



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Employment and Learning

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

NISRA Quarterly Labour Market Statistics

12 September 2012

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Basil McCrea (Chairperson)
Mr Thomas Buchanan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister
Mr Sammy Douglas
Mr Chris Lyttle
Mr Fra McCann
Mr Barry McElduff
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Pat Ramsey

Witnesses:

Mr Dave Rogers	Department for Employment and Learning
Dr James Gillan	Department of Finance and Personnel

The Chairperson: We will now get some detailed analysis of the labour market statistics. Department of Finance and Personnel officials will brief us on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's (NISRA) quarterly labour market statistics. I remind members that this session is being reported by Hansard, so be careful with electronic devices. Members' packs contain a briefing paper provided by the Department. There is also a research paper and a further research paper on EU regional employment statistics. That is about it; so it is over to you, gentlemen. You are in the hot seat today. It all seems to be happening and in the news. You are going to tell us what all the numbers mean.

Dr James Gillan (Department of Finance and Personnel): Thank you very much for inviting us to the Committee, Chairperson. The opportunity is very much appreciated. I will introduce us. I am James Gillan, and I am responsible for the production of the area statistical series. My colleague Dave Rogers is the NISRA senior statistician. Between the two of us we hope to be able to answer most of your queries. I propose to give you a short presentation to help in going through some of the figures. Hopefully, you have also received the monthly labour market statistical press release that was issued just this morning. If that is OK, I will kick off.

The first slide shows the approach that I will take. I will give a very brief background on how we go about measuring the labour market statistics. I will touch on some of the key statistics released this morning and speak a little bit more about some characteristics of the labour market, namely the unemployed, inactive and those not in education, employment or training (NEET). I will finish with what, as far as we know, is driving the increases in unemployment as regards the analysis of employee jobs. My next slide is by way of background. I apologise if this is already familiar to

members, but it emphasises that we use three key sources to try to triangulate what is happening in the labour market.

You will be familiar with the first source, which is the quarterly labour force survey (LFS) of about 2,500 households. That is one of our biggest and, I suppose, richest sources of labour market data. It meets the International Labour Office internationally agreed definitions of what it means to be unemployed, employed or inactive, and it is the international standard to which we adhere. The nature of the survey is that it provides an estimate for a rolling period of three months, the most recent being from May to July.

Our second source is the claimant count, which, as you will know, comes from the jobs and benefits offices and jobseeker's allowance. It is, in fact, very sensitive, in that it counts all persons in receipt of unemployment benefit. It also tends to be much more timely than the labour force survey. Its most recent set of information relates to August.

Our third independent source is the quarterly employment survey. It also relates to quarter 2, and is an estimate of the period from May to June. In conducting that survey, we ask about 5,000 employers for their number of employees. That gives us information such as the number of full-time and part-time employees, and the number of male and female employees.

Those are our three main sources. They do not always tell the same story and do not necessarily have to agree, but it is from those that we try to paint a picture of what is actually happening.

The next slide —

The Chairperson: I know that there is a lot of information still to come, and you may deal with this point later, but a recurring issue with the labour force survey is that it measures things only as a percentage of the economically active. So, in Northern Ireland, where we have a disproportionate level of economic inactivity, the LFS statistics show that Northern Ireland is, in labour force terms, below the UK average. In fact, it is below the average only because the economic inactivity figures are so high.

Dr Gillan: That is perfectly correct.

The Chairperson: I know why we have the international comparisons, but is the claimant count the best determinant of what is really happening in Northern Ireland? You said that it was the most timely, but the two sources seem to suggest different things. The LFS suggests that Northern Ireland is better than the UK average, whereas the claimant count suggests a divergence. Will you give me an opinion on that?

Dr Gillan: They are different because, as you said, they measure different things. Somebody who is unemployed according to the labour force survey, but not in receipt of benefit, is not included in the claimant count, and somebody on the claimant count might not meet the criteria for being unemployed according to the labour force survey. If, for example, I am on the claimant count and my partner's income is above a certain level, or I have engaged in at least one hour of paid employment, I will not be included as unemployed in the labour force survey. That is why the claimant count in Northern Ireland picks up proportionately more of the inactive than, for example, is the case in GB, or picks up proportionately more people in employment than does the labour force survey. I have a couple of slides on that to come later.

The Chairperson: I understand the difference. However, by the end of your presentation, either through your telling me or my drawing a conclusion, I need to be able to work out which is the true reflection. One tells me that things are good; the other that things are not so good.

Dr Gillan: If you take into account both the unemployment and inactive figures, you will get a more rounded figure. Indeed, within the inactive measure on the labour force survey, we separate out those who say that they want a job.

The Chairperson: I will not interrupt any further. Fire on through the slides, because there are a lot of them.

Dr Gillan: I will keep it reasonably brief, but if you want to stop me, please feel free.

This is the first time since November 2010 to January 2011 that the Northern Ireland unemployment LFS rate has gone above that of the UK. There is a lag time, and the LFS is now beginning to show that we are above the UK average. We are still the fourth lowest of the UK regions according to the LFS and still the second highest according to the claimant count, so there is that disparity between what the two measures tell us.

The next slide reiterates what the claimant count measures tell us, as it shows a slight drift upwards in the claimant count measures. The claimant count is very sensitive, whereas the LFS will not pick up shifts of 100 in the population. It is the twenty-ninth consecutive month in which we have had the highest or second-highest UK regional unemployment rate.

The Chairperson: Will you compare that figure, although it is only 100 people, or 0.2%, with the United Kingdom, which shows a fall of 0.9%? Our problem is that divergence with the United Kingdom.

Dr Gillan: That is right, and we will come to that a bit later.

Next, the quarterly employment survey shows an increase of just over 1,900 jobs in the last quarter, which is from the first quarter of 2012 to the second quarter of 2012. That comprises a decrease in public sector jobs and an increase in private sector jobs of 2,700. That is the first increase since the second quarter of 2008.

The next slide shows the apparent paradox between increases in unemployment in the second quarter of the year and an increase in filled jobs. There are likely to be a couple of factors occurring simultaneously. When we talk about increases in unemployment and in filled jobs, as the Chair referred to, we mean the economically active population, and both numbers have gone up. You might expect that an increase in employee jobs would result in a decrease in unemployment. However, the third leg of the stool is the economically inactive population, into which there are flows in and out. Over the quarter, there was an apparent decrease in the number of persons who are economically inactive, which means that they could all be flowing into unemployment, all into employment, or a combination of the two. There is a decrease in the economically inactive population and an increase in the economically active, which boosts both the numbers going into unemployment and the numbers going into filled jobs. Another way of looking at it is this: if that increase in employee jobs had not happened, you would have expected a higher increase in the unemployment rate. There are also new entrants into the labour market, and we also have to be conscious of the relative sensitivity of the measures: the labour force survey has a statistical margin of error.

The next slide details LFS unemployment versus the claimant count from August 2001 to February 2012. The disparity is that they measure different populations, but they do not have to be equivalent. We have put the statistical margin of error around the labour force survey measure. You will see that there has been a greater disparity in the past between the two measures, but there is a reasonable congruence in the scale of the numbers of LFS unemployed and those in receipt of jobseeker's allowance. Following that, the current figures are set in a historical context, with figures running from January 1971. I am not suggesting, for one minute, that the scale of the problem is not significant at present, but relative to what we experienced at the peak in October 1986, when there were about 123,000 on the claimant count compared with about 63,000 currently, it is not of the same order of magnitude.

I know that the Committee has a particular interest in the proportion of long-term unemployed. It is no surprise that the rate of long-term unemployment, at 45.5%, is markedly higher than the UK rate of 34.9%, or that the trend is upwards.

Next is youth unemployment, which, again, is of particular interest to the Committee and sits at 23.5% in Northern Ireland and 19.6% in the UK. When you compare that with last year, you will see that there is an estimated increase in youth unemployment of about 2,000. When you look back to the equivalent period in 2007, just before the current downturn occurred, you will see that the youth unemployment rate then was about 9%. So there has been an increase of about 120% since the equivalent period in 2007. The UK rate five years ago was about 19.6%, which means there has been about a 61% increase in youth unemployment there. So we have had a significant acceleration in youth unemployment relative to the UK.

Mr Allister: How do we measure youth emigration within that?

Dr Gillan: That will be expressed as a percentage of the economically active population of 18- to 24-year-olds. So the figure of 23.5% is not a percentage of all 18- to 24-year-olds, but 23.5% of those 18- to 24-year-olds who are either employed or unemployed, so actual youth migration sits outside that denominator. They are either —

Mr Allister: Is that ever measured?

Dr Gillan: We are able to provide information on the changes in the overall 18- to 24-year-old population. So —

The Chairperson: In comparison with the demographic change? Jim is alluding to the fact that some young people are leaving the country. Can we —

Mr Allister: The figures are bad, but they would be even worse had there not been emigration.

Dr Gillan: Yes. The census on population figures will give us the best estimate of the relative size of growth of the 18- to 24-year-old population.

The Chairperson: Do you do any work to get a comparative figure for the economically active versus the census figures for the demography?

Dr Gillan: Our labour force survey figures are benchmarked for the mid-year population estimates. So each time there is a census, we re-benchmark the LFS totals against the census population totals to ensure that we remain consistent with the latest up-to-date information. If we were to take the youth unemployed as a proportion of all those aged 18 to 24, the figure would be more like 14%, but we do not provide an estimate of the number of young people who have migrated. I think that we would have to go to other sources for that.

Mr Dave Rogers (Department for Employment and Learning): As James was saying, the census will give an estimate of that. The NISRA demography branch works that out annually — it moves in and out — and it does that by age. The Department for Employment and Learning also carries out analyses of students who move to universities in GB. Of course, those students would not, on the whole, be in the labour force at that point, but they will be in the future. That has other implications for where they go or stay after they graduate.

The Chairperson: I would like to come back to that point, but Fra has indicated that he wants to speak. You do not need to answer this now, but I will put a marker down that our very high participation rates for students will reduce our economically active population. We will talk about that in a moment.

Mr F McCann: Jim raised an interesting point. Quite a number of young people have emigrated to places where there are jobs. You said that you can determine that through the census. Is that the most recent census, or are we still relying on the one of 10 years ago? Is there another way to determine that?

Dr Gillan: The 2011 census results were published in June or July for single year age bands by sex.

Mr F McCann: Is that out next year?

Dr Gillan: No. That has already been published.

Mr F McCann: So when you talk about people who have emigrated, the figures that you are working on are the most up-to-date census figures.

Dr Gillan: Between censuses, we receive updated mid-year population estimates, so we add on the births, take off the deaths and make an allowance for migration based on information such as GP health cards and registration of health cards.

The Chairperson: I understand the mid-census figures, but is your baseline 2011 because that is the most recently published census?

Dr Gillan: It is a mid-year population estimate for 2011, which is updated from 2001. We have not re-benchmarked yet on the basis of the latest census results.

The Chairperson: That is the answer to the question, which is fair enough.

Dr Gillan: In the next slide, there will be nothing particularly new for members. It shows our inactivity rate for the working-age population, which is about 312,000. As you can see, there has been a decrease —

The Chairperson: What is the figure for the working-age population aged 16 to 64?

Dr Gillan: The estimate is 312,000.

The Chairperson: Is that the total workforce?

Mr D Rogers: No. That is the inactivity rate. The population is about 1.4 million.

Dr Gillan: You can see that there has been a fall in the levels of economic inactivity from in and around 2009, so more people have moved into economic activity over the past three years or so. However, that has still not made particular inroads into our relative position compared with the other countries of the UK.

The next slide will be fairly familiar to you. The main reason for inactivity is that 31% of those who are inactive are students, followed by sickness/disability, which accounts for 27%. Both those figures are considerably higher than the rest of the UK.

The Chairperson: I made the point that we have a higher participation rate, with 48% of our cohort in higher or further education.

Mr D Rogers: We also have a younger population. If you compare our population profile with the rest of the UK, our population is slightly younger, so we also have more potential students. Therefore, it is a combination of a number of those factors.

Mr F McCann: Are there any elements of sickness or disability that are not classed as making people economically inactive? I once heard that someone on incapacity benefit was not classed as being economically inactive. People said that a huge amount of people being on incapacity benefit skewed the figures.

Dr Gillan: Irrespective of whether somebody is in receipt of a benefit, these inactivity figures would look at whether, if they are not employed, or if they are not unemployed, they are inactive. Therefore, if they are in receipt of incapacity benefit and doing more than one hour's work in the reference week, they are employed. They could be in receipt of incapacity benefit and unemployed in terms of the LFS, so it would not be determined by whether they were in receipt of incapacity benefit. We have some figures on the number of persons employed and unemployed who are in receipt of various benefits. A little later, I will show a slide on that.

Of particular interest to the Committee will be the figures for people aged between 16 and 24 who are not in employment, full-time education or training. Again, the general trend is upwards. We are at 24.4%, while the UK position is 19.2%. That is our first increase since February to April 2011. We are now well above the UK rate, and 24% equates to around 54,000 persons in Northern Ireland who not in employment, full-time education or training.

The Chairperson: I am sorry; I keep interrupting. Does that refer to people who are deemed to be available for employment?

Mr D Rogers: No, this is expressed as a percentage of the total population. It refers to people aged between 16 and 24 who are not working, not in full-time education or not training. It is possible that some of them are in part-time education, but the labour force survey cannot capture that. It is not measuring the willingness or availability for work; it is simply an estimate of the numbers who are not working, not in full-time education or not training.

The Chairperson: I know that it is not quite the same base, but is there some concatenation? You showed that youth unemployment is increasing, but that figure would not encapsulate these people at all, so you could be adding —

Mr D Rogers: You need to be very careful, because there are always exceptions that prove the rule. Most unemployed young people will be included in those figures. There is an overlap between them. Especially when you look at the claimant count, you will see that not all but some young people claiming jobseeker's allowance may be doing a small amount of work, which they are permitted to do. Therefore, they are not "completely NEET". At the margins, there is some fuzziness, but young unemployed people would be included in this, as would young inactive people who were not students. Obviously, students will be in either education or training, but there will be some inactive people. There may, for example, be some young people on income support because they are lone parents. If they are not working, they will be included in this estimate as well. Therefore, it is a more complete estimate than the youth unemployment figure.

The Chairperson: That is really what I wanted to get at. Is this the best estimate of youth unemployment or people with an issue?

Mr D Rogers: As a statistician, I have to use the terminology very carefully. It is probably the best estimate of young people who, if you want to put it like this, have, at the moment, fallen through the net. Some people may have very justifiable reasons not to be there. A lone parent with a very young child might be encouraged to join the labour market, if the situation were correct, but would not fall into jobseeker's allowance, which expects people to be looking for employment.

Dr Gillan: I will give you an idea of the scale. Youth unemployment among the 18-to-24 age group was around 23,000. The number of young people not in employment, full-time education or training is about 54,000. That group comprises those aged 16 to 24, so the two are not exactly comparable. The definition of people who are NEET is much broader than pure youth unemployment. The net is cast quite a bit wider.

Mr P Ramsey: What is most worrying about this is that the figure for youth unemployment, or number of young people who are NEET, has risen by 10% in 10 years. Given those figures, which are quite similar to the general unemployment figures that you gave, ours is 23.5%, which is similar to the figure of 19.6% in Britain.

Mr D Rogers: Yes, they are similar, but, if I may say so, that is almost an accident. These figures are a percentage of all young people, whereas, with the youth unemployment figures, it is just the way that they are expressed, which, by international convention, is a percentage of the economically active, which is a much smaller denominator, or base number.

Mr P Ramsey: Would the graph for the general unemployment figures that you gave earlier be similar and show a 10% rise? Are we looking at, say, just over 12% in 2000 to 24%?

Mr D Rogers: Yes. James will correct me if I am wrong, but the general position is that both youth unemployment and the number of NEETs have gone up. A lot of those are the same people: they are counted in both categories. Unemployment is only a subset of NEETs, but they have both gone up. Unemployment is, undoubtedly, one of the drivers of the rise in NEETS. The number of young people who are looking for but cannot get work has more than doubled.

Mr P Ramsey: The great worry, Chair, is that a tsunami of young people is coming through because of so many other factors, including welfare reform, and that the number will accelerate.

The Chairperson: We are interested in the trends, Pat, and if I were to place a ruler across the line depicting the trend for NEETs, it would not be good.

Dr Gillan: The trend is upwards. You asked whether the youth unemployment rate tracks the overall unemployment. The "best" recent estimate of overall unemployment was in January 2006, when it was about 3.3%, and we are now up at 8.2%, which is a five percentage point increase, whereas the youth unemployment rate has gone from about 9% in 2007 to about 23.5%, so its increase is more rapid.

The next slide is on the switch to employee jobs, and you will be relieved to hear that I will not go through it in detail. It turns to one of the other sources to find out what is driving the increases in unemployment. That is shown more clearly in the following slide: the green line is the quarterly count of Northern Ireland jobs since 1998; the blue line is the UK trend in the increase in jobs since 1998, and both benchmark to a common level. You can see that the expansion in jobs was much more marked in Northern Ireland than in the UK as a whole. Obviously, we started from a much lower base, but there was a considerable increase. The figure was up by 20% in Northern Ireland since 1998, whereas it was up by 11% in the UK as a whole. Both countries have fallen back considerably since that period, with a loss of almost 40,000 jobs in Northern Ireland, which is down about 5% off its peak, and the UK is down about 2% off its peak. The little upward turn at the end of the green line is this later quarter's results, which provides some indication that Northern Ireland has moved into job growth.

Next is a quarterly description of the same events. Essentially, per quarter, an average of 2,600 jobs have been lost since quarter 2 of 2008. That is the scale. At the start, the rate of job losses was much greater than it is at present, and there have been various peaks and troughs throughout the period. That gives you a sense of the peaks and flows of job losses. The next slide separates that into the public and private sector for Northern Ireland. The blue line denotes the private sector and the red line denotes the public sector. I do not want to put you to sleep, but there is a reclassification of the banks from the private to the public sector, which has clouded the issue somewhat. Leaving that aside for the minute, you can see that both private and public sector jobs have fallen off dramatically. In the fall off in public sector jobs, there was a lag time from the peak in activity. So, private sector jobs have fallen by about 7% since quarter 2, 2008.

The next slide reverses that and puts some of the banks that were nationalised back into the private sector. The only point I am making is that the trend is basically the same, irrespective of the classification issue.

The following slide tries to break that down into its various sectors. You can see that it refers to jobs in the construction sector. Everybody will be aware of the huge boom in the property sector, which drove the number of jobs in the sector to an all-time high. The fall has been even more precipitous and much more pronounced than in the UK as a whole. So, for example, one third of all construction jobs have gone since quarter 4, 2007. Those are employee jobs, people on PAYE. Self-employed people will be in addition to that. About one third of all jobs lost have been lost in the construction sector since quarter 2, 2008.

The next slide shows the equivalent information for the manufacturing sector, and shows that it has not fared quite as badly. Some of the loss of jobs in manufacturing will have been driven by the supply chain for the construction sector, so it has also been affected. It is worth noting that the decline has not been as precipitous as it has been in the rest of the UK. Indeed, the manufacturing sector has been showing signs of growth over the past number of quarters.

The final slide in this section shows you the service sector. Again, it shows that there was a much more rapid growth in jobs than there was in the rest of UK and that the fall off has not been as marked.

The next slide compares our public and private sector versus those in the rest of UK. I draw your attention to the light blue line, which denotes UK private sector jobs, versus the dark blue line, which denotes Northern Ireland private sector jobs. That is from 2008, but it becomes pretty clear that the UK private sector has been in recovery for a considerable period of time when it comes to jobs, whether they are full time or part time, whereas Northern Ireland private sector jobs have, up until the second quarter of 2012, been in a fairly continuous decline over the past four years, since quarter 2, 2008. Again, there are some classification issues, but I do not think that impacts on the overall trend. That is a key point: we have not seen the private sector jobs recovery that has been experienced in the rest of the UK.

The next slide touches briefly on self-employed persons, which we do not pick up in the employee jobs measure. Of all persons employed, 14% are self-employed, which is a broadly similar figure to that for the rest of the UK. That is the proportion of those in employment who are self-employed. So, while the numbers may have changed, the share of those who are self-employed has remained relatively constant throughout.

In the next slide, the green line denotes the self-employed. That shows the volatility of the measure. If you can detect a trend, you will see that there was a bit of an increase in self-employment. What is interesting about this slide is that the blue line denotes the total number in employment — it is the

labour force survey measure. Although it has picked up a decrease from about 2007-08, it is now reporting an increase in employment. This is at slight variance with the quarterly employee jobs measure, but the important thing to remember is that the LFS definition of employment is relatively generous in that it includes one hour paid employment or more.

Mr F McCann: The figure on the green line shows an increase. How many people does that equate to? Usually, the term self-employed refers to a single person. Is it 10, 50 or 100? Are we talking about very small numbers?

Dr Gillan: Altogether, it is about 100,000 people. I do not have the exact figure, but it is of that order of magnitude. Anybody who is an employee of a self-employed person will be counted in the quarterly employee jobs survey or included in the blue line.

Mr D Rogers: It is not insignificant.

Dr Gillan: I am nearing the end of my presentation, you will be glad to hear.

The next slide looks at some subsectors of the population. It points out that female jobs have grown faster and declined less. The pink line denotes female jobs, and the blue line denotes male jobs.

The next slide has a red line, which represents part-time jobs. It shows a much more rapid expansion in part-time jobs. Remember that this is going back to 1998. There is less of a fall-off in part-time jobs, less rapid expansion in full-time jobs and a more pronounced fall-off. Full-time jobs are down about 7% from the peak in full-time employment. Part-time jobs are down about 5%. Part-time employment makes up a significant part of it.

The final summary slide gives you a scale of some of the figures. The first line shows that unemployment since February/April 2008 is up by about 37,000. The claimant count is up by about 39,000, and the total number of employee jobs lost is about 40,000. We are in broad agreement about the scale of the problem, even though they are measuring different aspects.

I was going to leave it open for questions, but I have a couple of extra slides that show the differences between LFS unemployment and claimant count unemployment, which we touched on earlier. I will leave it open for the minute.

The Chairperson: We asked questions on the way through. Is there anything that anybody wants to bring up?

Mr Buchanan: I have one question. What is the rest of the UK doing differently from Northern Ireland? Their private sector jobs have increased steadily, yet Northern Ireland has steadily declined until recently. They must be doing something differently from what we are doing, as their private sector is growing while ours is continually in decline.

Dr Gillan: The rebuilding and rebalancing is picked up quite well in the Executive's economic strategy. The characteristics of our jobs and the structure of our industry is different from that in GB, where there are much more higher value-added jobs. You can see that a lot of our job creation was due to the construction sector. So, we tend to be weaker in the number of high value-added jobs that we have. Thirty per cent of our jobs are in the public sector. In the rest of the UK, they have a paradox of increasing employment but falling output.

The answer to your question is that the structures of the two economies are quite different. Our reliance was on construction jobs, which came and went, and we are having difficulty replacing those jobs.

The Chairperson: That is an interesting point.

Mr Douglas: I will go back to Jim's point about emigration. I was at Harland and Wolff recently, as was Chris. It was employing hundreds of people, and, all of a sudden, there was a spike, and then it was finished for them overnight. A number of those people went to Newcastle and other parts of the UK. Do you trace that in your figures? I imagine that they will go over for two or three months and then come back again and be unemployed.

Dr Gillan: As I was saying, we provide figures on the basis of mid-year population estimates. If someone goes over to the UK temporarily and does not change their registration with their GP, we will not pick that up for the totals to which we are grossing. If it were a long-term move, we would expect to eventually pick it up. As I said, over the next year or so, there will be a programme to benchmark our figures back to the 2011 census. That is one of the real benefits of having the census — it gives us a gold standard for those sorts of issues.

Mr F McCann: I asked this question during the previous presentation. The document gives the information by council area. You said that there has been a drop of 40,000 jobs over a period of time. Are those spread across the North, or are there concentrations of job losses in wards and constituencies? My constituency of West Belfast contains a lot of the wards that have suffered from high unemployment and deprivation.

Dr Gillan: Slide 38 gives you the claimant-count rates by parliamentary constituency area. West Belfast, for example, has the highest claimant-count rate. It is measured against the resident population and is getting close to between 9% and 10% of the resident population, while Northern Ireland as a whole is 5.6%. Because it is a count, it does give that sort of information.

Mr F McCann: Can that be broken down further?

Dr Gillan: We can get figures on district council level and for super output areas.

Mr F McCann: It would be interesting to see those, because you would know where there are concentrated pockets. Earlier, we had a debate about NEETs and how that impacts on people. That would be useful.

The Chairperson: Time is going on a bit. We might revisit this with James and Dave in around three months' time, when we could have a look at some more specific things that we want to do. I hope you did not mind our interrupting your presentation. I think I can say for the Committee that we found it to be really useful and interesting. There are bits that we have not quite got our head around, including the question of which was the base figure, but we have a pretty good idea, and it was really useful and timely. I will ask the Clerk to reschedule, and it might be reasonable for you to come back in another quarter. We might then build on what you have given us and go into a bit more detail.

Dr Gillan: Yes, that will be fine.

Mr F McCann: Is the slide you mentioned not contained in your information?

Dr Gillan: No, but I can have that made available to the Committee, and I can see whether we can get a lower level of disaggregation.

The Chairperson: You can also get it on the website, Fra. The trouble is that you need to ask questions to find out what it means exactly. That is the benefit of having our colleagues with us. I thank you both for the presentation. I know that a lot of work has gone into that, and it is really useful for us. There are some quite stark figures, and we need to think about how to deal with them. We really appreciate your time and effort on this.

Dr Gillan: Thank you for the opportunity.