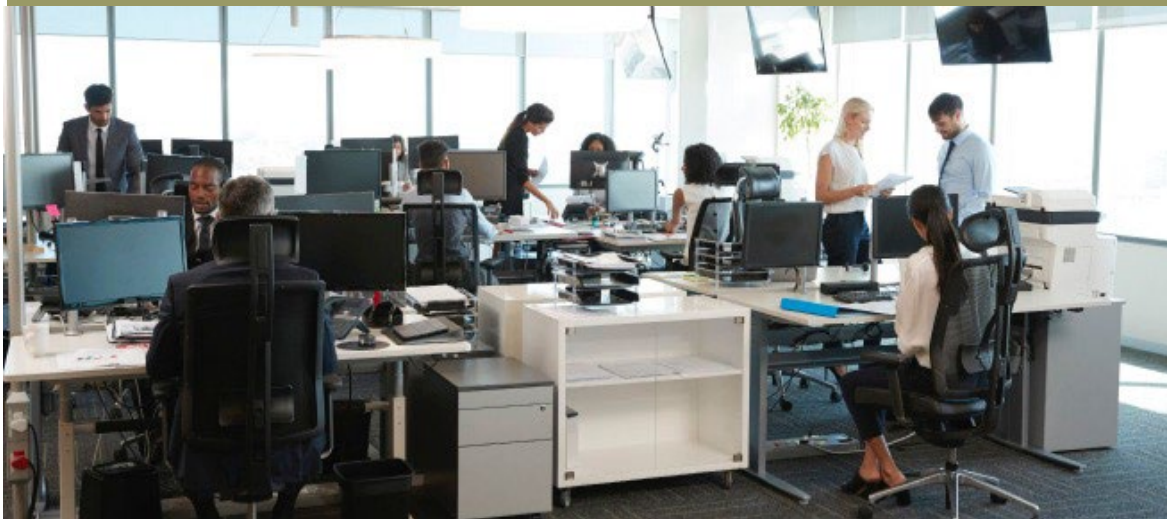


Personnel Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service 2023



Based on staff in post at 1
April 2023.

Published June 2023



Department of

Finance

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1 Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the personnel profile of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) at 1 April 2023 and how it has changed since 2013. The key findings are summarised below.

1) Numbers

At 1 April 2023 there were 22,818 full-time equivalent staff (FTE) in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), which was an increase of 1.3% on the figure at 1 April 2022, and a decrease of 13.2% from 1 April 2013.

Like the previous ten years, in 2023 the Executive Officer (EOI/EOII) and Administrative Officer (AO) grade levels jointly accounted for over half of FTE staff. Since 2013 the proportions of FTE staff have generally decreased at Administrative Assistant (AA) and AO level, and increased at EOI/EOII level and above. Departments continued to differ markedly in size in 2023, ranging from just over 6,800 FTE staff (Department for Communities) to just over 400 (The Executive Office).

2) Part-time working

At 1 April 2023, 21.0% of staff were working on a part-time basis, an increase of 1.7 percentage points from 2013. In terms of gender 33.0% of women and 9.0% of men were part-time.

The proportion of women working part-time varied by grade level, ranging from 9.3% at Grade 5 and above to 44.0% at AO level. The proportion of females working part-time decreased at all grades from 2013 with the exception of Prison Grades (10.5 percentage points increase), AA (9.9 percentage points increase) and AO (5.9 percentage points increase).

3) Leavers

There was an increase in the proportion of staff leaving the NICS during 2022/2023 (4.8%) compared with the previous financial year (2021/22, 4.6%). Resignations accounted for the largest proportion of leavers, followed by age retirement.

2 Introduction

About this Report

This report provides an overview of the human resource profile of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) in 2023 and how it has changed over time. Where appropriate, comparisons are made with the Civil Service in Great Britain (GB).

Data Coverage

The primary data source for this report, with the exception in part of the NI Prison Service (NIPS), was HRConnect, the Human Resource Service for the NICS. Data for NIPS staff not on HRConnect was obtained from NIPS's own personnel data systems.

Figures are based on actual staff in post at 1 April each year; analyses of leavers are on a financial year basis. Figures relate to employees with an employment contract who are being paid by the organisation. Employees can be permanent, on a fixed-term contract or employed on a casual basis. Permanent employees have a contract with no agreed expiry date or a fixed-term contract of more than 12 months.

Temporary/casual employees are those with a fixed term contract of twelve months or less, or employed on a casual basis.

Self-employed, contract workers and agency workers are excluded from the figures. Civil servants working on secondment to other organisations and staff on career break have also been excluded.

Figures for 2023 relate only to NICS staff in the following organisations –

DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for the Economy
DE	Department of Education
DoF	Department of Finance
DoH	Department of Health
DfI	Department for Infrastructure
DOJ	Department of Justice
TEO	The Executive Office
PPS	The Public Prosecution Service
Other	Includes the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland and Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland

Details of the methods used to count civil servants - headcount and full time equivalent (FTE) - are presented in the Appendices along with a full list of grade levels, occupations, and numbers at each grade level in the various Departments. Information relating to quality is also included. The report does not include information on absence, pay, or equality.

Separate reports on these topics can be found at:-

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/ni-civil-service-human-resource-statistics/sickness-absence-statistics>

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/ni-civil-service-human-resource-statistics/pay-statistics>

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/ni-civil-service-human-resource-statistics/equality-statistics>

3 Number of Staff

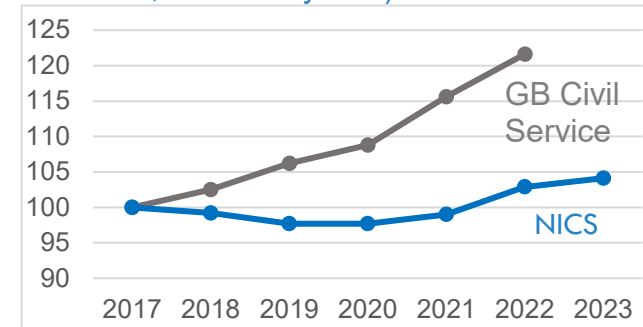
All Staff

On 1 April 2023 the headcount for the NICS was 24,407, an increase of 4.1% from April 2017 (Figure 1). The full time equivalent (FTE) number of staff in the NICS at 1 April 2023 was 22,818 and of these 693 were industrials (Figure 2).

Figure 2 shows that industrial staff numbers are the lowest they have been during the last eleven years.

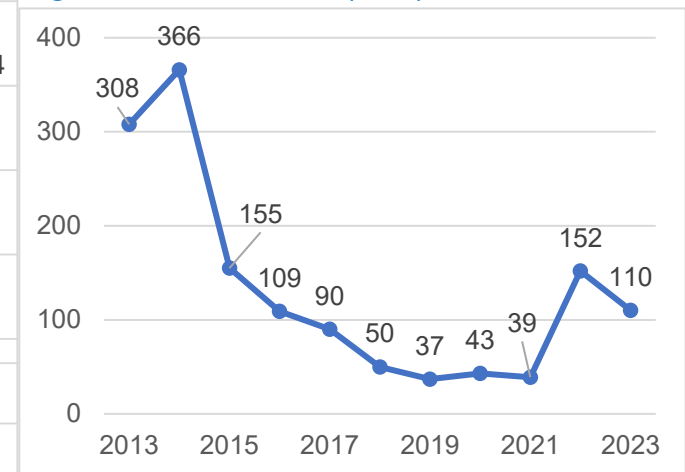
The FTE number of casual staff decreased each year from 2014 to 2019, reaching a low of 37 by April 2019. After an increase of 113 from 2021 to 2022 there was a decrease of 42 from 2022 to 2023 (Figure 3).

Figure 1: All Staff (Headcount) Comparing the NICS and GB Civil Service¹ Index (April 2017=100; non zero y axis)



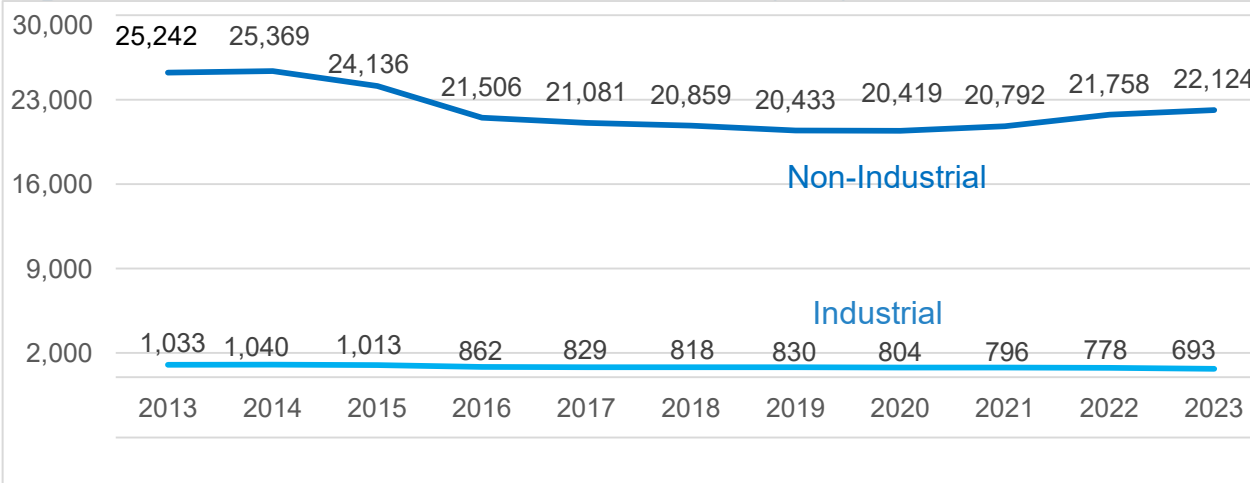
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Figure 3: Casual Staff (FTE), 2013 to 2023



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Figure 2: All Industrial and Non-Industrial NICS Staff (FTE), 2013 to 2023



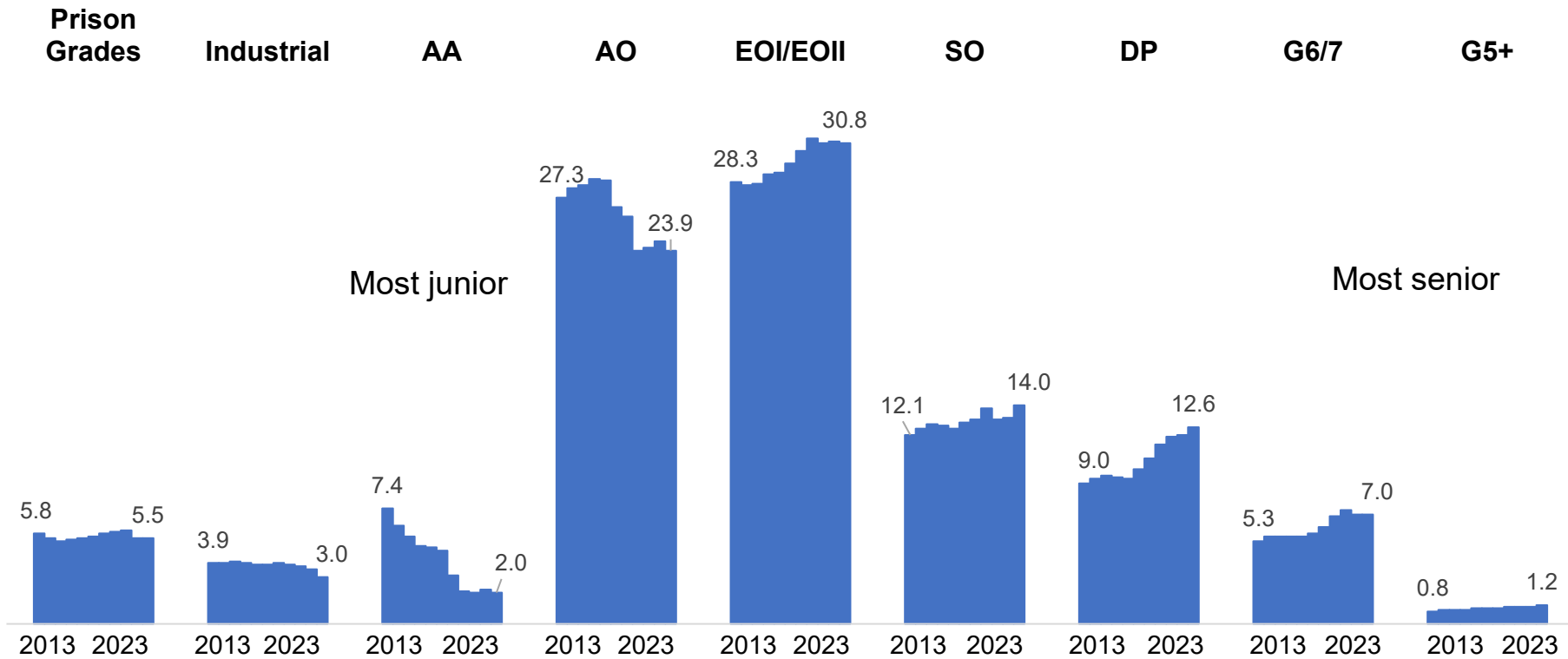
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¹ GB comparators will be published at a future date at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-statistics>.

² Non-Industrial and Industrial totals from figure 2 may not sum to overall total due to rounding.

3 Number of Staff

Figure 4: All Staff (FTE) Grade Level Distribution, 2013 to 2023 (% within Grade)



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Grade Profile

Since 2013 overall the proportion of FTE staff has generally decreased at Administrative Assistant (AA) and Administrative Officer (AO) level, and increased at Executive Officer (EOI/EOII) level and above. Grade 5 and above (G5+) has increased from 0.8 percentage points (2013) to 1.2 percentage points (2023). The largest decrease was at AA level (5.4 percentage points), while the largest increase was at DP level (3.6 percentage points). In 2023, the year on year proportion increased for all grades SO and above, except for G6/7 which remained at the same level. Industrial grades and all grades below SO decreased. Prison grades remained at the same level as 2022. As in the previous ten years, in 2023 the EOI/EOII and AO grade levels jointly accounted for over half of FTE staff.

3 Number of Staff

Departmental Composition

Departments continued to differ markedly in size in 2023, ranging from just over 6,800 FTE staff (DfC) to just over 400 (TEO). Each of the smallest three ministerial departments and the PPS had fewer than 1,000 FTE staff; the largest five each had more than 2,800 FTE staff. Since April 2021, DfI has decreased in the number of FTE staff. All other departments experienced an increase in FTE staff since 2021 with the biggest increase in TEO (35.2%).

Figure 5: All Staff (FTE) by Departmental Composition, 2016¹ to 2023 (% within Department)

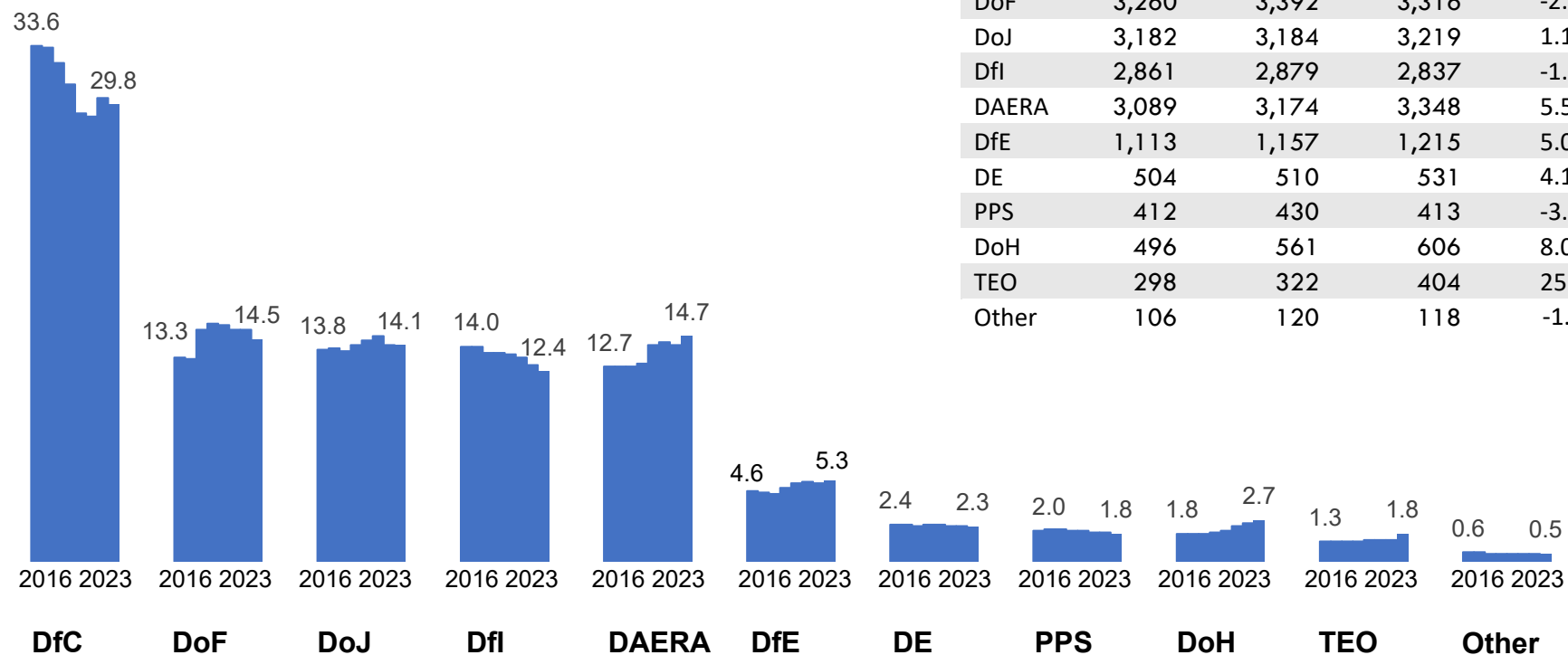


Table 1: Changes in Departmental Composition All Staff (FTE) 1 April 2021, 2022 and 2023²

Department	% change				
	2021	2022	2023	22-23	21-23
DfC	6,267	6,806	6,810	0.1%	8.7%
DoF	3,260	3,392	3,316	-2.2%	1.7%
DoJ	3,182	3,184	3,219	1.1%	1.2%
DfI	2,861	2,879	2,837	-1.5%	-0.8%
DAERA	3,089	3,174	3,348	5.5%	8.4%
DfE	1,113	1,157	1,215	5.0%	9.2%
DE	504	510	531	4.1%	5.3%
PPS	412	430	413	-3.8%	0.3%
DoH	496	561	606	8.0%	22.3%
TEO	298	322	404	25.3%	35.2%
Other	106	120	118	-1.9%	10.8%

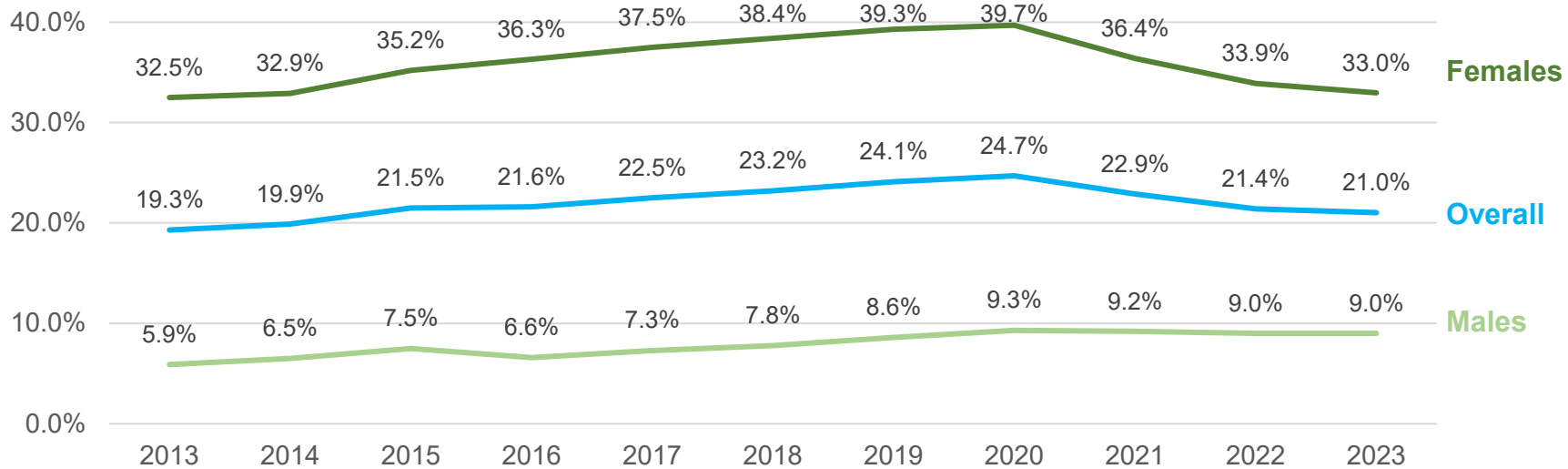
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¹ In May 2016, restructuring within the NICS saw the number of ministerial departments decrease from twelve to nine. Staff at 1 April 2016 were re-allocated to one of the new departments.

² Departmental calculations were based on unrounded figures and therefore may not equal overall total due to rounding

4 Part-time Working

Figure 6: Proportion of Staff (Headcount) Working Part-Time, 2013 to 2023



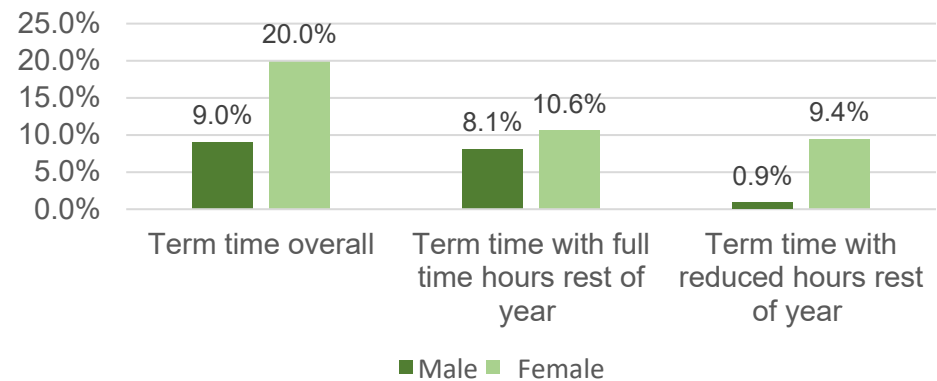
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Overall

The proportion of staff working on a part-time basis generally increased over the seven years from 2013 to 2020, however it has decreased since then. Since 2013 the proportion of males and females working part-time has increased by 3.1 and 0.5 percentage points respectively (Figure 6).

Approximately 9.0% of male and 20.0% of female part-time staff had a term time work pattern. Just over 47.1% of women working on a term time basis worked reduced hours during the rest of the year. The remaining 52.9% worked full time hours for the rest of the year. The comparative figures for males were approximately 10.1% and 89.9% respectively.

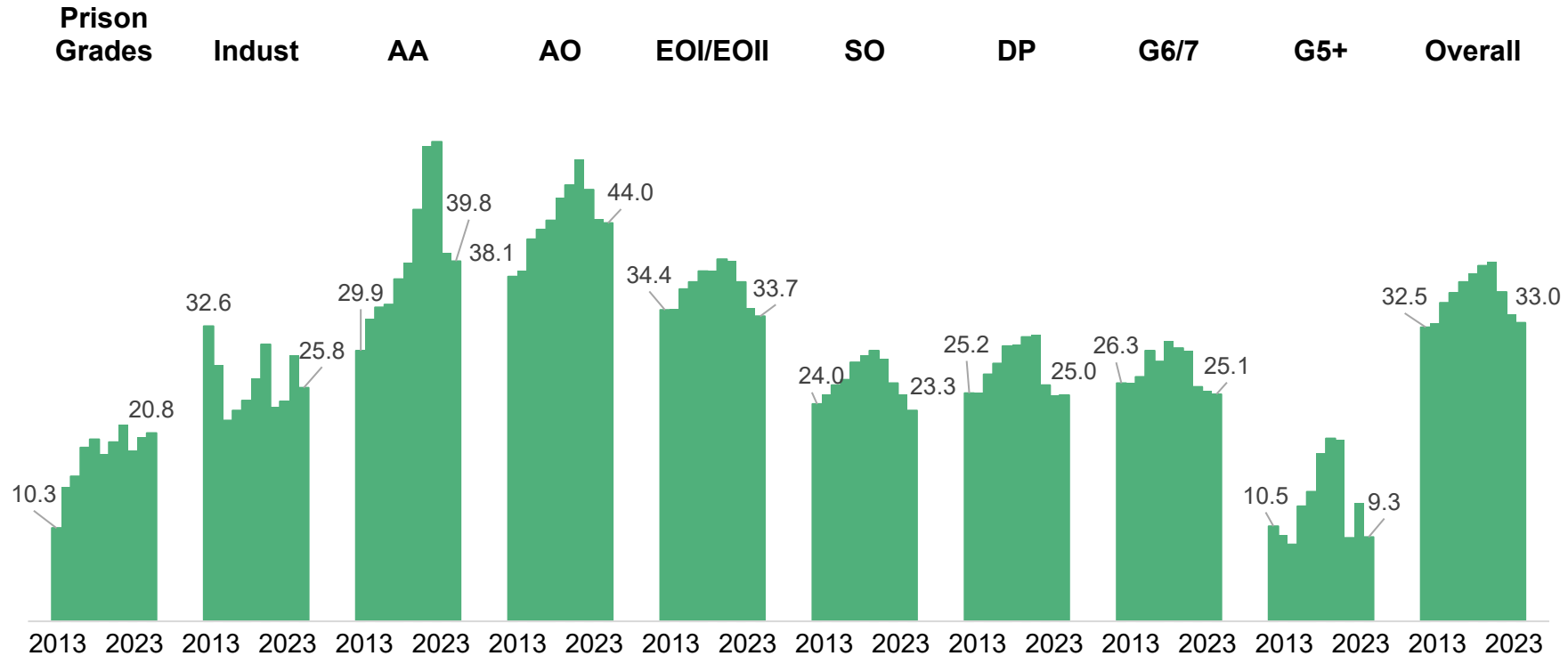
Figure 7: Term Time Working Percentage of All Part-Time Staff (Headcount) 1 April 2023



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4 Part-time Working

Figure 8: Percentage of Part-time Female Staff (Headcount) at each Grade Level, 2013 to 2023 (% within Grade)



[Download Data](#)

Grade Profile for Part-Time Female Staff

An analysis by grade was undertaken for female staff only as they accounted for the vast majority (78.7%) of part-time workers. The analysis showed that the proportion varied markedly by grade, ranging from around 9.3% at Grade 5+ to 44.0% at AO level.

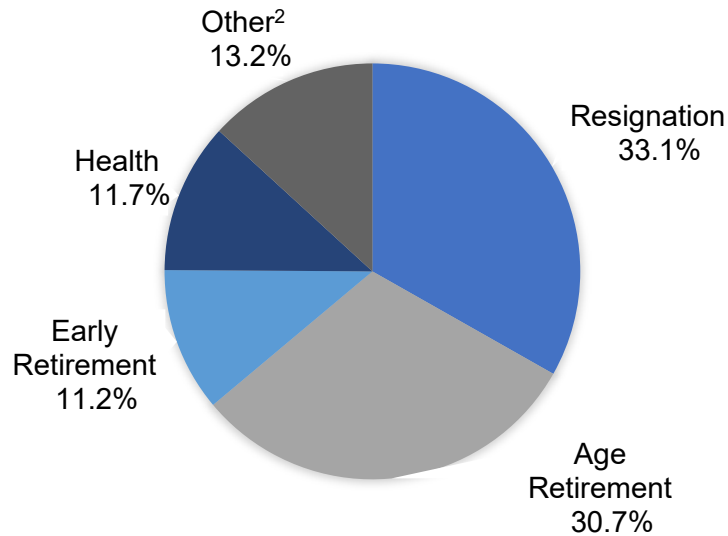
The proportion of females working part-time decreased at all grades from 2013 with the exception of Prison Grades (10.5 percentage points increase), AA (9.9 percentage points increase) and AO (5.9 percentage points increase). Overall the proportion has increased by 0.5 percentage points.

5 Leavers

Reasons for leaving

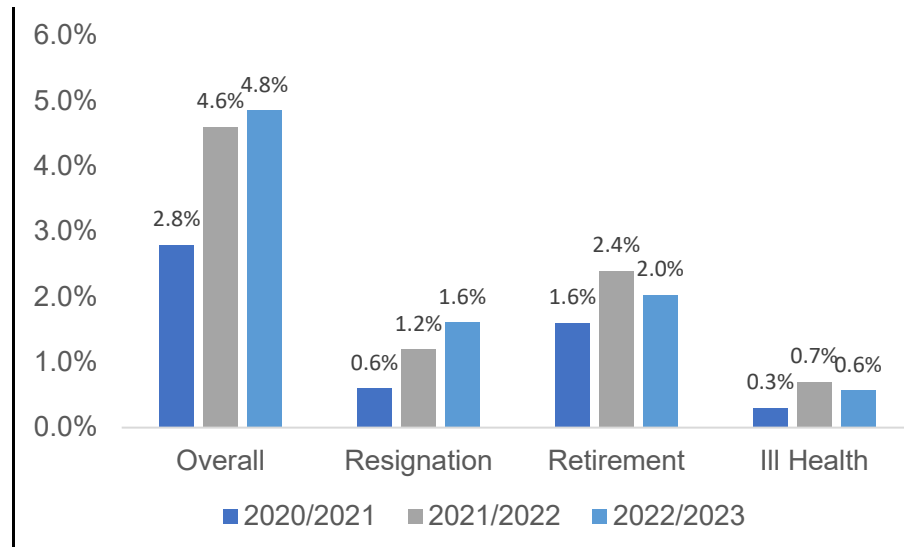
Resignations (33.1%) and Age Retirement (30.7%) accounted for the majority of all leavers in 2022/23. The 2022/2023 leaving rate¹ (4.8%) was higher than the rate during the previous financial year (4.6%).¹

Figure 9: Reasons for Leaving All Staff (Headcount) 2022/2023



[Download Data](#)

Figure 10: Leaving Rates³ by Reason for Leaving (Excluding Other) All Staff (Headcount) 2020/2021, 2021/2022 and 2022/2023



[Download Data](#)

¹GB comparators will be published at a future date at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-statistics>.

²The “Other” classification includes those leaving the NICS under Death in Service, Casual Contracts, Fixed Term Contracts, Disciplinary and Inefficiency-Performance categories.

³Leaving rates are calculated by dividing the number of staff who left during the financial year by the number of staff in post at the start of the financial year, then multiplying by 100.

Appendix 1 – Counting Civil Servants

Two methods of counting Civil Servants are used in this report:

Headcount

Each civil servant is counted as one member of staff, regardless of whether he or she works full-time or part-time. This is appropriate, for example, when recording the numbers leaving the service.

Full-time Equivalent (FTE)

Each full-time civil servant is counted as one member of staff and each part-time civil servant is counted as a proportion (based on hours worked) of a full-time member of staff. Thus, for example, someone working 18.5 hours per week counts as 0.5 staff, since a full-time employee works 37 hours per week. This is appropriate, for example, when recording the number of staff required to perform Civil Service functions.

Appendix 2 – Analogous Grade Level

Table 2: NICS Grading Structure in Descending Order of Seniority (Excludes Industrial and Prison Grade Staff)

Abbreviation	Analogous grade
G5	Grade 5 (Assistant Secretary)
G6/7	Grade 6 (Senior Principal) and Grade 7 (Principal)
DP	Deputy Principal
SO	Staff Officer
EOI/EOII	Executive Officer I and Executive Officer II
AO	Administrative Officer
AA	Administrative Assistant

Appendix 3 – Occupations

Table 3: Occupations of Staff (Headcount) 1 April 2023

Occupation ¹	No. of Staff	Occupation	No. of Staff
Agricultural Economists	23	Information Officers	69
Agricultural Inspectors (Grade)	308	Legal Grades (Solicitors)	380
Agricultural Inspectors (Group)	328	Mechanical and Electrical Engineers	92
Architects (Professional)	51	Mapping and Charting	175
Architects (Technical)	48	Meat Inspectors	117
Careers Officers	104	Miscellaneous	29
Civil Engineers (Professional)	186	Planning Office Staff	49
Civil Engineers (Technical)	559	Prison Grades	1,293
Computing	616	Psychologists	23
Curatorial Grade	61	Quantity Surveyors	38
DE Inspectorate	46	Science Grades	613
Drawing Office Staff	113	Statisticians	344
Economists	119	Support Grades	108
Fisheries	43	Trading Standards	22
Foreperson	21	Typing	188
Forestry	33	Valuation	180
General Service	15,969	Vehicle and Driving Examiners	464
General Service (Accountant)	348	Veterinary Officers	147
General Service (Auditor)	37	YJA Specialisms	139
Health and Safety Inspectors	74	-	
Industrial Grades	705	ALL²	24,407

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¹Occupations with fewer than 20 staff have not been listed in the table.

²Including occupations not listed in the table.

Appendix 4 – Composition of NICS overall

Table 4: Staff (FTE) by Grade Level in Each Department¹, 1 April 2023

Department	Grade 5 and above	Grade 6/7	DP	SO	EOI/EOII	AO	AA	Industrial	Prison Grades	All Grades
DAERA	30	294	547	805	1004	409	86	175	0	3348
DfC	26	137	387	540	3048	2542	105	25	0	6810
DfE	27	132	275	261	335	155	31	0	0	1215
DE	19	95	102	77	130	93	15	0	0	531
DoF	46	404	627	603	901	661	67	7	0	3316
DoH	30	115	143	149	115	45	9	0	0	606
DfI	20	140	284	371	700	785	67	471	0	2837
DoJ	22	157	262	257	598	596	46	16	1264	3219
PPS	8	69	100	15	80	118	23	0	0	413
TEO	34	41	105	109	78	32	6	0	0	404
Other	5	22	39	11	29	10	2	0	0	118
Total	266	1607	2870	3197	7017	5446	457	693	1264	22818

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¹Departmental figures may not equal overall total due to rounding.

Appendix 5 – Quality Assessment

This section provides information about the quality of the data used to produce this publication, and any statistics derived from these data.

Dimension	Assessment by the author
Introduction:-	<p>This report provides an overview of the human resource profile of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) in 2023 and how it has changed over time. Information is broken down by analogous grade, department, work-pattern and reason for leaving.</p> <p>The primary data source, with the exception in part of the NIPS, was HRConnect, the Human Resource Service for the NICS. Data for NIPS staff not on HRConnect was obtained from NIPS’s own personnel data systems. Figures are based on actual staff in post at 1 April each year; analyses of leavers are on a financial year basis.</p>
Relevance:- <i>The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.</i>	Covers a breakdown of NICS staff at 1 April 2023 by analogous grade, department and work pattern. Comparative figures and trend data have been included where possible.
Accuracy and reliability:- <i>The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.</i>	Coverage of staff is 100%. The main computer system from which the data are extracted is also used to pay staff.
Timeliness and punctuality:- <i>Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.</i>	<p>The report relates to 1 April 2023, and is published as pre-announced on 22nd June 2023.</p> <p>Some data for GB comparators were not available in time for publication of the 2023 report.</p>

Appendix 5 – Quality Assessment

Dimension	Assessment by the author
<p>Accessibility and clarity:- <i>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 metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.</i></p>	<p>The report contains a description of the staff covered, and definitions of the terms used.</p> <p>It is available on the NISRA website and contains contact details for further information.</p> <p>The full release is made available in a PDF format, which includes all commentaries, notes, tables and charts. This can be viewed using free software. Data from the tables and charts are also made available separately in open data source format.</p>
<p>Coherence and comparability:- <i>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.</i></p>	<p>Counts of staff depend on the reference date, whether staff are permanent or casual, whether those on a career break are included, and whether secondees are included.</p> <p>There have been various changes in the scope of the NICS over the past decade as a result of the transfer of functions (and the associated staff) to new bodies outside the NICS, or from outside bodies to the NICS.</p> <p>The headcount figures are on the same basis as those in the 'Employment in the Northern Ireland Civil Service', the 'Equality Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service' and 'Pay Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service' publications.</p> <p>Where appropriate comparisons are made with GB figures. However, some data for GB comparators were not available in time for publication of the 2023 report.</p>
<p>Trade-offs between output and quality components:-</p>	<p>Coverage of staff is 100%. The main computer system from which the data are extracted is also used to pay staff.</p>

Appendix 5 – Quality Assessment

Dimension	Assessment by the author
<p>Assessment of user needs and perceptions:- <i>The process for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.</i></p>	<p>The report contains contact details in case users wish to provide feedback, comments or queries on the publication.</p> <p>Key stakeholders, notably NICS HR, regularly communicate their personnel statistics requirements to NISRA. In addition an annual customer satisfaction survey is undertaken to review the publication by gathering feedback on the statistics produced, how well they meet user needs and whether there are any suggested improvements. Where specific changes have been suggested, these have been incorporated as far as possible.</p>
<p>Performance, cost and respondent burden:- <i>The effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output.</i></p>	<p>The annual operational cost (staff time) of producing this publication is approximately £2,000.</p> <p>There is no respondent burden, since the data are held on an administrative system.</p>
<p>Confidentiality, transparency and security:- <i>The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.</i></p>	<p>Data are held on a network that is only accessible to the few statisticians who need access.</p>