

# UK National Wellbeing Measures: Northern Ireland Data July 2017

Key:  
Outside Circle: UK\*  
Inside Circle: NI





## Introduction

The Measuring National Wellbeing programme established by the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) was launched in 2010 and sets out a range of measures, organised under 10 themes, such as Health, The Economy, Where We Live and What We Do. This brief update seeks to provide an overview of Northern Ireland across these measures. Further information on the ONS programme can be found at this link ([ONS – Wellbeing](#)).

Since the last update in June 2016, work has progressed on the development of a draft Programme for Government in Northern Ireland using an approach which sets out the outcomes to improve wellbeing for all. The approach is based on progress towards outcomes being measured primarily through a series of population level indicators, with each outcome having a small set of supporting indicators. When finalised, this outcomes framework will be the principal mechanism for assessing societal wellbeing in Northern Ireland. Further information on the NI Programme for Government is available at this link ([NI Programme for Government](#)).

NISRA continues to participate in the ONS-led Measuring National Wellbeing programme. This latest update of NI data is presented alongside UK data in a ‘wheel’ format that has been used by ONS in previous reports, and although ONS has now replaced this graphic with a dashboard, NISRA has decided to continue its use. The latest update has also been shortened to include key information only; however we have expanded reporting through the NISRA website, with a separate page for each of the 10 domains ([Wellbeing in Northern Ireland](#)). These domain pages include time series information (where data are available), brief commentary on the latest findings and links to key sources of statistical information where you can access further information. It is our intention to provide more timely updates to the measures on these domain pages.

We understand that this is a different format and are keen to receive feedback. Please forward any views or queries to Niall O’Neill (e-mail: [niall.o’neill@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:niall.o’neill@nisra.gov.uk)).

## Sources of Data

All of the UK data and most of the NI data have been sourced from the ONS release, [Measuring national well-being: Life in the UK, Apr 2017](#), and its associated tables and datasets. Sources are detailed in the report. There are some gaps in the data available for Northern Ireland, for example, a number of the wellbeing indicators use sources that are only available at the UK level. If possible, alternative data are included for Northern Ireland. In other instances, the Northern Ireland source may not provide data that are exactly comparable to the UK or sub-UK data. Where the two sets of data are not directly comparable, this is depicted using this symbol, ‡.

## International Comparisons

ONS also produces information comparing the UK with OECD countries or the European Union, where available, using directly comparable or proxy measure data across the main areas of wellbeing. [Measuring National Well-being - International Comparisons](#).



## Explanation of Differences

Where relevant and possible, differences between the latest NI and UK figures arising from sample surveys have been tested for statistical significance. The following key has been used in this report, in the table and wheel:

- \* denotes a statistically significant difference
- # the difference is not statistically significant
- ‡ not applicable.

## Summary

### Personal Wellbeing

There are significantly higher proportions of NI respondents reporting very high levels of life satisfaction, worthwhile and happiness than in the UK overall. In recent years there has also been a marked distinction in terms of anxiety, with latest figures indicating a greater proportion of NI respondents indicating very low levels of anxiety than is the case in the UK overall.

### Our Relationships

In 2013/14, 80% of respondents in Northern Ireland indicated that they had a spouse, family member or friend to rely on if they had a serious problem, slightly lower than the UK average of 84%.

The proportion of NI respondents indicating that they were fairly or extremely unhappy in their relationship was 6.6% in 2013/14, which was not significantly different from the UK overall.

### Health

Males and females born in Northern Ireland have fewer expected years of living in good health than their counterparts in the UK. The proportion of adults in Northern Ireland who were satisfied with their health was similar to that in the UK.

The proportion of respondents in NI showing evidence of some mental ill health was 15.6% in 2014/15. In the UK overall, the proportion was 17.3%.

### What We Do

In the 3 months to the end of February 2017, the Northern Ireland unemployment rate was 5.2%, while the overall UK average rate was 4.7%. Around three in five respondents in Northern Ireland indicated that they were mostly or completely satisfied with their job, which is comparable with the UK generally.

The proportion of Northern Ireland respondents indicating that they were mostly or completely satisfied with their amount of leisure time was slightly higher than was the case in the UK overall. In 2015/16, 61% of adults engaged with/participated in arts or cultural activities at least three times in the last year.

### Where We Live

It is estimated that there were 32 crimes against the person per 1,000 adults in Northern Ireland (2015/16). The corresponding figure in England & Wales was 56 crimes. As was the case in England & Wales, the proportion of male respondents in Northern Ireland (88%) feeling fairly/very safe walking alone after dark in 2015/16 was higher than the proportion of female respondents (67%).



A higher proportion of NI respondents felt they belonged to their neighbourhood (78.7%), compared with the UK generally.

### Personal Finance

Around one fifth of people in Northern Ireland live in households with less than 60% of UK median income, which is similar to the proportion in the UK as a whole. At around 7%, a similar proportion of respondents in Northern Ireland and the UK overall reported that they were finding it quite or very difficult getting by financially. Approximately two in five respondents reported that they were mostly/completely satisfied with the income of their household.

### The Economy

The measures in this domain are only reported at UK level. In 2016, the real net national disposable income per head for the UK was £24,224, the UK public sector debt was 86.0% of Gross Domestic Product and the UK inflation rate, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH), was 1.0%.

### Education and Skills

In 2016, 15.8% of Northern Ireland residents aged 16 to 64 had no qualifications, which was noticeably higher than the position in the UK overall (8.1%). The value of human capital in 2015 in Northern Ireland was £0.42 trillion (UK overall: £19.9 trillion). This equates to £362k per head of working age population in NI, compared with £487k per head of working age population in the UK overall.

### Governance

In 2015, the most recent General Election for which Electoral Commission information is available, the turnout in Northern Ireland was 58% compared with 66% across the UK. In 2015/16, 21% of respondents in Northern Ireland reported that they tended to trust the Northern Ireland Assembly.

### Natural Environment

In 2015, greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland totalled 20.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (UK overall: 495.8 million tonnes). This equates to 11.2 tonnes per capita in Northern Ireland, compared with 7.6 tonnes per capita in the UK overall. In Northern Ireland, greenhouse gas emissions increased by 0.6% between 2014 and 2015, and have decreased by 17.8% compared to the base year (the base year is 1990 for carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, and 1995 for the fluorinated gases).

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## UK National Wellbeing Measures: NI & UK Data

Domain / Measure		NI Data	UK Data <sup>1</sup>	Directly Comparable	Sig <sup>2</sup>	Date	NI Source	UK Source
<b>Personal well-being</b>								
1.1	Very high rating of satisfaction with their lives overall	37.5%	29.6%	Yes	*	2016 data	<a href="#">Annual Population Survey, ONS</a>	Annual Population Survey, ONS
1.2	Very high rating of how worthwhile they feel the things they do are	41.8%	34.9%	Yes	*	2016 data	<a href="#">Annual Population Survey, ONS</a>	Annual Population Survey, ONS
1.3	Rated their happiness yesterday as very high	39.7%	34.6%	Yes	*	2016 data	<a href="#">Annual Population Survey, ONS</a>	Annual Population Survey, ONS
1.4	Rated their anxiety yesterday as very low	47.0%	40.3%	Yes	*	2016 data	<a href="#">Annual Population Survey, ONS</a>	Annual Population Survey, ONS
1.5	Population mental well-being	24.9/35	24.6/35	Yes	*	2012 to 2013 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
<b>Our relationships</b>								
2.1	Proportion of those in fairly or extremely unhappy relationships	6.6%	8.4%	Yes	#	2013 to 2014 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
2.2	Feelings of loneliness often/always	N/A	4.1%	N/A	-	UK data 2015/16 relates to England only	N/A	Community Life Survey, Cabinet Office
2.3	Has a spouse or partner, family member or friend to rely on if they have a serious problem	80.0%	84.0%	Yes	*	2013 to 2014 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
<b>Health</b>								
3.1	Healthy life expectancy at birth (male/female)	61.5 (male) 62.0 (female)	63.1 (male) 63.9 (female)	Yes	*(m) *(f)	2013 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Health analysis and reporting, ONS</a>	Health analysis and reporting, ONS
3.2	Percentage who reported a disability	19.8%	17.7%	Yes	*	Oct to Dec 2016 data	<a href="#">Labour Force Survey, NI</a>	Labour Force Survey, ONS
3.3	Mostly or completely satisfied with their health	49.1%	49.6%	Yes	#	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study

<sup>1</sup> Mostly UK, some indicators relate to sub-UK geographies, as indicated in Date.

<sup>2</sup> Differences between the NI and UK data for each indicator are assessed using 95% confidence intervals. If a difference is said to be statistically significant, it is unlikely that it could have occurred by chance. Confidence intervals give a measure of the statistical precision of an estimate and show the range of uncertainty around the estimate. As a general rule, if the confidence intervals around the estimate overlap with the intervals around another, there is no statistically significant difference between the estimates.

3.4	Some evidence indicating depression or anxiety	15.6%	17.3%	Yes	#	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
<b>What we do</b>								
4.1	Unemployment rate	5.2%	4.7%	Yes	#	Dec 2016 to Feb 2017 data	<a href="#">Labour Force Survey, ONS</a>	Labour Force Survey, ONS
4.2	Mostly or completely satisfied with their job	58.7%	55.8%	Yes	#	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
4.3	Mostly or completely satisfied with their amount of leisure time	47.0%	43.7%	Yes	*	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
4.4	Volunteered more than once in the last 12 months	14.4%	19.1%	Yes	*	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
4.5	Engaged with/participated in arts or cultural activity at least 3 times in last year	61%	82%	No		2015/16 data; UK data relates to England only	<a href="#">NISRA Continuous Household Survey, DfC</a>	Taking Part Survey, DCMS
4.6	Adult participation in 30 mins of moderate intensity sport, once per week.	N/A	36.1%	N/A	-	UK data Oct 2015 - Sept 2016 relates to England only	N/A	Active People Survey, Sport England
<b>Where we live</b>								
5.1	Crimes against the person (per 1,000 adults)	32	56	No		2015/16 data; UK data relates to England and Wales only	<a href="#">Northern Ireland Crime Survey, DoJ</a>	Crime Survey for England and Wales, ONS
5.2	Felt fairly/very safe walking alone after dark (men/women)	88% (men) 67% (women)	87.9% (men) 61.7% (women)	No		2015/16 data; UK data relates to England and Wales only	<a href="#">Northern Ireland Crime Survey, DoJ</a>	Crime Survey for England and Wales, ONS
5.3	Accessed natural environment at least once a week in the last 12 months	68%	58.9%	No		UK data 2013/14 relates to England only; NI data 2015/16	<a href="#">NISRA Continuous Household Survey</a>	Monitor of Engagement with the natural environment, Natural England
5.4	Agreed/agreed strongly they felt they belonged to their neighbourhood	78.7%	68.8%	Yes	*	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
5.5	Average minimum travel time to reach the nearest key services	N/A	17 minutes	N/A	-	UK data 2014 relates to England only	N/A	Journey Time Statistics, Department for Transport

5.6	Fairly/very satisfied with their accommodation	92%	89.9%	No		UK data 2014/15 relates to England only; NI data 2011	<a href="#">House Condition Survey</a>	English Housing Survey, Department for Communities and Local Government
<b>Personal finance</b>								
6.1	Individuals in households with less than 60% of median income before housing costs	20%	16%	No		UK data: single year (2015/16); NI data: 3 year (2013/14-2015/16)	<a href="#">Family Resources Survey, Department for Work and Pensions</a>	Family Resources Survey, Department for Work and Pensions
6.2	Median wealth per household, including pension wealth	N/A	£225,100	N/A	-	UK data 2012-2014 relates to Great Britain only	N/A	Wealth and Assets Survey, ONS
6.3	Real median household income	N/A	£26,332	N/A	-	UK data 2015/16	N/A	National Accounts, ONS
6.4	Mostly or completely satisfied with the income of their household	41.8%	42.8%	Yes	#	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
6.5	Report finding it quite or very difficult to get by financially	7.5%	6.6%	Yes	#	2014 to 2015 data	<a href="#">Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study</a>	Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study
<b>The economy</b>								
7.1	Real net national disposable income per head	N/A	£24,224	N/A	-	UK data 2016	N/A	National Accounts, ONS
7.2	UK public sector net debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product	N/A	86.0%	N/A	-	UK data 2016	N/A	National Accounts, ONS
7.3	Inflation rate (as measured by CPIH)	N/A	1.0%	N/A	-	UK data 2016	N/A	Consumer Prices, ONS
<b>Education and skills</b>								
8.1	Human capital - the value of individuals' skills, knowledge and competences in labour market	£ trillion 0.42	£ trillion 19.9	Yes	-	2015 data	<a href="#">Human Capital estimates, ONS</a>	Human Capital estimates, ONS
8.2	Those not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	N/A	11.5%	N/A	-	UK data Oct-Dec 2016 (seasonally adjusted figures)	N/A	Labour Market, ONS
8.3	UK residents aged 16 to 64 with no qualifications	15.8%	8.1%	Yes	*	2016 data	<a href="#">Labour Force Survey, ONS</a>	Labour Force Survey, ONS
<b>Governance</b>								
9.1	Voter turnout in UK General Elections	58.1%	66.2%	Yes	-	2015 data	<a href="#">Electoral Commission</a>	Electoral Commission
9.2	Those who have trust in national Government	21%	35%	No		UK data 2016; NI data 2015/16	<a href="#">NISRA Continuous Household Survey</a>	Eurobarometer



The natural environment								
10.1	Total green house gas emissions (millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)	20.7	495.75	Yes	-	2015 data	<a href="#">DAERA</a>	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
10.2	Protected areas in the UK (Millions hectares)	0.47	21.41	Yes	-	2015 data	<a href="#">Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</a>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
10.3	Energy consumed within the UK from renewable sources	N/A	8.3%	N/A	-	UK data 2015	N/A	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
10.4	Waste from households that is recycled	42%	44.3%	Yes	-	2015 data	<a href="#">Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</a>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs