



*Digest of statistics for the
Public Record Office of Northern Ireland*

2015/16

Annual report

PRO NI



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1. Background

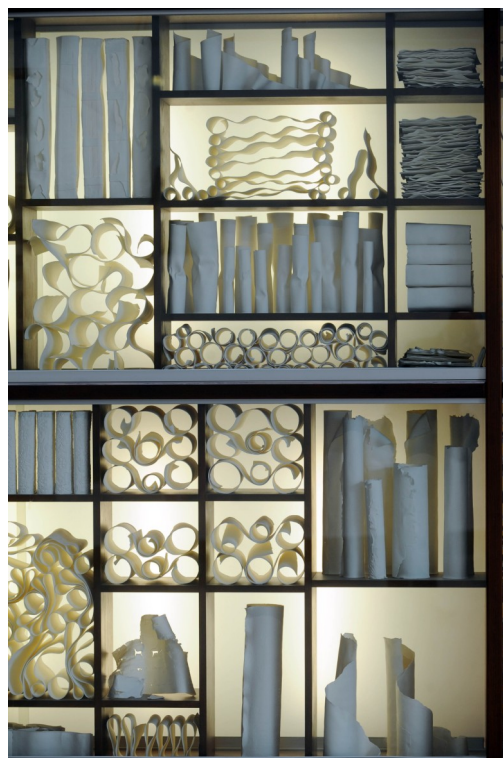
1.1 Background to PRONI

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.



1.2. Methodology and quality of the data

The main purpose of these statistics is to give a broad overview of PRONI. The base year is 2015/16 and, where appropriate, other years are also included.

- In September 2010, PRONI began the move of records to new, purpose built accommodation in the Titanic Quarter in Belfast. PRONI was closed to the public from September 2010 until March 2011. As a result, caution should be taken when comparing 2010/11 figures with other years.
- 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 Analytical Services Unit.

2. Accommodation and holdings

2.1 Accommodation at PRONI 2015/16

- PRONI is located in Titanic Quarter Belfast.
- There are 10,000 square metres of accommodation at PRONI.
- The reading room has 78 seats.
- The search room has 60 seats.
- There are 22 microfilm readers, 2 microfilm reader printers and 1 microfiche reader.

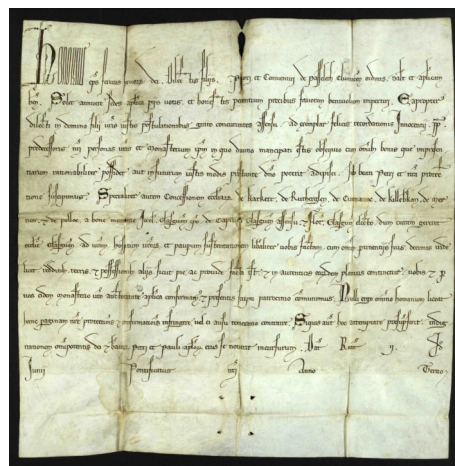


PRONI at Titanic

- From 2016, PRONI now 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.
- A Registration of Deeds/House Mortgage Check Service is facilitated by Land & Property Services (LPS) staff in the PRONI Reading Room .

2.2 Holdings in PRONI 2015/16

- It was estimated that there are approximately three million documents stored in the archives at PRONI which fall under the categories of either public or private records.
- If all the boxes in the archive were laid down side by side, this would equate to 54 linear kilometres (33.6 linear miles).
- PRONI's oldest document is a bull of Pope Honorius the Third, dated 1219.



PRONI's oldest document: bull of Pope Honorius the Third
(PRONI archive reference number D623/B/7/1/1)

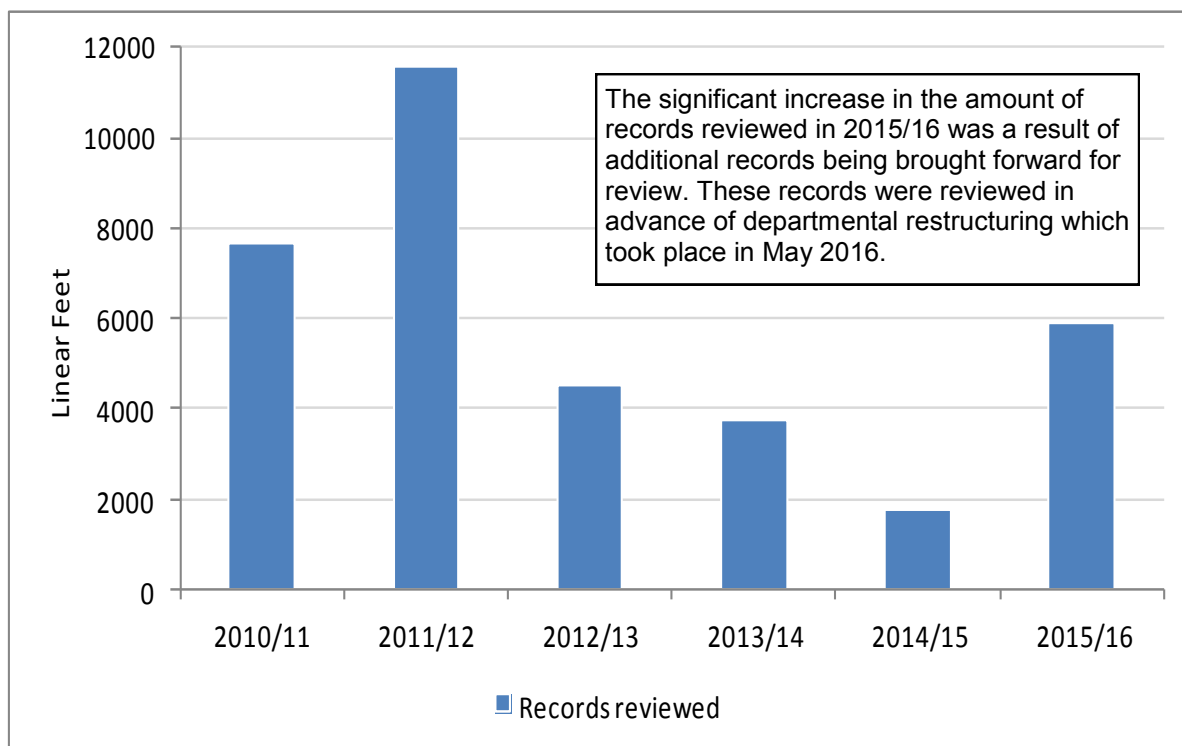
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. A 'bull' is a specific type of letter, patent or charter issued by a Pope.

3. Acquisition

3.1. Records reviewed

Figure 3.1: Linear feet of records reviewed 2010/11-2015/16



Unit: Linear feet						
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Records reviewed	7,665	11,585	4,517	3,724	1,788	5,877

Potential deposits are reviewed to assess their suitability for preservation.

Records can come from central and local government, the courts and other public bodies, as well as private depositors.

- In 2015/16, 70 private deposits were accepted.

A PRONI box equals one linear foot and the measurement demonstrates the amount of space freed up in storage in public bodies.



PRONI stores

- In 2015/16, there were 5,877 linear feet of records reviewed.

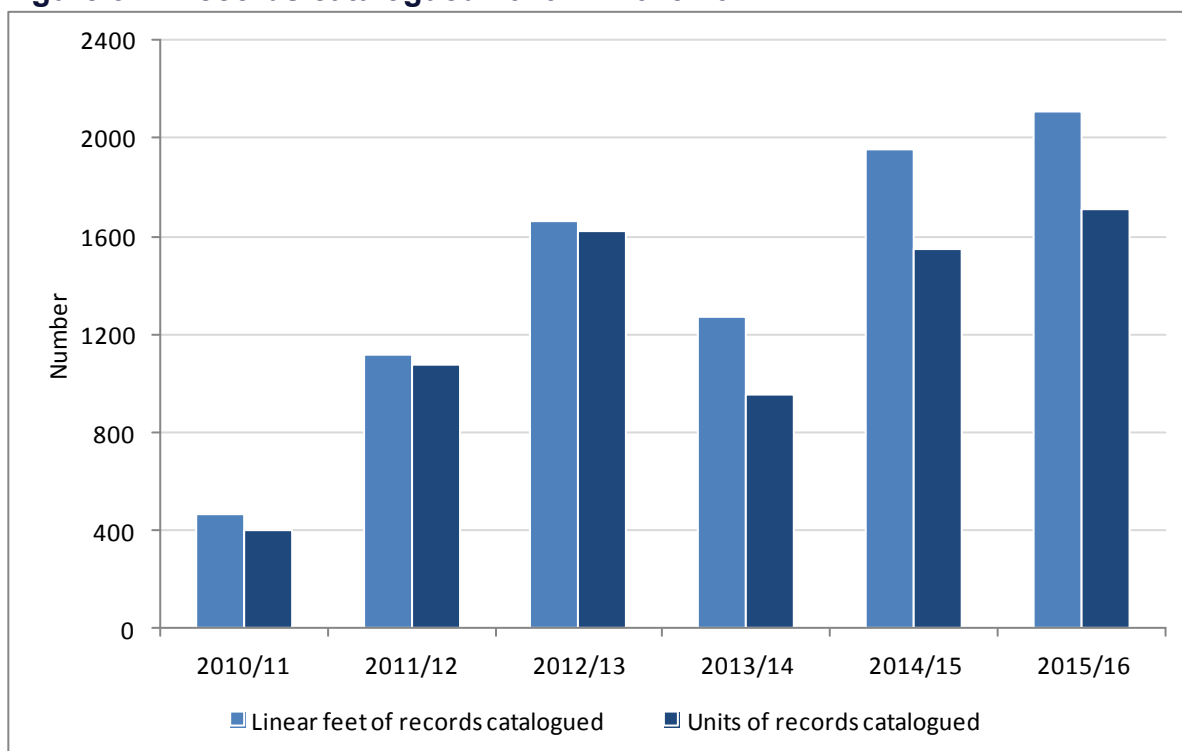
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. One linear foot is 0.3 of a metre. In 2015/16 1791 linear metres of records were reviewed.

3. Acquisition

3.2. Records catalogued

Figure 3.2: Records catalogued 2010/11-2015/16



	Unit: Number					
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Linear feet of records catalogued	461	1,118	1,660	1,269	1,955	2,106
Units of records catalogued	396	1,071	1,623	952	1,544	1,712

After records are reviewed and transferred to PRONI, staff undertake a programme of cataloguing by providing a description, e.g. file title and date, against each record or group of records.

- These catalogues accurately summarise the scope and content of PRONI's archives – 1.5 million catalogue item descriptions.
- There were 2,106 linear feet of items and 1,712 units of records catalogued in 2015/16.

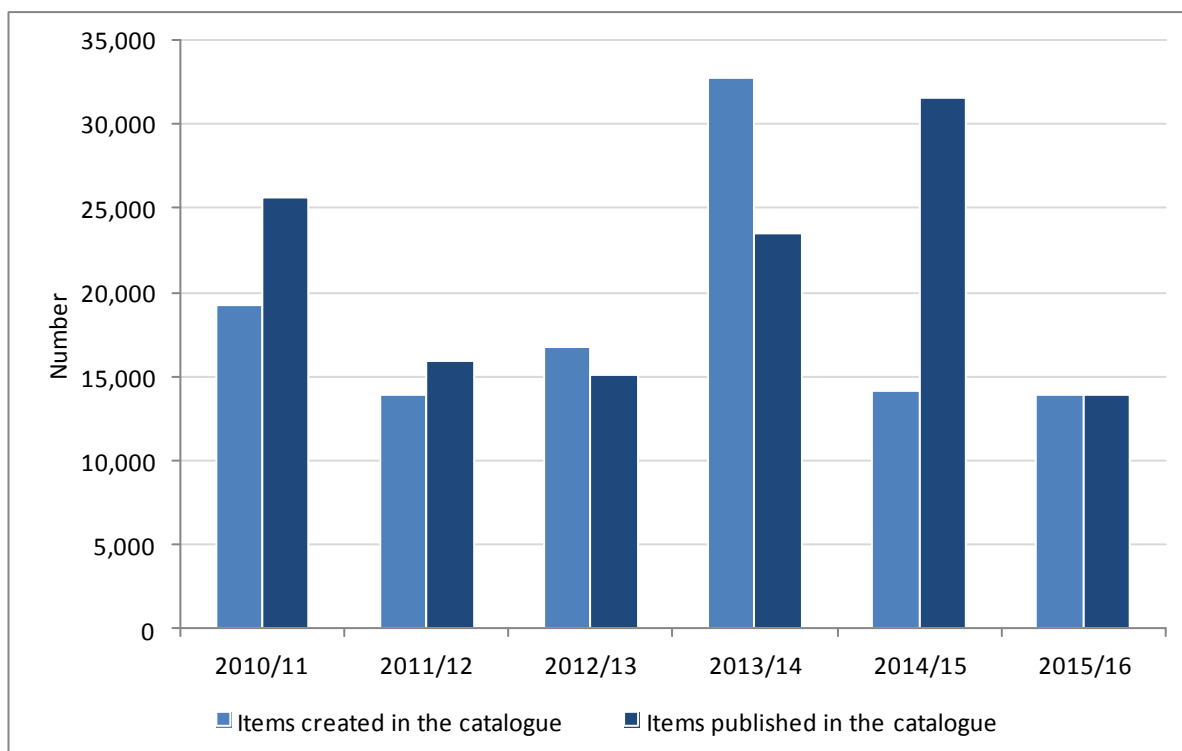
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. One linear foot is 0.3 of a metre. In 2015/16 642 linear metres of records were catalogued.
2. Unit of records catalogued is calculated using the linear feet weighted by degree of difficulty.
3. An item can be a single letter, volume or file or may relate to a bundle of documents.

3. Acquisition

3.3. Records published

Figure 3.3: Records published 2010/11-2015/16



	Unit: Number					
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Items created in the catalogue	19,274	13,884	16,752	32,764	14,109	13,902
Items published in the catalogue	25,653	15,948	15,039	23,573	31,565	13,941

Items created in the catalogue relate to descriptions of records being added to the PRONI catalogue for the first time.

- There were 13,902 items created in the PRONI catalogue in 2015/16.

Items published refers to when items are made accessible to the public via the electronic catalogue [e-CATNI], which is available at PRONI's premises and via its website.

- There were 13,941 items published in the PRONI catalogue in 2015/16.
- A total of 1,312 government files were released in 2015/16. Of these, 306 files had some information blanked out, with the main reason for this being to protect personal information.
- A further 199 government files could not be released at all, again this was usually to protect personal information.

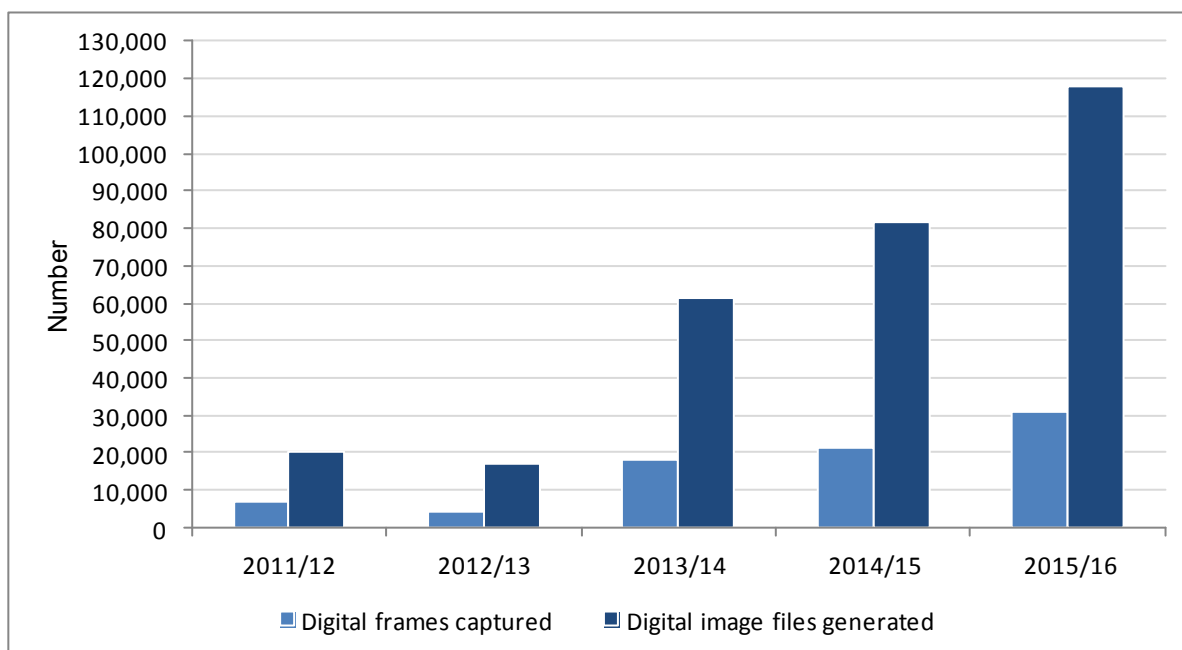
Source: PRONI, DfC

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

4. Preservation and collections management

4.1. Digital frames and microfilm frames captured

Figure 4.1: Digital frames captured 2011/12-2015/16



Unit: Number					
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Digital frames captured	7,065	4,463	17,900	21,156	31,109
Digital image files generated	20,015	16,991	61,258	81,820	118,046
Microfilm frames captured	NA	NA	3,070	NA	NA

Besides the acquisition of records, PRONI's main statutory responsibility is the preservation of Northern Ireland's unique archival heritage.

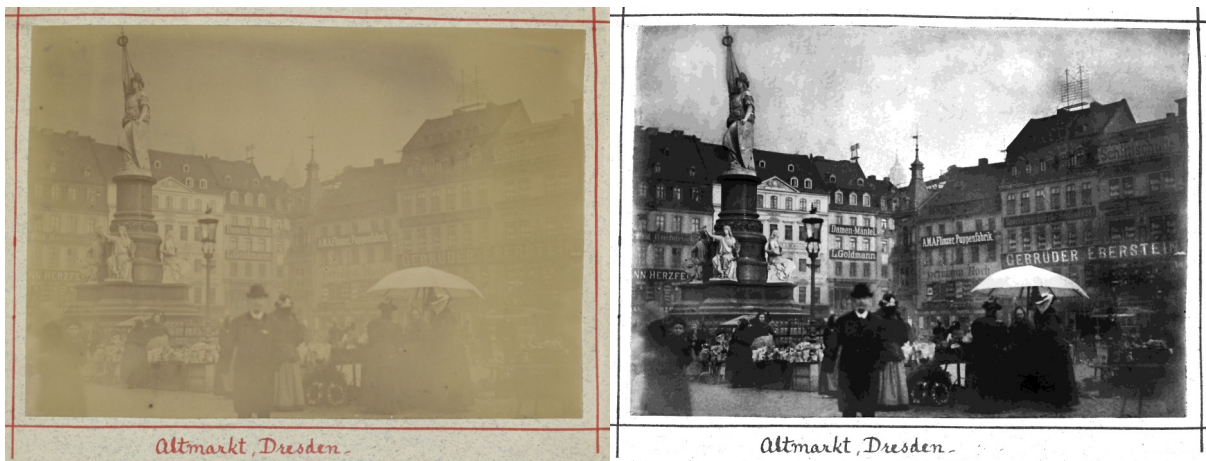
- One method of preserving is capturing images of the records digitally.
- Making digital copies allows the records to be accessed without the original record being handled. They can also be viewed by more than one person at a time and many digital collections are now available online.



Overhead mounted digital camera system used at PRONI for digitising archival material

- There has been a change in the nature of preservation copying over the past few years. Projects which previously could not be undertaken are now possible with digitisation, for example, glass plate negatives are now captured, inverted and restored to a high quality which could not be done on film.
- In 2015/16, there were 31,109 digital frames captured.
- Increasingly, more time and professional expertise is required to produce an enhanced image suitable for wider access, in addition to the traditional preservation copy. The images generated include the initial image, a high resolution restored image for archival purposes and an image for access purposes.
- More resources, both equipment and staff time, were available in 2015/16 resulting in 118,046 image files being generated.

The images below are from the Eva Chichester Papers and show the Altmarkt, Dresden (PRONI ref: D4563). They demonstrate how an original image can be enhanced.



Eva Chichester Papers (Preservation Copy)
(c. 1890)

Eva Chichester Papers (Restored Copy)
(c. 1890)

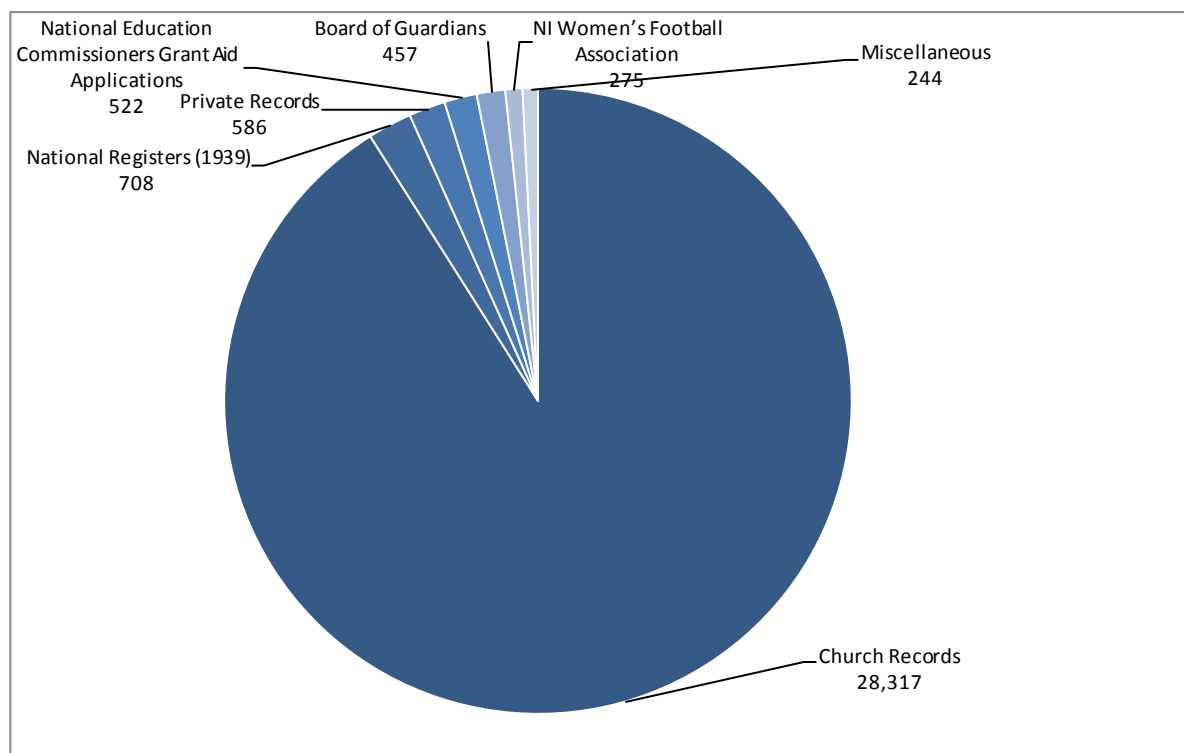
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. A session capture is the initial RAW format image as created by the digital camera system. From this original capture, other copies in various formats may be generated.
2. The images generated include the RAW format session captures, high resolution .tiff format images for archival purposes, and .jpeg format copies for access purposes.
3. In December 2013, a new PhaseOne P40+ camera with new CaptureOne v7 image capture software was acquired and installed. Previously a PhaseOne P30 with CaptureOne v3.1 was being used. The new equipment, and particularly the new software package, has enabled increased efficiency in the capture process. In March 2014, a second PhaseOne P40+ camera and a Book2Net book scanner were purchased, which have increased efficiency further.
4. During 2015/16, the majority of digitisation work involved creating surrogates of textual originals (e.g. manuscripts or printed documents), rather than photographic or pictorial originals (photographs, glass plate negatives, art works). There is much less post-capture processing work required when digitising textual originals as opposed to photographic or pictorial originals, therefore the process is much quicker and a greater volume of material can be digitised in a shorter period of time.

4. Preservation and collections management

4.2. Digital frames captured by project

Figure 4.2: Digital frames captured by project 2015/16



	Unit: Number
	2015/16
Church Records	28,317
National Registers (1939)	708
Private Records	586
National Education Commissioners Grant Aid Applications	522
Board of Guardians	457
Northern Ireland Women's Football Association	275
Miscellaneous	244
Number of digital frames captured	31,109

Figure 4.2 provides a breakdown of the number of digital frames captured for specific collections that were digitised in 2015/16.

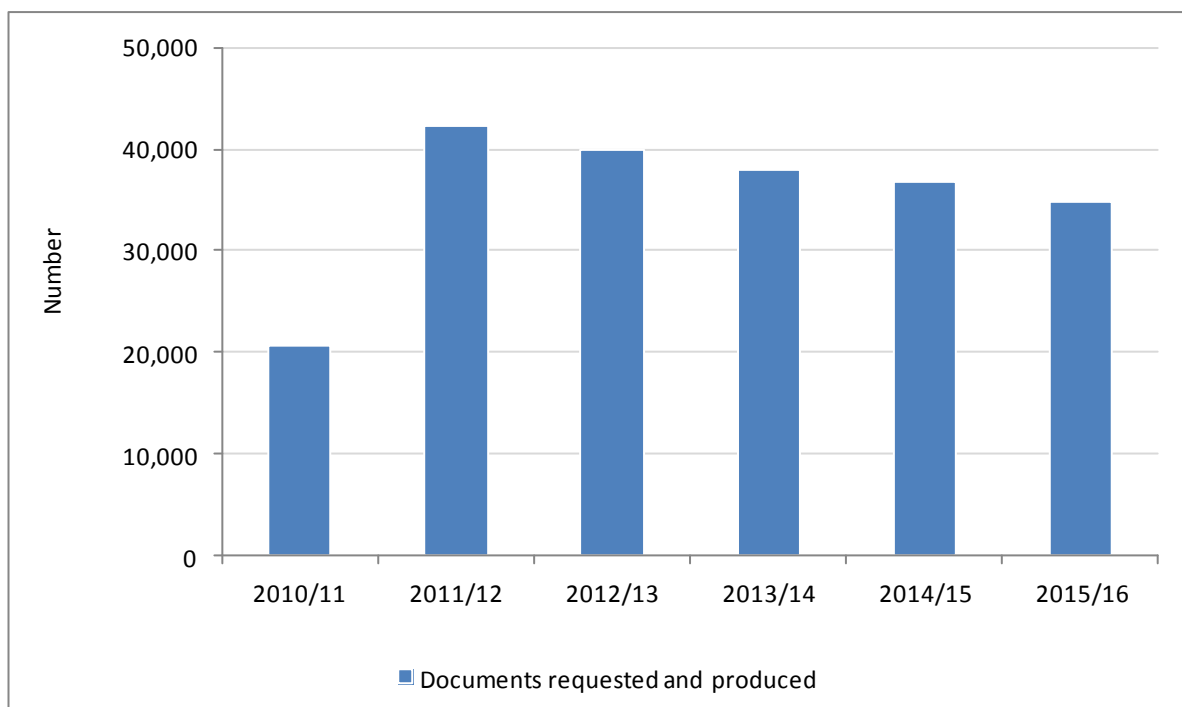
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. Miscellaneous includes other projects, ad-hoc staff requests, images created for demonstrations for new staff and work experience students and images created of conservation treatments.

5. Accessing the archive

5.1. Document production

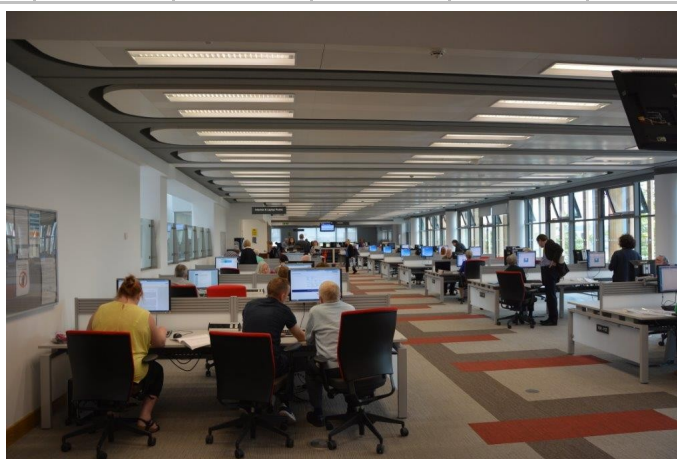
Figure 5.1: Number of documents requested and produced 2010/11-2015/16



	Unit: Number					
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Documents requested and produced	20,677	42,318	39,907	38,020	36,866	34,790

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

- In 2015/16, there were 34,790 documents produced.



Search room in PRONI

5. Accessing the archive

5.2. Documents produced

The top ten documents produced/requested in PRONI in 2015/16 were:

PRONI Reference	Description
T1013/2B	Indexed note book giving marriages, births and deaths of various families of Carnmoney Presbyterian Church. 1708-1917
D2892/1/1	Passenger book - Londonderry to Philadelphia, New Orleans, Quebec and St. John. February 1847-1849
T1013/2A	Note books giving marriages, births and deaths of various families of Carnmoney Presbyterian Church. 1708-1917
T1013/1	Three documents comprising Register of Baptisms of Carnmoney Presbyterian Church, 1708-1800.
CR4/17/A/3	Register of baptisms and marriages of Killinchy Presbyterian Church. 1825-1830
CR4/17/A/2	Register of baptisms and marriages of Killinchy Presbyterian Church. 1819-1824
T700/1	Will abstracts of individuals in the Stewart Kennedy Notebooks. c.1500-1858
CR4/17/A/1	Register of baptisms, 1812-18, and marriages, 1813-17, of Killinchy Presbyterian Church, Co Down. 1812-1818
CR4/17/A/4	Register of baptisms, 1831-6 and marriages, 1832-6 of Killinchy Presbyterian Church and after 1835 of Killinchy Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. 1831-1836
CR4/17/A/5	Register of baptisms 1838-54, and marriages, 1838-45, of Killinchy Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. 1838-1854

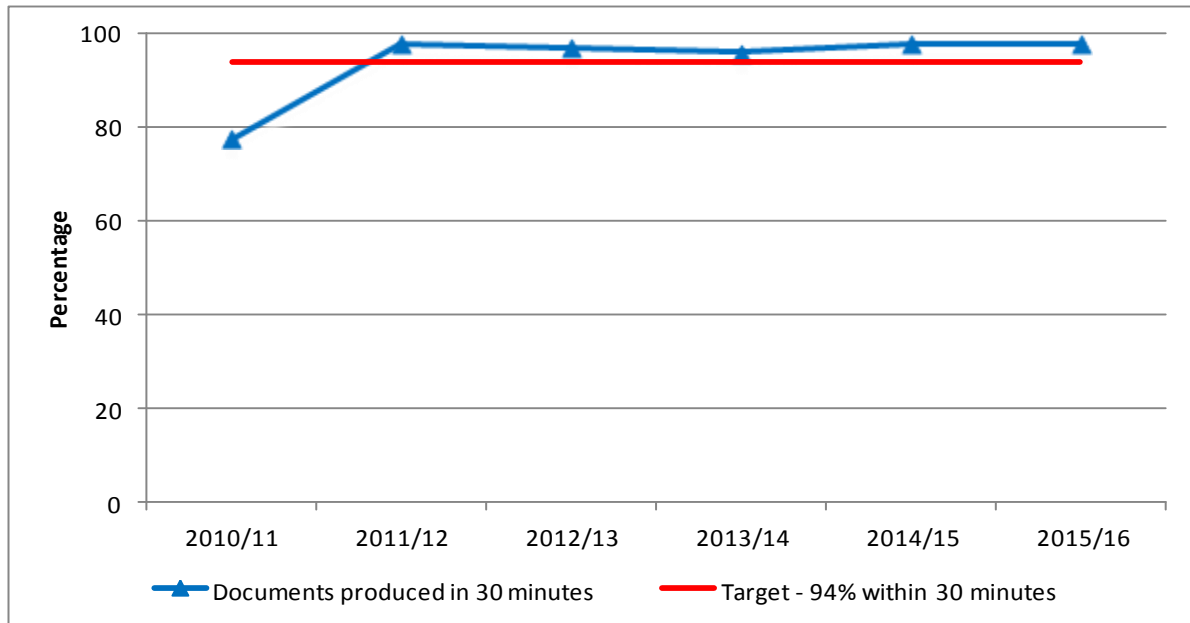
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. Popularly requested documents are accessible through the self service microfilm service and are not included here. The top ten documents produced only includes documents ordered through the onsite ordering system.
2. A document could be accessed on multiple occasions by one person.

5. Accessing the archive

5.3. Document production target

Figure 5.3: Document production target 2010/11-2015/16

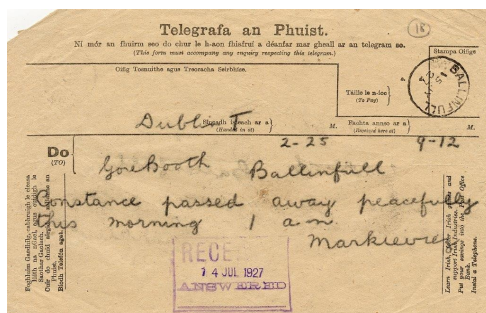


Unit: Percentage						
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Documents produced in 30 minutes	78	98	97	96	98	98

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 2015/16, 98% of documents were produced within 30 minutes. The average retrieval time per order was 14 minutes.



Telegram from Casimir Markievicz to the Gore-Booth family informing them of the death of Constance Markievicz

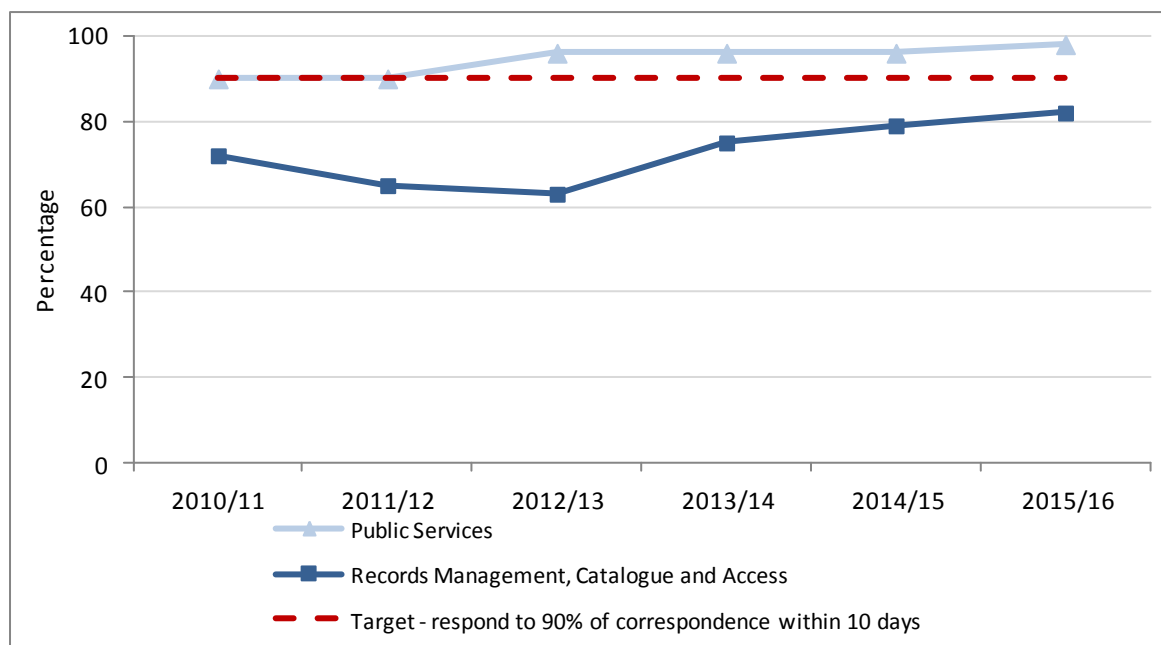
(PRONI archive reference number is D4131/K/1/4/13/12)

Source: PRONI, DfC

5. Accessing the archive

5.4. Written correspondence target

Figure 5.4: Written correspondence target 2010/11-2015/16



Unit: Percentage						
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Written correspondence target						
Public Services	90	90	96	96	96	98
Records Management, Catalogue and Access	72	65	63	75	79	82

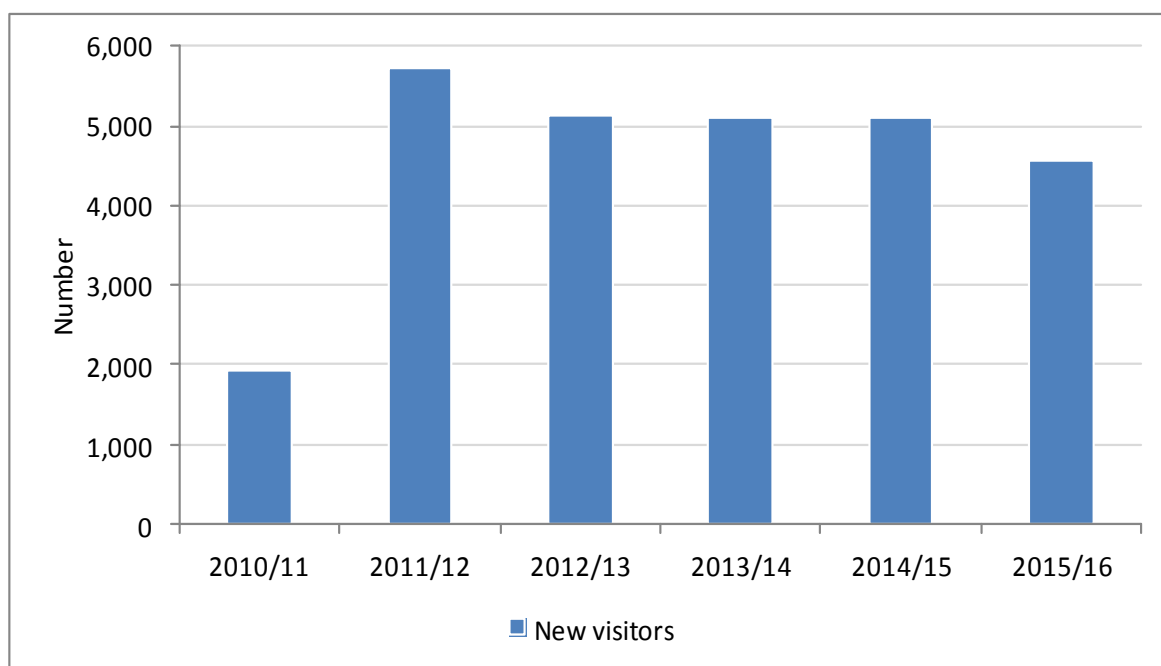
The written correspondence target states that 90% of requests should be responded to within 10 days.

- In 2015/16, there were 2,806 written enquiries to PRONI's Public Services branch with 98% of responses to written correspondence meeting the target.
- In 2015/16, 82% of the responses to the 822 written correspondence enquiries to Records Management, Catalogue and Access branch met the target.

6. Visitors and visits

6.1. New visitors

Figure 6.1: New visitors registered 2010/11-2015/16



	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
New visitors	1,939	5,724	5,121	5,093	5,108	4,748

Unit: Number

- There were 4,748 new visitors registered in PRONI in 2015/16.
- In total, 52% of new visitors registered in 2015/16 were female and 48% were male.
- 55% of new visitors registered in 2015/16 were aged between 25 and 64 years while 32% were aged 65 years and over and 6% were under 25 years of age.

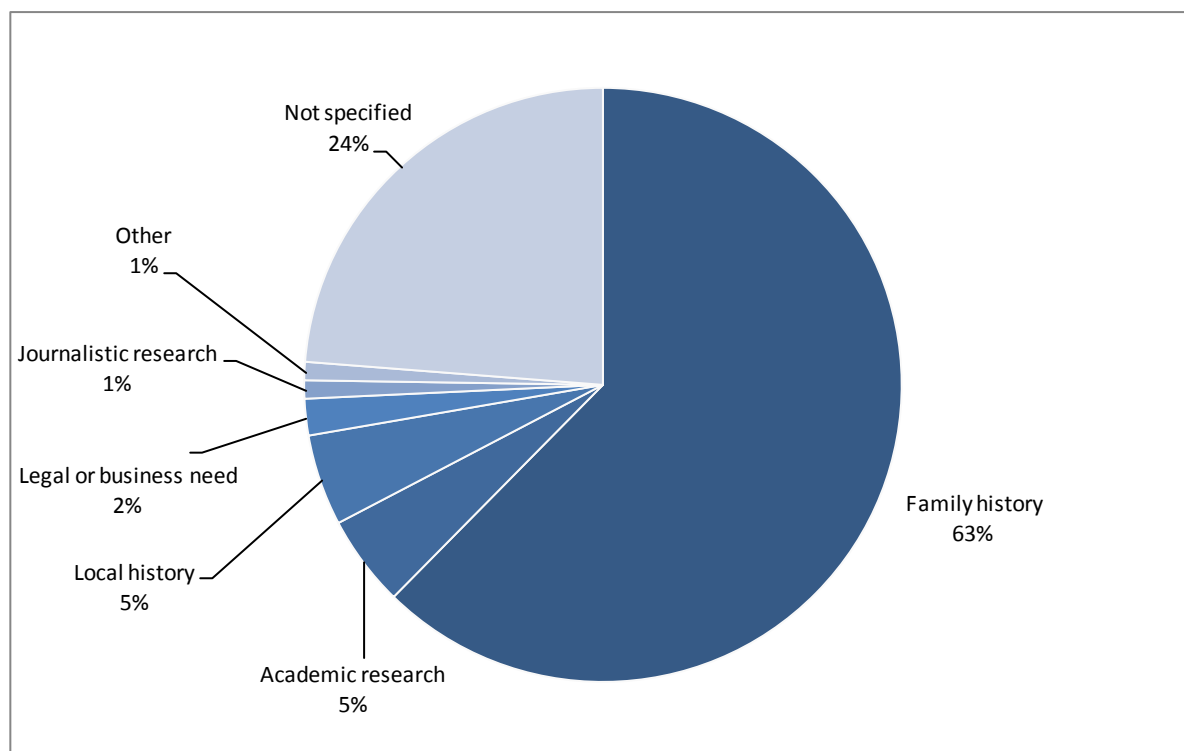
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. The age of 6% of new visitors in 2015/16 is not available.

6. Visitors and visits

6.2. Main reason for registering in PRONI

Figure 6.2: New visitors' main reason for registering in PRONI 2015/16



	Unit: Percentage					
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Family history	58	73	77	89	84	63
Academic research	4	1	2	3	3	5
Local history	3	4	5	4	2	5
Legal or business need	2	0	1	1	0	2
Journalistic research	1	0	0	0	0	1
Other	15	0	0	0	0	1
Not specified	18	21	15	3	10	24

- The majority (63%) of new visitors in 2015/16 cited family history as the main reason for registering with PRONI.

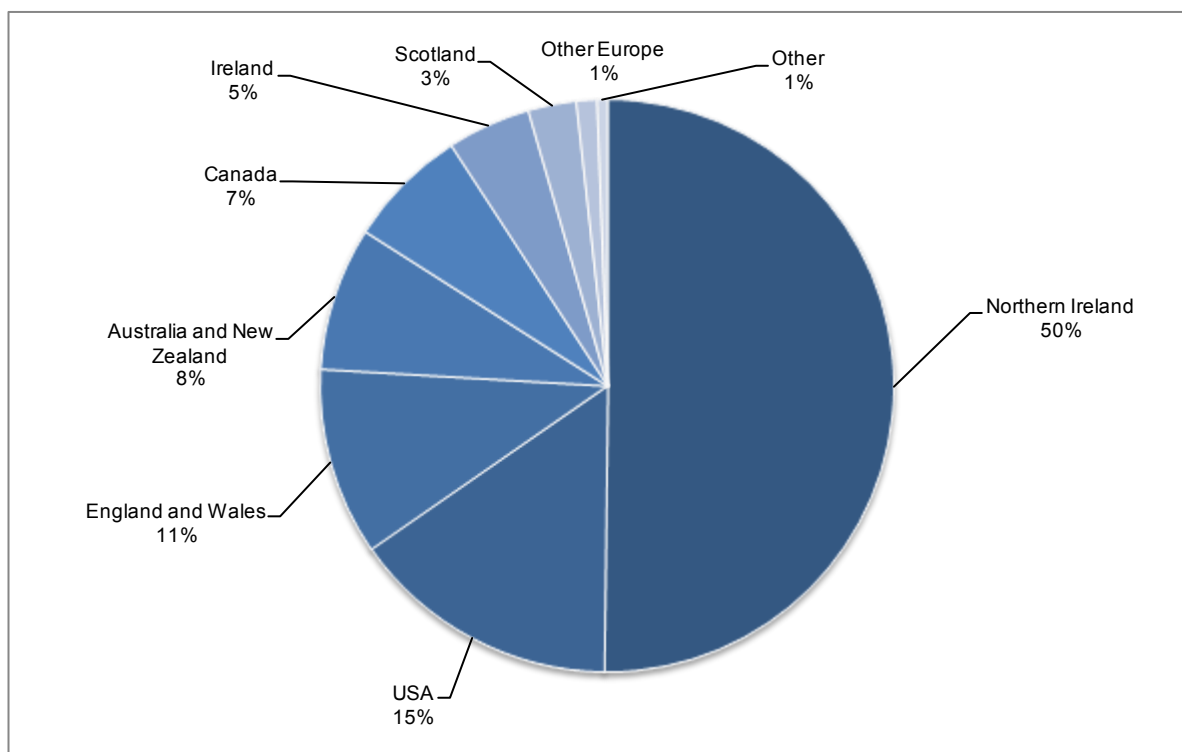
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. Reason for registering is recorded at first visit only. A visitor might indicate they were doing legal or business reasons on their first visit, but then undertake family history on every subsequent visit.

6. Visitors and visits

6.3. Country of origin of new visitors in PRONI

Figure 6.3: Country of origin of new visitors in PRONI 2015/16



Unit: Percentage						
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Northern Ireland	55	61	51	52	52	50
USA	8	9	13	15	14	15
England and Wales	11	10	13	10	10	11
Australia and New Zealand	8	5	7	7	9	8
Canada	5	4	6	6	7	7
Ireland	6	6	6	5	5	5
Scotland	3	2	3	2	2	3
Other Europe	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other	3	1	1	1	0	1
Don't know	0	0	-	0	-	0

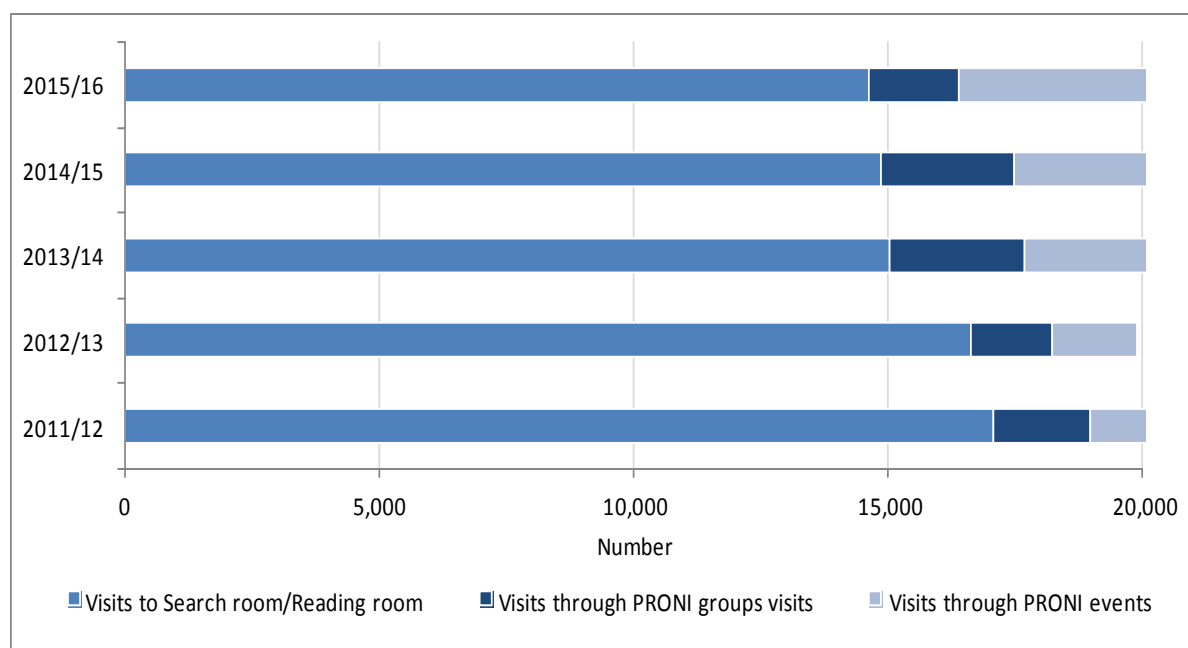
- In 2015/16, half (50%) of new visitors were from outside Northern Ireland.
- Fifteen per cent of new visitors were from the USA and 11% were from England and Wales.

Source: PRONI, DfC

6. Visitors and visits

6.4. Visits to PRONI

Figure 6.4: Visits to PRONI 2011/12-2015/16



	Unit: Number				
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Visits to Search Room/Reading Room	17,073	16,619	15,036	14,849	14,612
Visits through PRONI groups visits	1,899	1,601	2,636	2,617	1,775
Visits through PRONI events	1,112	1,680	2,652	2,932	2,509
Total number of visits to PRONI	20,084	19,900	20,324	20,398	18,896

- There were nearly nineteen thousand visits by the public to PRONI in 2015/16. In addition 2,461 visited as part of internal public sector events and 937 visited as part of events arranged with partner organisations.
- 77% of visits by the public were to the Search Room/ Reading room in PRONI, while 13% of people attended PRONI events and 9% as part of a group.



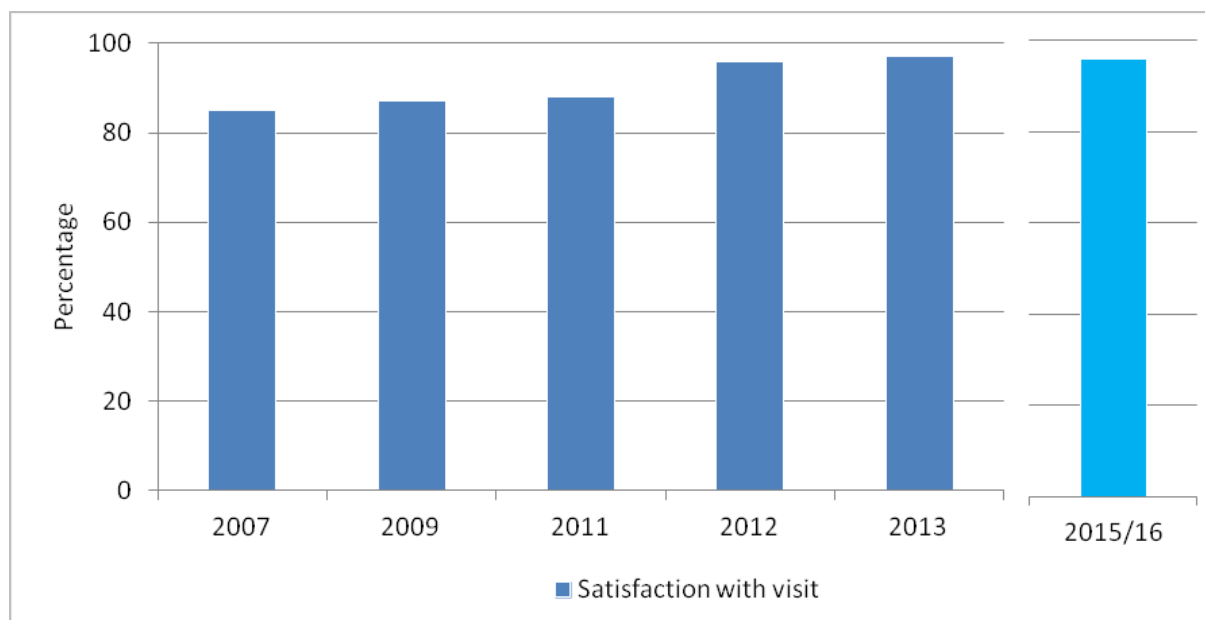
Writer and actor Mark Gatiss visits PRONI

Source: PRONI, DfC

6. Visitors and visits

6.5. Satisfaction with PRONI

Figure 6.5: Customer feedback rating the archive’s service as good or very good 2007-2015/16



Unit: Percentage						
	2007	2009	2011	2012	2013	2015/16
Satisfaction with visit	85	87	88	96	97	96

- A number of surveys have been used to measure customer satisfaction in PRONI in previous years. In 2015/16 customer satisfaction was measured using event feedback forms. Figures for 2015/16 are therefore not directly comparable with previous years.
- In 2015/16, 96% of respondents were satisfied with their visit.



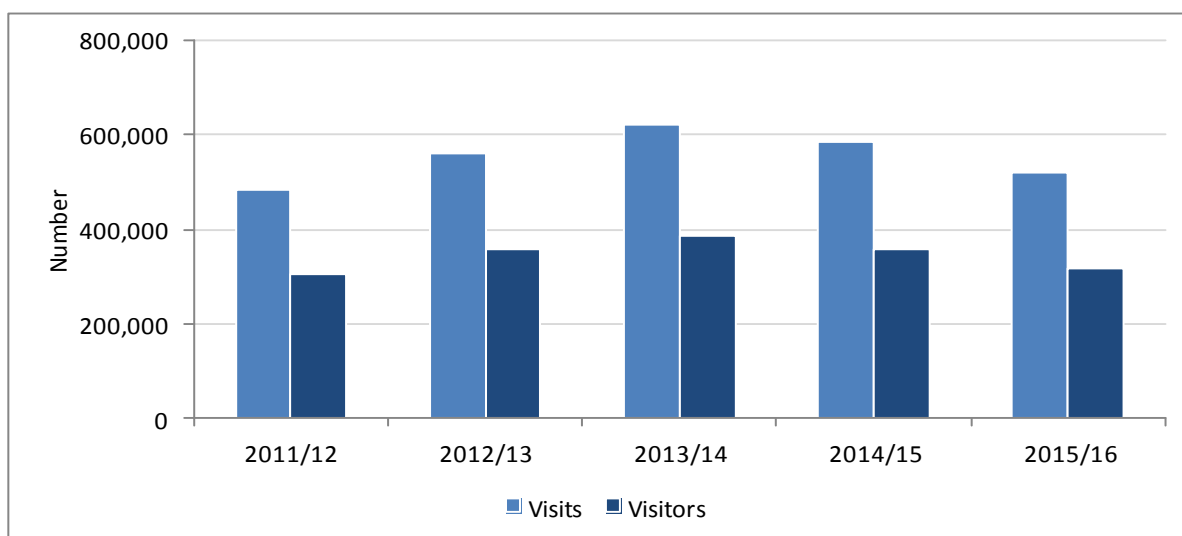
Group visit at PRONI

Source: Public Services Quality Group (PSQG) survey 2007, 2009 and 2012, PRONI Customer survey, 2011 and 2013. In 2015/16 customer satisfaction was measured through feedback forms which accompanied all events and lectures. Customers were asked to rate the event or lecture on a scale of 1-5.

7. PRONI website

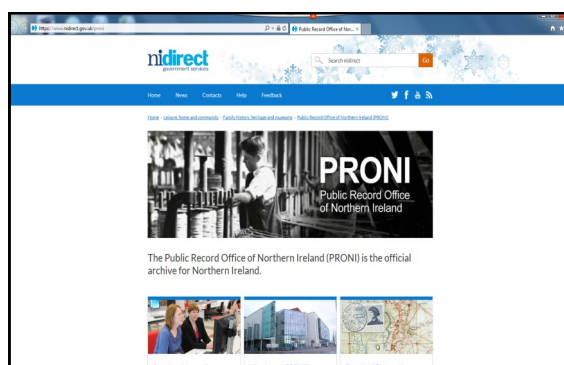
7.1. PRONI website visits and visitors

Figure 7.1: Number of website visits and visitors 2011/12-2015/16



Unit: Number					
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Page views	10,213,338	10,278,818	13,522,146	11,563,196	10,072,053
Visits	485,365	561,047	623,176	584,315	522,417
Visitors	303,352	358,028	384,612	356,112	317,837
Percentage of web visits that are international	45%	46%	45%	51%	48%

- PRONI has a programme of digitising significant archives to make them accessible to the public online.
- There were 522,417 visits and 317,837 visitors to the PRONI website in 2015/16.
- There were over 10 million page views in 2015/16.



PRONI website

- During 2015/16, PRONI added 110 photographs to the Flickr photostream. This brought the total number of PRONI photographs available to view on Flickr to 2,892. In 2015/16, 636 photos were favoured, 62 comments were added to photographs and there were 2,786,542 photo views.

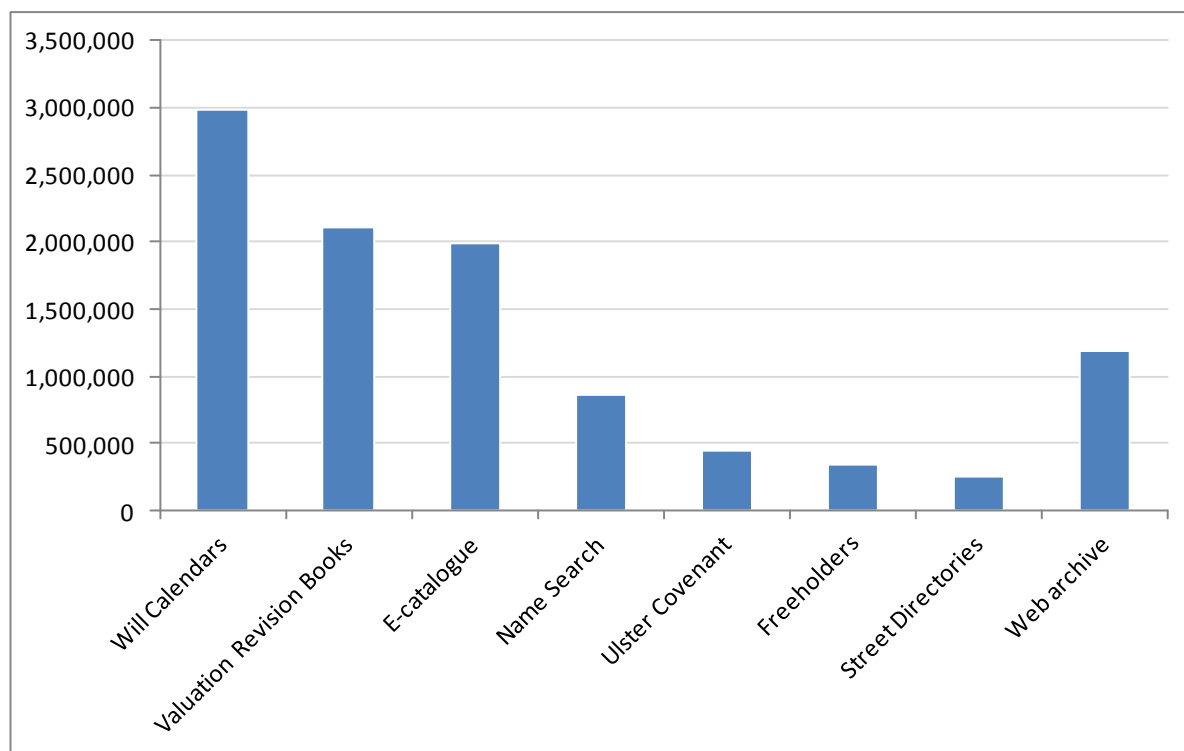
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. A page view is a hit to any file classified as a page.
2. A website visit is a series of actions that begins when a visitor views the first page from the server and ends when the visitor leaves the site or remains idle beyond the idle-time limit.
3. A website visitor is a person at a computer using a browser to visit a web site. A visitor may make more than one visit during a given time period.

7. PRONI website

7.2. PRONI page views by category

Figure 7.2: Breakdown of page views by category 2011/12-2015/16



	Unit: Number				
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Will Calendars	2,880,723	2,494,378	3,674,334	3,350,101	2,990,653
Valuation Revision Books	-	-	3,597,133	2,488,414	2,109,561
E-catalogue	1,983,321	1,954,411	2,106,959	2,034,974	1,982,661
Name Search	1,136,761	1,210,666	1,106,736	922,548	854,893
Ulster Covenant	961,579	1,906,481	700,644	629,824	443,035
Freeholders	633,426	559,491	447,125	441,037	344,754
Street Directories	933,246	702,753	350,729	303,706	254,213
Web archive	-	-	-	135,175	1,193,259

- Figure 7.2 details the number of page views by category. Will Calendars remains the most popular category visited.
- PRONI records available on the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN) website are hosted separately by the University of Ulster. In 2015/16, there were an additional 430 documents posted to CAIN. This brought the number of PRONI documents on CAIN to 1,501.

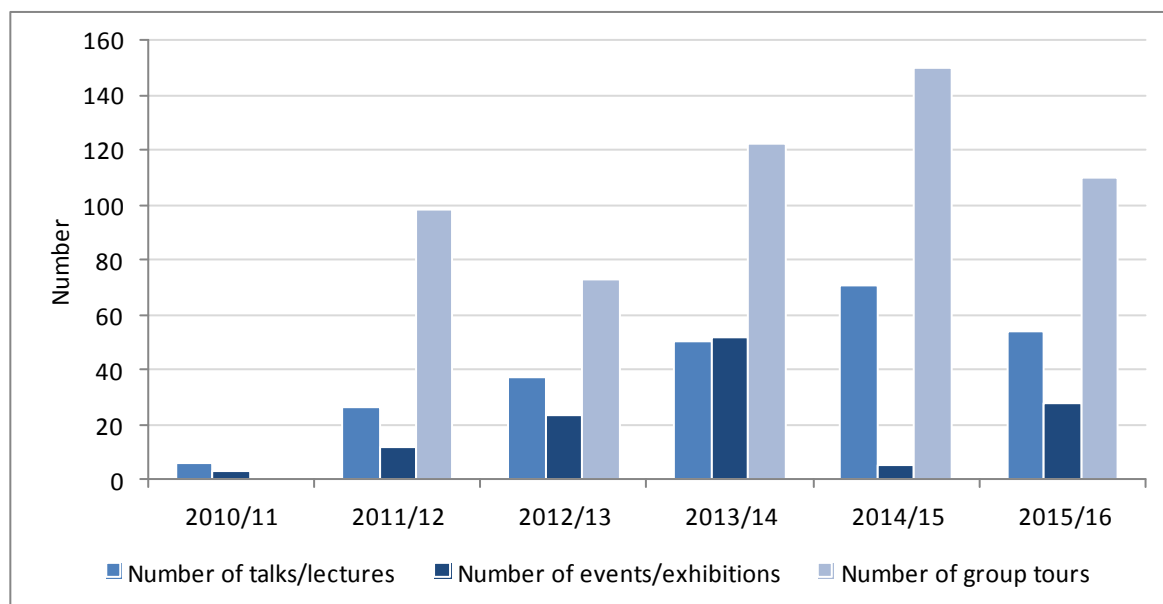
Source: PRONI, DfC

1. A page view is a hit to any file classified as a page.
2. Valuation Revision Books went live in March 2013.
3. Glossary provides explanations of the categories of pages.

8. Education

8.1. Public lectures, events and group visits

Figure 8.1: Public lectures, events and group visits 2010/11-2015/16



Unit: Number						
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Talks/lectures	6	26	37	50	71	54
Group visits	NA	98	73	122	150	110
Visits through PRONI group visits	NA	1,900	1,600	2,636	2,617	1,775
Events/exhibitions	3	12	23	52	5	28
Visits through all PRONI events	355	1,112	1,680	2,652	2,932	2,509

- 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 82 public lectures, events and exhibitions with 2,509 people attending in 2015/16.
- There were 110 group visits to PRONI in 2015/16 with 1,775 people attending.

Source: PRONI, DfC

1. There were no statistics on group visits prior to 2011/12 when PRONI moved to the Titanic Quarter.

9. Glossary

9.1 Glossary

Category	Description
E-catalogue	PRONI's electronic catalogue containing over 1.5 million searchable entries.
Freeholders	Searchable database and associated digitised images of pre-1840 registers and poll books listing those entitled to vote at elections.
Name search	A searchable database of indexes for records that no longer exist including pre-1858 wills, diocesan wills; surviving fragments of 1740-66 dissenters petitions; 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	Searchable database and associated digitised images relating to the half a million original signatures and addresses of those who signed the Ulster Covenant and Declaration on 28 September 1912.
Valuation revision books	Searchable database of placename index and digitised images of the Valuation Revision Books (VAL/12/B) for the years 1864-1933.
Web archive	Searchable database of c. 150 archived public sector websites.
Will calendars	Searchable catalogue of will calendar entries for the period 1858-1965.



'Surviving the City' Exhibition

Source: PRONI, DfC