working age who are out of work or work less than 16 hours per week on average. If eligible, it is paid whilst looking for work. To get JSA a person must be:

- available for, capable and actively seeking work;
- aged 18 or over but below State Pension age (JSA is only paid to 16 or 17 year olds in special cases); and
- working less than 16 hours per week on average.

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

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a quarterly survey of households living at private addresses in NI, collecting information on the economic status and activity of all residents aged 16 and over during a specified week in the quarter (termed the reference week). It also covers a wide range of related topics such as income, qualifications, training and disability. Each

participating household is interviewed five times, at three-monthly intervals to find out if anyone's circumstances have changed. The theoretical sample for each quarter consists of around 3,900 addresses, made up of five 'waves', each containing approximately 780 private households.

### **Labour Market Statistics**

A measure of many different aspects of the labour market that provide an insight into the economy. They are also very much about people, including: their participation in the labour force; the types of work they do; earnings and benefits they receive; their educational qualifications; and their working patterns.

### **Median Gross Weekly Pay**

Median gross weekly pay for full-time employees is the headline measure of earnings from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE).

Gross weekly pay includes basic pay, overtime pay, commissions, shift premium pay, bonus or incentive pay and allowances, and is before deductions for PAYE, National Insurance, pension schemes, student loan repayments and voluntary deductions.

Median measures the amount earned by the average individual, i.e. the level of pay at which half the population are above and half the population are below.

Full-time employee is defined as anyone aged 16 years or over that is directly paid from a business's payroll for carrying out more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).

### **NEET**

Young people not in education, employment or training.

### **Productivity per Job Filled**

A measure of productivity, calculated as GVA divided by the number of filled jobs used to create it.

### **Qualification Level 2**

Level 2 is the equivalent of having five A\* - C grade GCSEs. The level of highest qualifications held by working age adults is collected via the Labour Force Survey using the National Qualification Framework.

### **Qualification Level 3**

Level 3 is the equivalent of having more than one A-level. The level of highest qualifications held by working age adults is collected via the Labour Force Survey using the National Qualification Framework.

**School Leavers**

Pupils leaving post-primary schools, includes grant-aided schools but excludes special and independent schools.

**Sector**

All people in employment are classified to the private sector except those employed by central government, local government and public corporations.

**Unemployment**

The definition of unemployment used in the Labour Force Survey (LFS) is in accordance with that of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The LFS measure of unemployment refers to people without a job who were available to start work in the two weeks following their LFS interview and had either looked for work in the four weeks prior to interview or were waiting to start a job they had already obtained.

**Unemployment Rate**

The unemployment rate is the percentage of economically active people aged 16 - 64 who are unemployed.

**Universal Credit**

Universal Credit (UC) is a benefit rolled out in 2017 in Northern Ireland to replace a number of means-tested benefits, including the means-tested element of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Those UC claimants who are required to be seeking work are included in the Claimant Count estimates along with all claimants of JSA.

**Vacancies**

Vacancies are defined as positions for which employers are actively seeking recruits from outside their business or organization. Based on vacancies that have been notified to the Department for Communities. The statistics do not represent the total unsatisfied demand for staff by employers within Northern Ireland, but are only those vacant positions notified by employers to the Department.

**Working Age**

Working age is considered to be ages 16 to 64 for both males and females.

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