



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Research and Information Service Briefing Paper

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# People with a Disability in Employment: A Supplementary Briefing Paper

## 1 Introduction

This briefing paper responds to queries raised by the Committee for Employment and Learning in relation to people with a disability in employment, supplementing the previous paper NIAR (540-2014). This briefing paper outlines an urban/rural breakdown of people with a disability in employment; an outline of what industries people with a disability are employed in; and seeks to explain the decrease in people with a disability employed in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area between 2008 and 2009.

## 2 Urban / Rural Breakdown

A search of publicly available data found no statistics outlining an urban/rural breakdown of people with a disability in employment. An information request was made to DFP in order to acquire this information. The Department provided the table below which has been extracted from the Labour Force Survey:

**Table 1:** Employment (16 plus) of those with a Disability: Urban/Rural Breakdown, Labour Force Survey October-December 2014<sup>1</sup>

	<b>BMUA*</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Total</b>
Disabled	22,000	24,000	36,000	81,000
Not-Disabled	219,000	229,000	281,000	729,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>241,000</b>	<b>253,000</b>	<b>316,000</b>	<b>810,000</b>

\*Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area

It should be noted that these figures are estimates having been extracted from Labour Force Survey data. The figures have been rounded by NISRA to the nearest thousand and as a result may not sum.

Table 1 shows that in total 81,000 people with a disability were employed in Northern Ireland in the period October-December 2014. Within the three Urban/Rural categories there is the following breakdown:

- In 'Rural' areas 36,000 (11%) people with a disability were employed;
- In 'Urban' areas 24,000 (9%) people with a disability were employed; and
- In the 'BMUA' 22,000 (9%) people with a disability were employed.

As can be seen, in 'Rural' areas a higher percentage of the workforce was composed of people with a disability in comparison to 'Urban' areas, or 'BMUA'. However, the difference between the categories could be explained by sampling error.

### 3 Industry Breakdown

A search found no publicly available data outlining the Industry Sectors where people with a disability are employed. A request for information was made to DFP. In response the table following was provided:

<sup>1</sup> Information provided by DFP 19/05/15, Labour Force Survey October-December 2014.

**Table 2:** Employment (16 plus) of those with a disability by Industry Sector, Labour Force Survey October-December 2014 <sup>2</sup>

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Confidence interval</u>	<u>Lower Limit</u>	<u>Upper Limit</u>
A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing	*	*	*	*
B,D,E - Energy and water	*	*	*	*
C -Manufacturing	*	*	*	*
F - Construction	*	*	*	*
G,I -Distribution, hotels and restaurants	18,000	6,000	12,000	24,000
H,J -Transport and communication	*	*	*	*
K,L,M,N - Banking and finance	*	*	*	*
O,P,Q - Public admin, education and health	27,000	7,000	20,000	34,000
R,S,T,U - Other services	*	*	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>79,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>67,000</b>	<b>91,000</b>

\*Indicates that the sample size is too small to produce a reliable estimate

These figures come with the caveat that they are estimates based on Labour Force Survey data. As a result of the data collection method, and the relatively small sample size of people with a disability within the LFS there is a high degree of variability, as demonstrated by the confidence intervals provided in the table.

Please also note that the total figure in Table 2 of 79,000 people with a disability in employment differs from the total figure of 81,000 in Table 1 despite the data originating from the same source, the Labour Force Survey October-December 2014.

The figures demonstrate that the Industry Sector 'public admin, education and health' employed the largest numbers of people with a disability with 27,000 employed in this Sector. The Industry Sector 'distribution, hotels and restaurants' was the second largest, with estimates suggesting that 18,000 people with a disability are employed in this Sector. 34,000 people with a disability were employed in other sectors. However, the sample size was too small to generate a reliable estimate.

## 4 Southern Trust Area Employment

In NIAR 540-2014 a decrease in employment for people with a disability was identified in the Southern Trust Area in 2008-2009. Following a review of a number of statistics, including LFS, DLA, Census 2011 demography data and ESF funded projects no apparent reason for this decrease was found.

RaISe subsequently submitted an information request to NISRA (via DFP) inquiring as to whether any research had been carried out on this matter, none was found.

As such it has not been possible to identify an explanation for the fall in employment during this period.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Information provided by DFP on 03/03/15, Labour Force Survey October-December 2014

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<sup>3</sup> Email correspondence with DFP on 03/03/15