

Annual publication

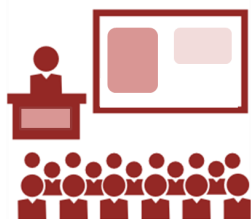
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DfC Professional Services Unit

Main stories

- In 2018/19, there were 1,179 linear feet of records reviewed to assess their suitability for preservation.
- There were 11,628 new items published in PRONI's electronic catalogue in 2018/19 which contains over 1.5 million item descriptions.
- In 2018/19, there were 20,046 visitors to PRONI for group visits, organised events and to use the search and reading rooms.
- There were 10.1 million page views of PRONI's website in 2018/19.

PRONI Events



In 2018/19, there were 58 lectures and PRONI events, 122 group visits and 9 temporary exhibitions held at PRONI.

New Visitors to PRONI



There were 4,610 new visitors registered in PRONI in 2018/19. Fifty five per cent of new visitors were from outside Northern Ireland, with 16% from the USA, 12% from England and Wales., 9% from Canada and 8% from Australia and New Zealand.

Government Files



A total of 1,429 government files were released in 2018.

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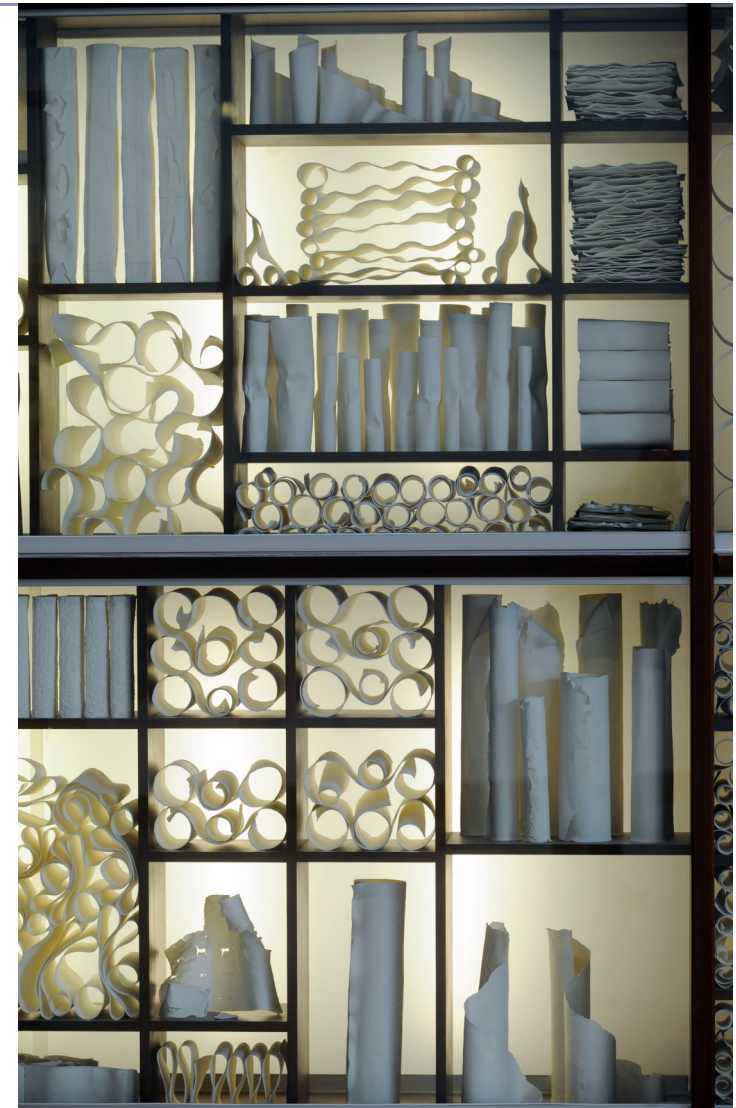
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Introduction

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) is the official archive for Northern Ireland.

It aims to identify and preserve records of historical, social and cultural importance and make them available for the information, education and enjoyment of the public.

PRONI is the official place of deposit for public records in Northern Ireland. In addition, it collects a wide range of archives from private sources. PRONI also advises on and promotes best practice in archive and records management to ensure that today's records will be available for future generations.

PRONI is located in Titanic Quarter Belfast and provides a reading room and search room for visitors.

There are approximately three million documents stored in the archives at PRONI which fall under the categories of either public or private records. PRONI's oldest document is a bull of Pope Honorius the Third, dated 1219.

PRONI hosts four General Registry Office of Northern Ireland (GRONI) terminals which allow users direct access to GRONI's most up to date Births, Marriages and Deaths database. From April to September 2019, a Registration of Deeds/House Mortgage Check Service was facilitated by Land & Property Services (LPS) staff in the PRONI Reading Room.

Methodology and quality of the data

These statistics provide a broad overview of PRONI. The base year is 2018/19 and, where appropriate, other years are also included.

- Figures less than 0.5% are denoted by '0', while no responses are represented by '-'.
- Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.
- Data is validated by PRONI on an ongoing basis and quality assured by DfC Professional Services Unit.



Receiving and Preserving Records

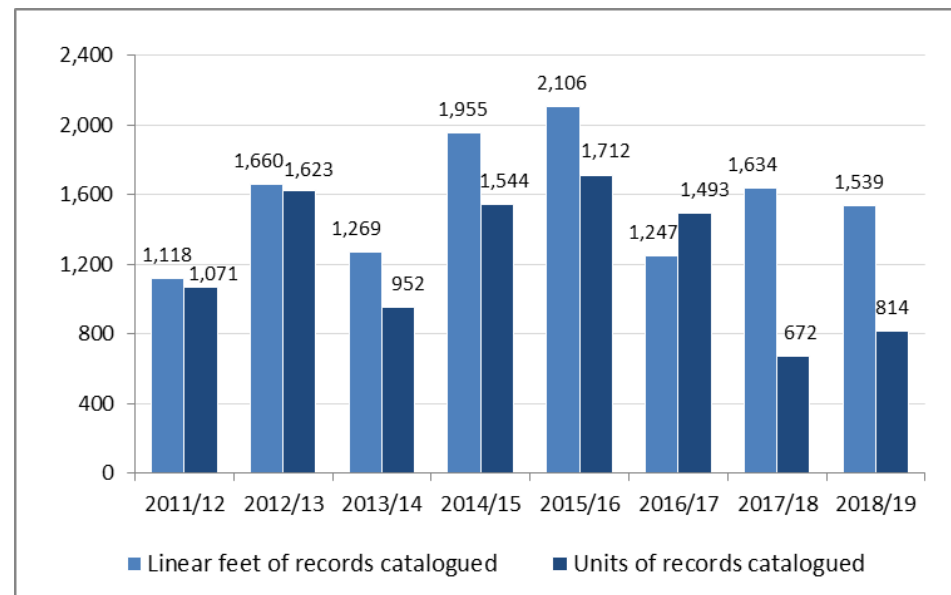
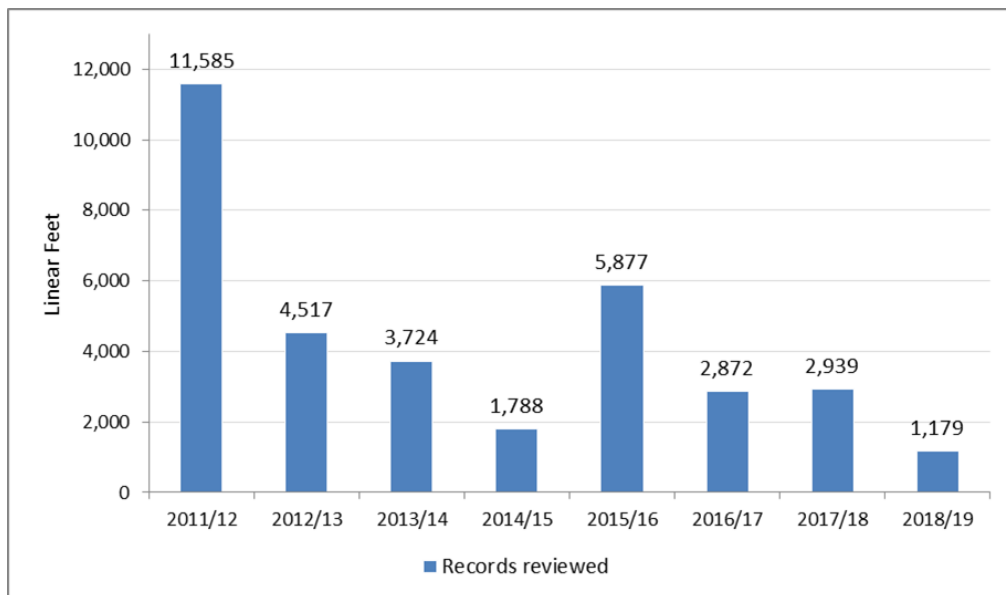
Records reviewed, catalogued and published

Public authority records which are judged to be of lasting value are moved to PRONI for permanent preservation. PRONI also receives records from non-government sources e.g. churches, businesses, charities and families.

Potential deposits are reviewed to assess their suitability for preservation. Records to be preserved by PRONI are accessioned. This involves assigning a reference number and recording information about the collection e.g. a summary description and relevant dates. Once accessioned the records are stored and catalogued. Cataloguing involves creating descriptions of the record/group of records in the PRONI catalogue.



In 2018/19, there were 1,179 linear feet of records reviewed. A PRONI box equals one linear foot and the measurement demonstrates the amount of space freed up in storage in public bodies. There were 1,539 linear feet of records and 814 units of records catalogued in 2018/19.



Source: PRONI, DfC

1. One linear foot is 0.3 of a metre. In 2018/19, 359 and 469 linear metres of records were reviewed and catalogued respectively.
2. Unit of records catalogued is calculated using the linear feet weighted by degree of difficulty.

Receiving and Preserving Records

Records reviewed, catalogued and published

The catalogue summarises the scope and content of PRONI's archives and contains over 1.5 million catalogue item descriptions. A snapshot of the catalogue is made available to the public via PRONI's electronic catalogue (e-CATNI).

There were 15,383 new items added to the PRONI catalogue in 2018/19 and 11,628 items published in PRONI's electronic catalogue.

Available Collections

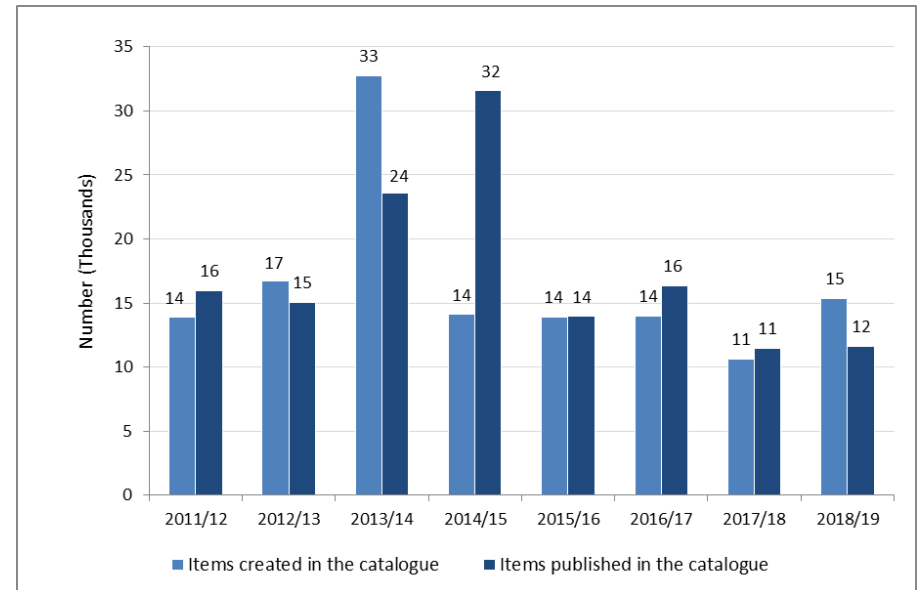
PRONI holds millions of documents that relate chiefly, but not exclusively to Northern Ireland. The records held in PRONI fall into two main categories:

Public Records

PRONI holds public records mainly dating from the formation of Northern Ireland (1921) to the present day. However, a significant number of records also date back to the nineteenth century and some to the eighteenth century and includes the archives of courts, schools, valuation, Board of Guardians, Ordnance Survey, land registry, hospitals including asylums, local authorities and prisons.

Private records

PRONI also holds a diverse range of privately deposited records such as letters, journals, diaries, photographs and albums. There are also extensive archives of churches, landed estates, businesses, charities, sporting bodies, and political parties.



Source: PRONI, DfC

1. An item can be a single letter, volume or file or may relate to a bundle of documents.



Receiving and Preserving Records

Digital Images

One method of preserving is capturing images of the records digitally. Making digital copies allows the information to be accessed without the original record being handled and also allows access by more than one person at a time. Many collections of records are now available online. Increasingly, more time and professional expertise is required to produce an enhanced image suitable for wider access, in addition to the preservation master copy. The images generated include the master copy, a high resolution restored image for archival purposes and a small image (usually in jpeg or pdf format) for access purposes.

In 2018/19, there were 24,435 digital frames captured resulting in 59,971 image files being generated.

The table below provides a breakdown of the number of digital frames captured for specific collections that were digitised in 2018/19.

	Unit: Number
	2018/19
Church Records	5,336
Suffrage Exhibition	4,413
Absent Voters Lists	3,597
Enniskillen Workhouse Registers	2,688
CAIN	2,414
Allison Photographic Collection (Glass Plate Negatives)	1,731
State Pathologists Department - case index books	1,176
Other exhibition photography	749
World War Two Casualities	678
Tithe Applotment Books	426
Steeple Estate Photographic Collection	329
Miscellaneous	898
Number of digital images captured	24,435

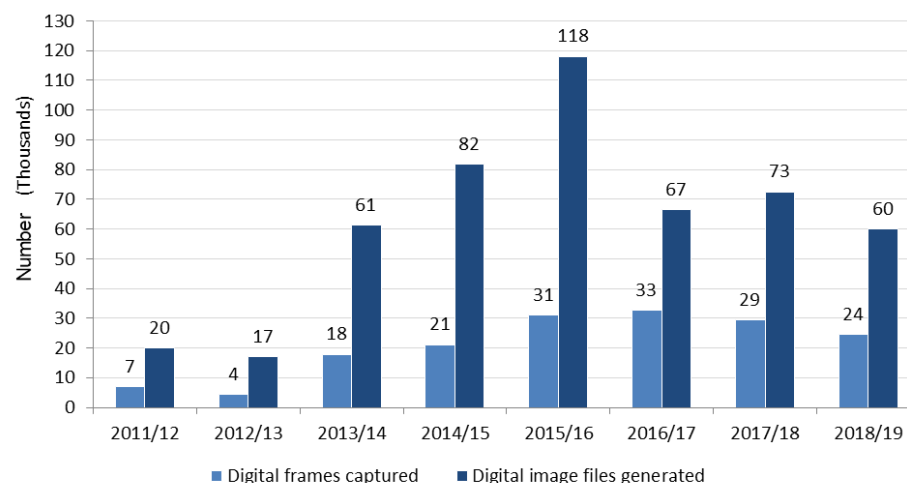


Preservation Copy



Restored Copy

A colour photograph from the Steeple Estate, County Antrim, Photographic Collection, before and after digital restoration. Although this photographic print is relatively young (it dates from c.1975), the colour pigments have faded and discoloured badly over time. Using digital restoration techniques the image was returned back to its original state.



Making records available to the public

Document Production

Anyone can access documents in PRONI. By registering with PRONI, visitors can request documents through the onsite ordering system.

In 2018/19, there were 30,642 documents requested and produced.

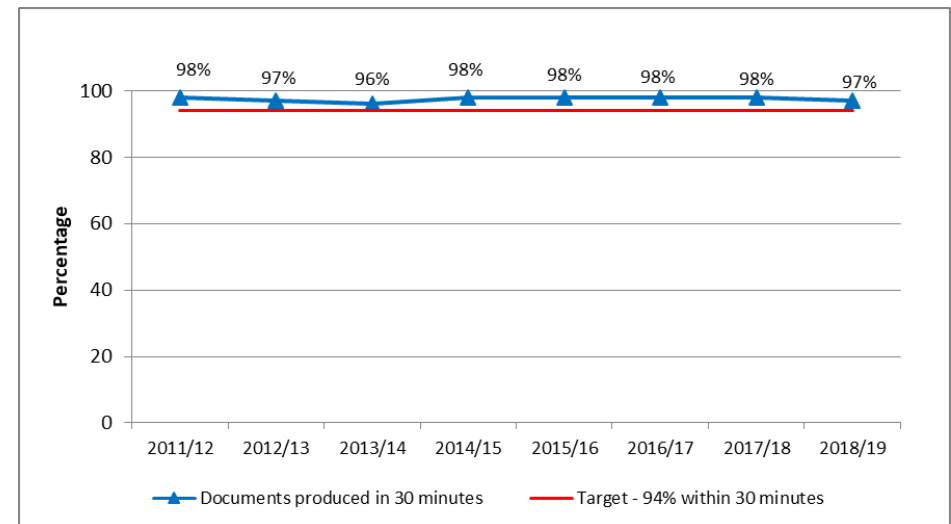
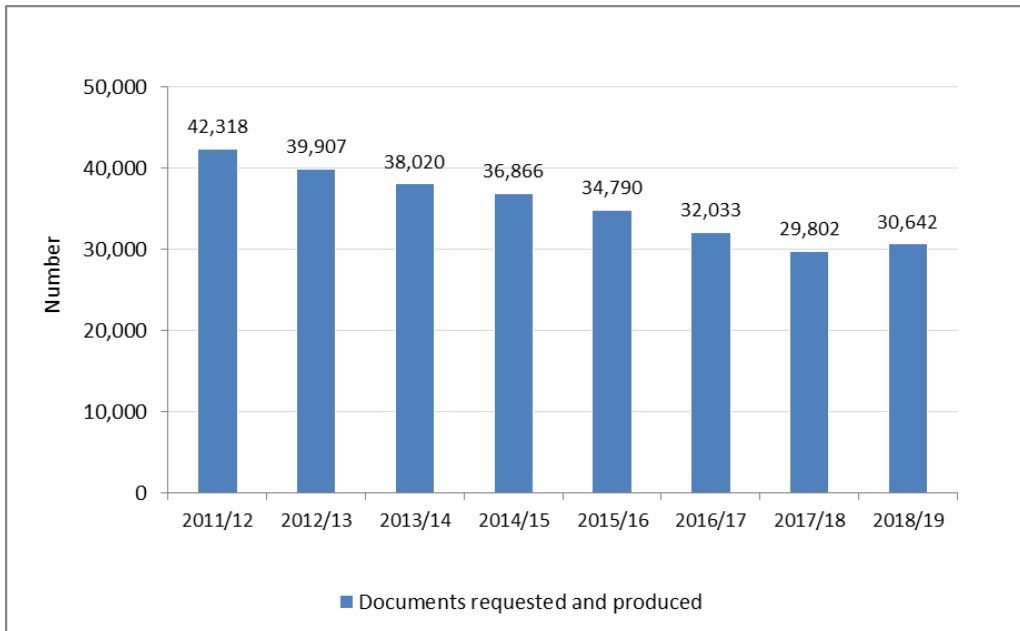
PRONI has a number of targets to measure performance. Original documents requested by visitors are retrieved from the stores, produced in the Reading Room for consultation and then returned to their designated locations in the stores.

The document production target for PRONI states that 94% of documents should be produced within 30 minutes of being requested.

In 2018/19, 97% of documents were produced within 30 minutes. The average retrieval time per order was 14.34 minutes.



PRONI Search Room

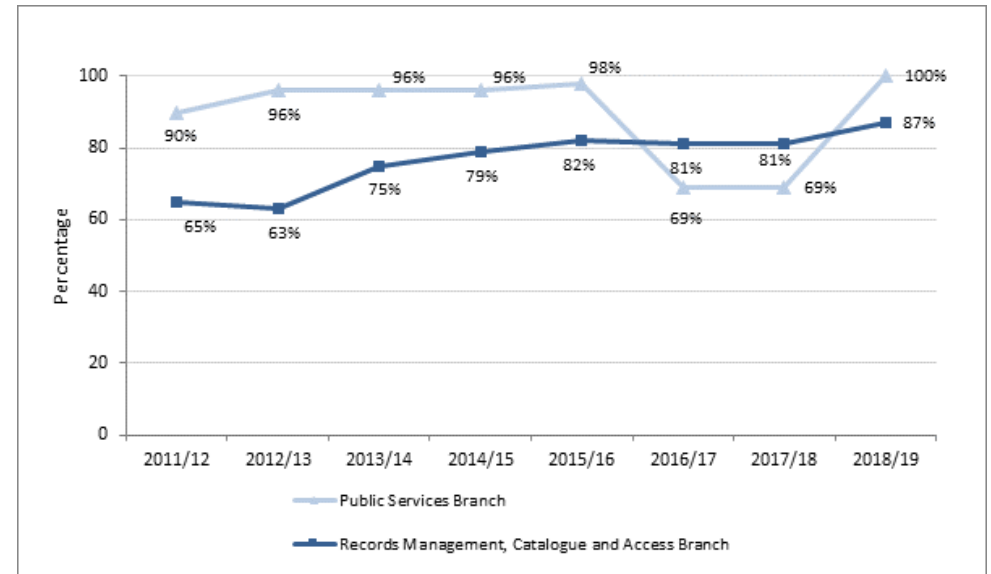


Making records available to the public

Written Correspondence

In 2018/19 the written correspondence target for PRONI's Public Services branch stated that 95% of written enquiries for open material should be responded to within 20 days. It should be noted that this is an amended target from 2017/18. For Records Management, Catalogue and Access branch 80% of requests should be responded to within 10 days.

In 2018/19, there were 3,356 written enquiries to PRONI's Public Services branch with 100% of responses to written correspondence meeting the target. In comparison 87% of the responses to the 776 written correspondence enquiries to Records Management, Cataloguing and Access branch met the target.



Making records available to the public

PRONI website

Search the archives online

PRONI has a programme of digitising significant archives to make them accessible to the public online. The PRONI website provides a number of applications allowing users to search the archives:

- [eCatalogue](#)
- [Freeholders Records](#)
- [Londonderry Corporation Records](#)
- [Name Search](#)
- [PRONI Historical Maps viewer](#)
- [PRONI Web Archive](#)
- [Street directories](#)
- [Ulster Covenant](#)
- [Valuation Revision Books](#)
- [Will calendars](#)



Go online week - April 2018

The eCatalogue is a fully searchable database containing over 1.5 million catalogue entries relating to PRONI's archives which is updated on a quarterly basis. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 11,628 item descriptions were added to the PRONI online catalogue.

Image Gallery

Images from the PRONI archives are available to view on the photo-sharing website Flickr (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/proni>). Photographs added during 2018/19 include images from the Galgorm Castle Papers (D3027), merged images of Belfast, Portrush, Kilkeel and Newcastle from originals by Welch, Lawrence and Allison (T2418, D2324, D2886 & D1403), and images from the Allison Photographic Collection (D2886). During 2018-19, PRONI added 109 photographs to the Flickr photo-stream. This brought the total number of PRONI photographs available to view on Flickr to 3,188.

Facebook

PRONI publishes a new Facebook post every weekday. Posts include promoting new events, reminders of upcoming events and drawing attention to PRONI's resources and services. Popular posts have included 'Guess the Image' and 'On this Day'.

YouTube

PRONI aims to record its public events and talks when possible. These recordings are continuously being collected and added to PRONI's YouTube channel. In 2018-19, an additional 16 talks were made available on PRONI's YouTube channel.

PRONI Express

PRONI's monthly eNewsletter, the PRONI Express, includes information of forthcoming talks, events and new resources. Members of the public can subscribe to receive the eNewsletter at the following link: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/subscribe-pronis-enewsletter>. At the end of 2018-19, a total of 4,071 people had subscribed to receive the eNewsletter. That represents a total increase of 1,704 for the year.

Making records available to the public

Release of Government Files

Each year, PRONI makes historical government records publicly available; generally these are the files of NI Departments and the Northern Ireland Office (Belfast).

The annual release of selected official files continues against a background of greater public access through the Freedom of Information Act (2000), balanced against the need to protect personal information.

Annually since 1976, official records held by PRONI which were 30 years old have been reviewed with a view to making them publicly available ("the 30 year rule"). In September 2011, the Assembly accepted a Legislative Consent Motion to reduce the time limit for release from 30 years to 20 years ("the 20 year Rule"). This is underpinned by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the amendments made to it by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The 20 year rule is being phased in over 10 years, with two years of records being reviewed and released each year. This year, the records of NI Departments and the NIO with terminal dates of 1993 were brought forward for release during August 2018 and the records of 1994 were brought forward in December 2018. This process involves the referral of the files to the Responsible Authority for sensitivity review. This entails a page by page examination to ensure that a record contains nothing sensitive as defined by the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act.

A total of 1,429 government files were released in 2018. Of these, 385 files had some information blanked out, with the main reason for this being to protect personal information.

A further 61 government files could not be released at all, again this was usually to protect personal information.

The released files are listed in the [PRONI catalogue](#) and they are available to consult at PRONI.

PRONI on CAIN

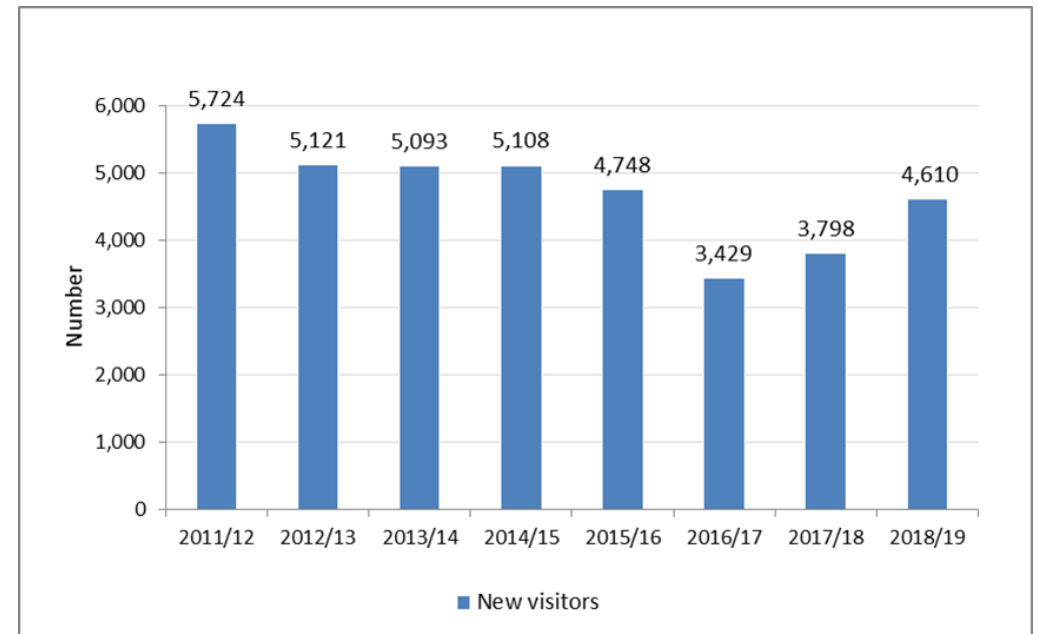
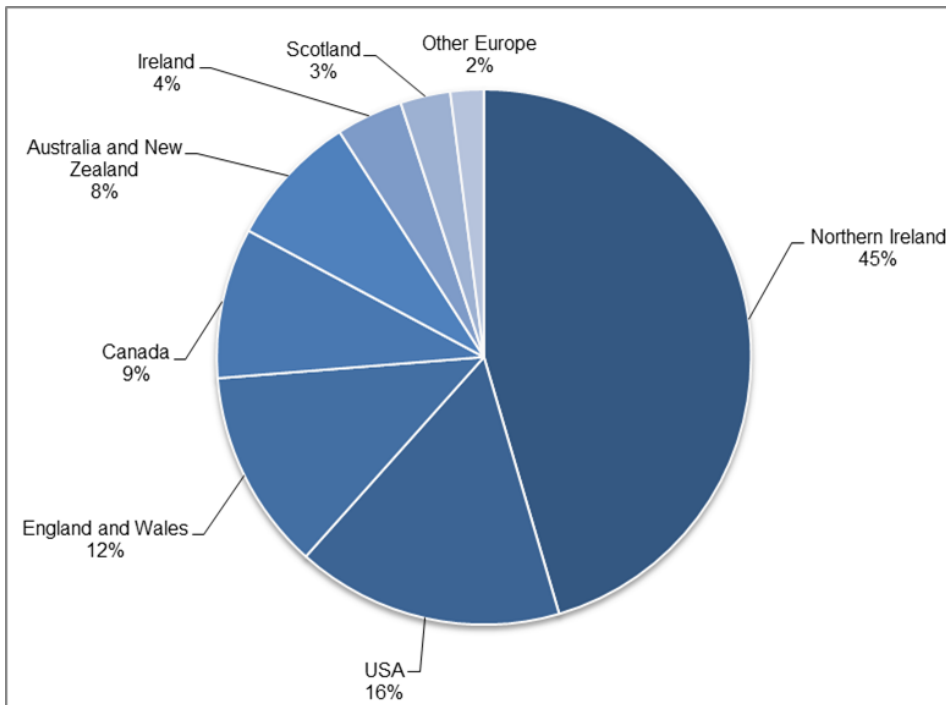
The PRONI at CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) partnership publishes conflict-related documents selected from the Northern Ireland Office and NI Departmental files. [CAIN](#) is hosted by Ulster University. In 2018/19, 580 documents were added to CAIN, mainly relating to the years 1988, 1989 and 1990. Over 2,200 PRONI documents are currently available on CAIN.

Visitors and Visits

New Visitors

There were 4,610 new visitors registered in PRONI in 2018/19. In total, 50% of new visitors were female and 50% were male. Fifty one per cent of new visitors registered in 2018/19 were aged between 25 and 64 years, whilst 35% were aged 65 years and over and 5% were under 25 years of age¹.

In 2018/19, 55% of new visitors were from outside Northern Ireland, with 16% from the USA, 12% from England and Wales, 9% from Canada and 8% from Australia and New Zealand.



1. 9% new visitors did not specify their age when registering.

Visitors and Visits

Visitors to PRONI

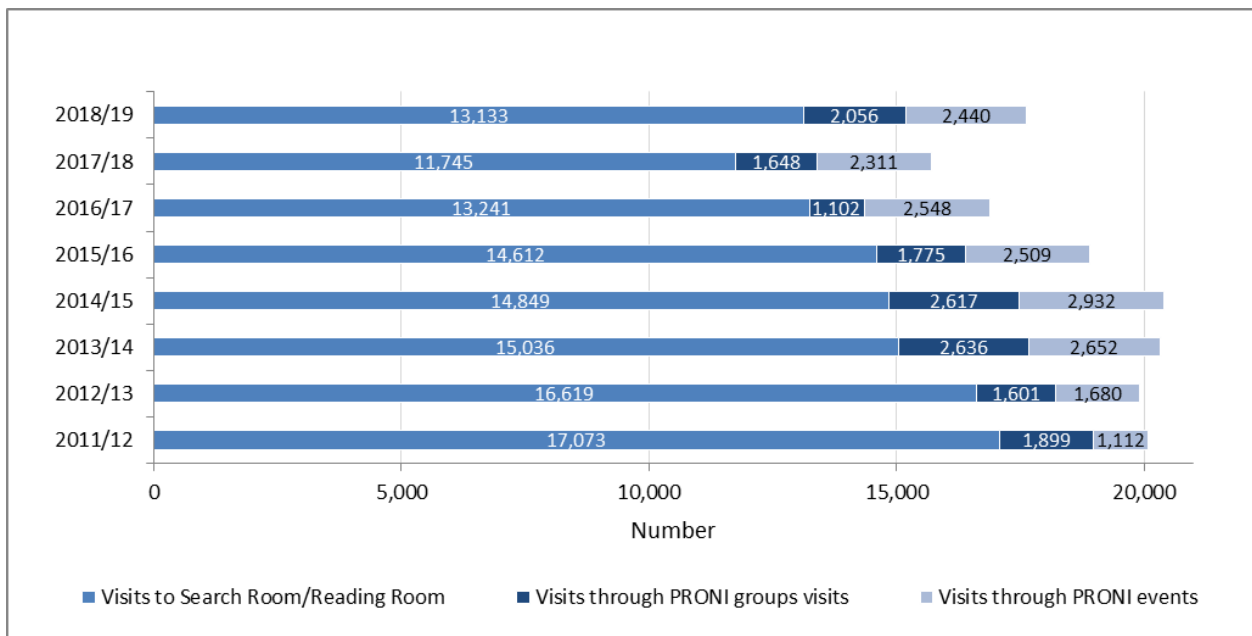
PRONI is committed to improving and increasing cultural participation. A series of public lectures, events and group visits takes place throughout the year.

There were 17,629 visits by the public to PRONI in 2018/19. The majority (74%) of visits by the public were to the Search Room / Reading room in PRONI, while 14% of people attended PRONI events and 12% attended as part of a group visit. In addition, a further 610 people visited as part of events organised with partner organisations, including Civil Servants week. A number of other events were organised through PRONI's Facilities Management contractor which were attended by 1,807 people. The overall number of visitors to PRONI in 2018/19 was 20,046.

There were 58 lectures and PRONI events, 122 group visits and 9 temporary exhibitions held in 2018/19.



Launch of 'In Her Words' exhibition at Parliament Buildings

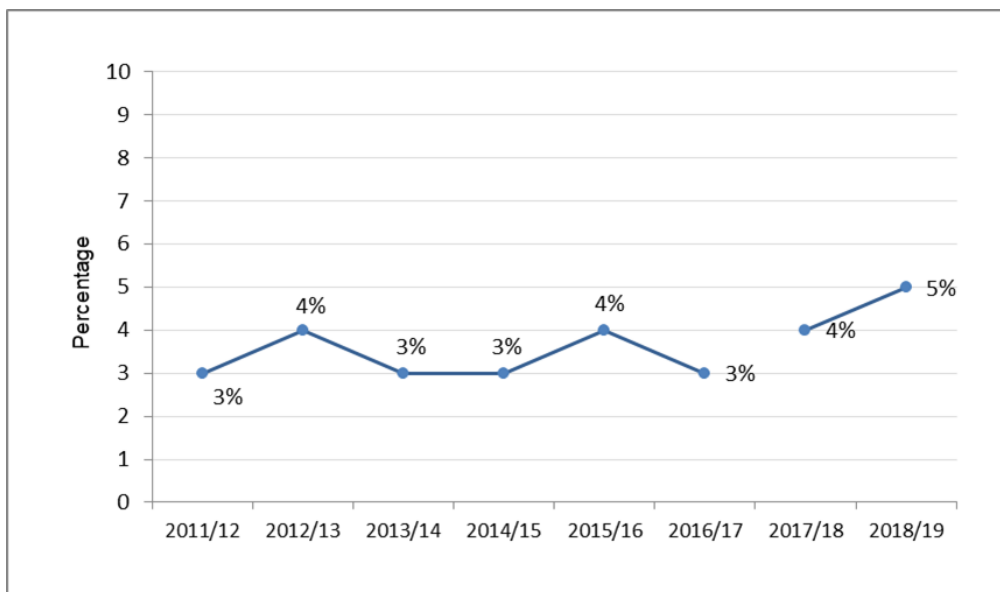


Visitors and Visits

Continuous Household Survey

The graph below presents data from the Continuous Household Survey (CHS) in relation to visits to and use of PRONI services. In 2017/18, the PRONI question was extended to include contact with PRONI both online and by telephone as well as visiting PRONI. Given the change in the 2017/18 question to capture full utilisation of PRONI services, previous years' figures cannot be directly compared with figures for 2017/18 onwards. More information relating to the CHS, methodology, definitions and the interpretation of the figures can be found in the report entitled '[Engagement in culture, arts and sports by adults 2018/19](#)' (Definitions and technical notes section).

- In 2018/19, 5% of adults had used PRONI services within the last 12 months.
- Analysis by age showed no differences in the proportions of adults who had used PRONI services. There was also no difference in the proportion of adults who lived in the least deprived areas compared to those who lived in the most deprived areas (5% and 4% respectively).
- In 2018/19, respondents were also asked how often they have used PRONI services over the previous year. Four per cent of adults visited PRONI or used PRONI services at least once in the previous year but not more than once a month.



Note: The figures for 2017/18 onwards are not directly comparable to previous years given the change to the question relating to PRONI in the Continuous Household Survey 2017/18.



The 'Medieval to the Modern' exhibition on display at Libraries NI

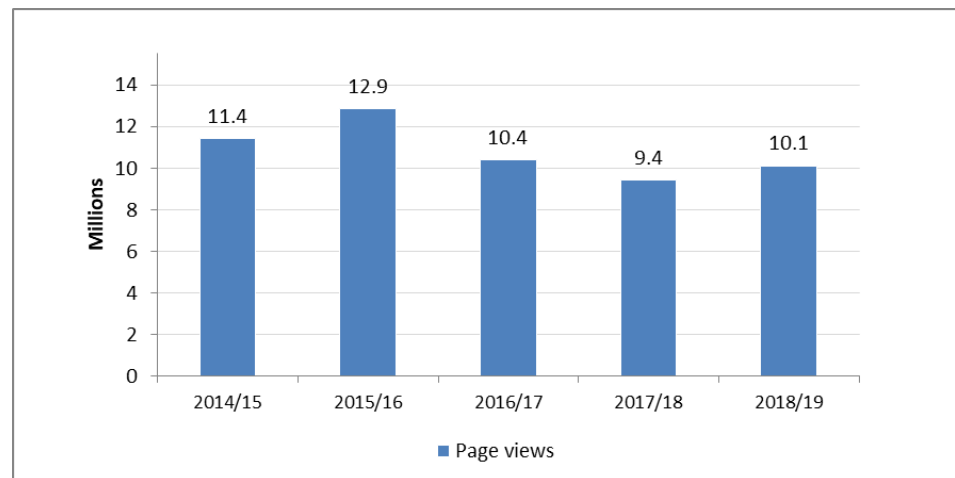
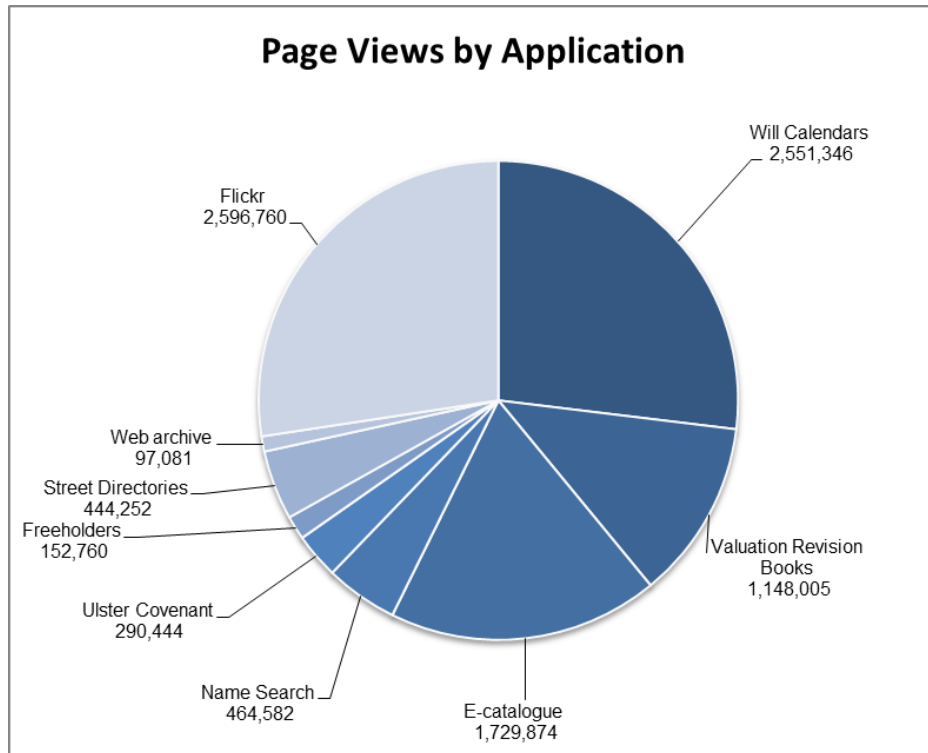
Visitors and Visits

PRONI website

There were 10.1 million page views to the PRONI website in 2018/19. A breakdown of page views by application is presented in the chart below.

At the end of 2018-19 PRONI had 3,552 followers on Facebook.

In 2018/19, 553 PRONI photographs on the Flickr photo-stream were favoured, 67 comments were added to photographs and there were 2,596,760 photo views.



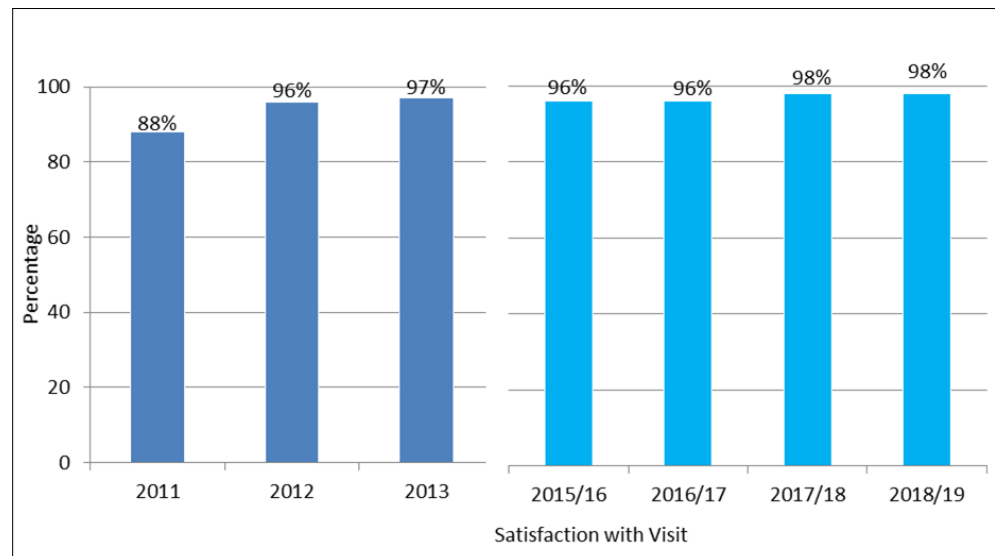
1. A page view is a hit to any file classified as a page.
2. Glossary provides explanations of the categories of pages.
3. From 2015/16 onwards 'Flickr' page views have been included in the total page views figure.
4. A new supplier has provided the number of Web Archive page views for 2018/19 and the data is not comparable to previous years. The number of Web Archive page views for 2018/19 is included in the total page views but has been removed for previous years (2014/15 to 2017/18).

Visits and Visitors

Satisfaction with PRONI

A number of surveys have been used to measure customer satisfaction in PRONI in previous years (see footnote below). In 2018/19, customer satisfaction was measured using customer comment cards and event feedback forms where customers were asked to rate the visit, event or lecture on a 5 point scale. In 2018/19, 98% of customers who provided feedback rated their visit as 'Excellent'/'Good' or 4 or 5 out of 5 (1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest).

PRONI receives customer feedback via its website (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/forms/feedback?s=/proni>) and by email. A selection of feedback received from customers in 2018/19 is included below.



- Just to reaffirm my thanks for the event that you hosted for us..... It was clear that you guys had put a great deal of thought and effort in to making it work along the lines we had discussed. The feedback has been universally positive. I think in terms of format and sources you have something that could be used with a lot of schools, if you were able to. I will definitely be in touch next year to see if it is possible to arrange a repeat.*
- You have been so incredibly helpful and I am so very excited to perhaps be able to stand and walk where my grandmother and her family lived before she Immigrated to Canada. Happy New Year!
The Irish land holding system of the early 1900's seems so very interesting. I'm assuming by what I read from the documents that my great grandfather was an agricultural labourer and leased land from those who owned it.
With many thanks!*
- I cannot tell you how much I appreciate all your help over the last few weeks. The information provided has been of great interest to our family. We are happy to add xxxx back into our family history, instead of being forgotten as it seems was her family's intention.
As you suggested, it is my intention to now try and locate her burial place so that we may pay our respects as she deserved.
All the best!*
- A huge thank you for all the time and the trouble you have taken to help me with my family research - I received all the copies you sent in the post . xxxx was my great grandfather - my mother's grandfather - and it was important for me to know why he had died in an asylum.
I am much obliged and thanks again.*

1. Customer satisfaction with PRONI has been measured by the Public Services Quality Group (PSQG) survey in 2007, 2009 and 2012 and by the PRONI Customer survey in 2011 and 2013. It includes customers who rated the archive's service as 'Good' or 'Very Good'. In 2015/16 customer satisfaction was measured through feedback forms which accompanied all events and lectures. In 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 customer satisfaction was measured using customer comment cards and event feedback forms. Customers were asked to rate the visit, event or lecture on a 5 point scale.

Glossary

Category	Description
E-catalogue	The eCatalogue is a fully searchable database containing over 1.5 million catalogue entries in PRONI's archives.
Freeholders	Freeholders were men who either owned their land outright or who held it in a lease for the duration of their life, or the lives of other people named in the lease. The freeholders' records application includes pre-1840 freeholders' registers and poll books.
Name search	The Name Search database is a searchable index listing pre-1858 diocesan wills and administration bonds; and surviving fragments of the 1740 and 1766 religious census returns and 1775 dissenters petitions.
Street Directories	Searchable database and associated digitised images of Belfast and Ulster Street Indexes, 1819-1900 listing names of principal inhabitants, merchants, shopkeepers, etc.
Ulster Covenant	The archive of the Ulster Unionist Council, held by PRONI, has just under half a million original signatures and addresses of the men and women who signed the Ulster Covenant or corresponding women's declaration on 28 September 1912.
Valuation revision books	PRONI holds valuation records relating to the valuation of property in Northern Ireland from the 1830s to 1993. The original purpose was, and remains, the assessment of every building and every piece of land and an estimation of its financial value.
Web archive	Together with the Internet Archive (and previously the Internet Memory Foundation), PRONI manages a programme to capture and preserve a selection of Northern Ireland's websites that are of historical and cultural importance to Northern Ireland.
Will calendars	Searchable catalogue of will calendar entries for the period 1858-1965.



Event to mark the 800th anniversary of PRONI's oldest document