Research and Information Service
Briefing Note

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Northern Ireland sub-regional economic data

1   Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to assess the availability of sub-regional economic data for Northern Ireland. The focus of the paper is not upon data analysis; rather it seeks to identify datasets which are publically available (although some analysis is include to demonstrate what the datasets show).

The data which has been located has been divided into three broad categories – business and the economy, the labour market and education, and household and personal finances. The first three sections correspond to each of these broad categories. In sections 2-4, the paper will identify what can be said about Northern Ireland in this area based on the available data. Section 5 which follows discusses the available data and lists data which was sought but found to be unavailable.

Datasets have been sought at Parliamentary Constituency level in the first instance, however, data at a small or larger sub-regional level have been included should they be of potential interest. For example, GVA at NUTs3 level has been included, as it is the smallest sub-division of this indicator which could be found.

All data addressed in the paper is included in Statistical Appendices, which accompany this document.

The remaining sections of the paper provide commentary from the compilers of the UK Competitiveness Index, outlining the reasons why Northern Ireland cannot currently be included in that index. Additional commentary from Dr John Bradley on the subject of Northern Ireland economic data in general is included. This draws comparison with developments in Scotland and may point the direction of future work.

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to ensure that as much publically available data as possible is included in this paper, what is included should not, however, be viewed as an exhaustive list, due to the vast amount of data available from various sources.

2   Business and the economy

Table 1 summarises the available data on business and the economy and the geographical level at which the data is recorded.

Table 1: Data available on business and the economy

Dataset	Geographical level
Number of businesses	Local Government District
Business size – turnover	Local Government District
Business size – employment	Local Government District
Business births and deaths	Local Government District
Invest Northern Ireland – financial assistance	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Invest Northern Ireland – jobs promoted by externally owned companies	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Invest NI new jobs promoted by first time inward investors	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Invest NI jobs promoted through inward investment above the NI Private Sector Median Wage	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Invest NI Enterprise Development Programme	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Bankruptcy cases	Local Government District
GVA current prices	NUTs3
Strategic Investment Board planned investment	Parliamentary Constituency Area

Business numbers

The data for the number of businesses is sourced from the UK Business: Activity, Size and Location which is compiled from the Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) which is produced by the Office of National Statistics in conjunction with the Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch, of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The IDBR provides data on VAT and/or PAYE registered business in the Northern Ireland economy including the agriculture, production and service sectors. The data allows for the ranking of local government districts according to the number of businesses in the district. It shows us, for example, that Belfast had the most VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses and that Carrickfergus had the fewest in 2012 (see Figure 1, Statistical Appendix 1, page 1).

This dataset has some shortcomings, however. Most notably the IDBR is reliant on VAT and PAYE data. As such it does not include businesses which fall below VAT and PAYE thresholds. These are described by DETI as *'very small'* businesses and may include:

- Businesses with an annual turnover (or expected annual turnover) below £79,000 unless voluntarily registered, and businesses who trade in VAT exempt goods or services (such as insurance, finance and credit or education of training[1]);[2] and/or
- Employers that employ individuals whose earnings fall below the National Insurance contributions Lower Earnings Limit - £109 a week, £473 a month or £5,668 a year for the tax year 2013/14.[3]

The Department notes that the data may exclude figures for some start-ups due to delays in notification of VAT or PAYE status. Similarly, data on enterprises that have deregistered or closed may also be included due to the timing of the data extraction.

Data on business turnover size and business employment size is also sourced from the IDBR and has the same limitations as the data for business numbers. From the data on business turnover (see Figure 2, Statistical Appendix 1, page 1) it is possible to conclude, for example, that Belfast has the largest proportion of businesses in the top turnover size-band – £5,000,000 plus – of all district councils (4% of Belfast businesses are in this bracket). Alternatively, the data shows that Belfast has the smallest proportion of businesses in the smallest turnover size-band - £0 to £49,000 (13.2% of businesses in the district have a turnover of this size).

The data on business employment size allows for a similar ranking of the local government districts. The data shows (see Figure 3, Statistical Appendix 1, page 2), for example, that Belfast has the largest proportion of businesses with 250 plus employees (0.85% of businesses in the district are in this size-band). Fermanagh, by contrast, has the largest proportion of businesses in the 0-4 employees size band (85.71% of businesses in the district are in this size-band).

Business births and deaths data is available from the Office of National Statistics Business Demography publication. The data is available at Local Government District (LGD) up to 2012 (see Figure 4, Statistical Appendix 1, page 2). It shows that greatest number of business births (745) and business deaths were in Belfast LGD. Moyle had the fewest business births (25) and business deaths (40) in the same year.

Invest Northern Ireland data

A number of data sets on Invest Northern Ireland (INI) activity have been sourced from a Ministerial Response to Assembly Questions on 2 May 2013, namely:

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[1] Further details available http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/vat/managing/reclaiming/partial-exemption.htm
[2] HM Revenue and Customs *When to Register for UK VAT* http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/vat/start/register/when-to-register.htm
[3] HM Revenue and Customs *PAYE for Employers – the basics* http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/payerti/getting-started/paye-basics.htm

- Invest Northern Ireland – financial assistance;

- Invest Northern Ireland – jobs promoted by externally owned companies;

- Invest NI new jobs promoted by first time inward investors; and

- Invest NI jobs promoted through inward investment above the NI Private Sector Median Wage.

This data, which is at Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA) level and provides figures for the 2012/13 financial year, shows a number of things, including:

- Belfast South was offered the most INI financial assistance in that year (receiving offers totalling £18.37m or 17.2% of total funding offered). North Down was offered the least financial assistance in the period measured (receiving offers totalling £1.37m, or 1.3% of the total sum offered). (See Figure 5 for of Statistical Appendix 1, page 3);

- Belfast South had the most jobs promoted (with 908 jobs promoted in the PCA, or 32.5% of the total number promoted in Northern Ireland). East Londonderry saw the fewest jobs promoted (with three jobs promoted in the PCA, or 0.1% of the total number of jobs promoted by externally owned companies in Northern Ireland). (See Figure 6, Statistical Appendix 1, page 3);

- 523 new jobs were promoted by first time inward investors in Northern Ireland over this period. These new jobs were spread across six PCAs, with a significant number (203, or 38.8%) of jobs promoted not assigned a confirmed location (these are listed as N/A in the figure). The majority of new jobs promoted by first time investors in 2012/13 were located in Belfast (270 jobs, or 51.6% of the total number). (See Figure 7, Statistical Appendix 1, page 4); and

- A total of 1,766 jobs above the PSM were created in Northern Ireland. These jobs were spread across 12 PCAs, with 174 not yet assigned to an area (N/A in Figure below). 817 or 46.26% of all the jobs above PSM were promoted in Belfast South (Figure 8, Statistical Appendix 1, page 4).

Data for INI's Enterprise Development Programme (EDP) is available from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) database. The website includes data for a number of measures across a range of geographical levels for three indicators – number of participants completing the course, the percentage of participants who started a business, and the total number of start-ups. Data for the first two indicators is available for the years 2002/03 through to 2010/11; data for the third indicator is available from 2007/08 to 2011/12.

The data on participants completing the course (Figure 9, Statistical Appendix 1, page 5) shows, for example, that completion rates were highest in Mid Ulster and lowest in North Down. The data on the proportion of participants who started a business following their completion of the EDP in 2010/11 shows that the greatest proportion was in East Londonderry and the smallest East Antrim (see Figure 10, Statistical Appendix 1, page 5). The final variable shown by the data is the number of business

start-ups resulting from the EDP (See Figure 11, Statistical Appendix 1, page 6). In 2010/11 Mid Ulster had the largest number of start-ups whilst East Antrim had the least.

Combining the available data on participants completing the EDP and the number of start-ups resulting from the EDP enables an analysis of the number of start-ups created per participant successfully completing the EDP in 2010/11 (see Figure 12, Statistical Appendix 1, page 6).This provides some measure of how effective the EDP was in the year in question. For example it shows that for every participant who completed the EDP in Mid Ulster there were 0.69 business start-ups. This falls to 0.48 start-ups per participant completion in East Antrim and Upper Bann.

Bankruptcy

Data for bankruptcy cases is available at Local Government District (LGD) level and is sourced from the NINIS database. It shows the total number of Participants disposed of in bankruptcy cases in 2012. The data (Figure 13, Statistical Appendix 1, page 7), which enables a ranking of LGDs according to the number of bankruptcy cases disposed, shows that the highest number of disposed cases was in Newry, Mourne and Down LGD.

Gross Value Added (GVA)

GVA is a measure of the increase in the value of the economy due to the production of goods and services. It is measured at current basic prices, which include the effect of inflation, excluding taxes (less subsidies) on products (for example Value Added Tax). Data for GVA is available on a sub-regional basis, via the Office of National Statistics (ONS). It is measured at Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTs) levels 1, 2, and 3. NUTs level 3 (NUTs 3) divides Northern Ireland into five sub-divisions:

- Belfast;
- Outer Belfast;
- East of Northern Ireland;
- North of Northern Ireland; and
- West and South of Northern Ireland.

The map on the page following shows the location of these sub-divisions. ONS data allocates income to the region in which the economic activity takes place.
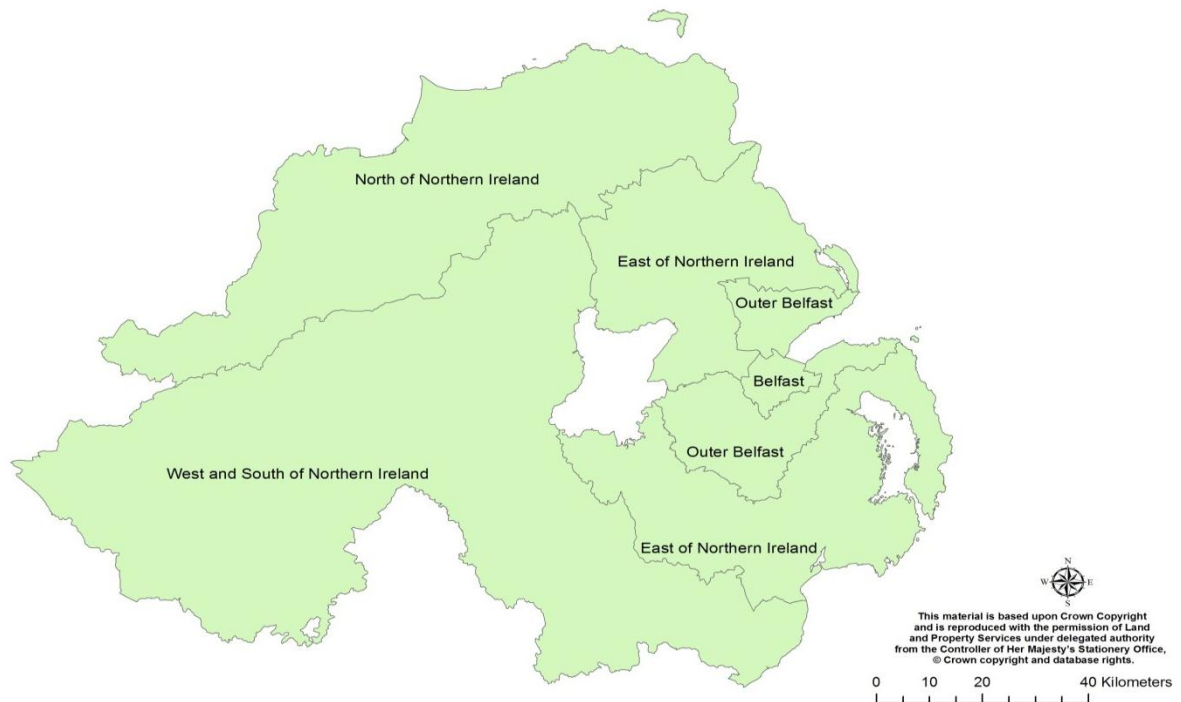
ONS provide data on a number of variables at this level including total GVA, GVA per capita, and GVA by industry sector. This section will briefly look at the first two of these variables for the latest year (2012). Comparing total GVA (£M) for each of five regions for 2012 (Figure 14, Statistical Appendix 1, page 7), shows that the Belfast region recorded the largest GVA (£9,184m), while the North of Northern Ireland recorded the lowest (£3,591m). It is also possible to look at GVA for each region as a proportion of Northern Ireland's total GVA (Figure 15, Statistical Appendix 1, page 8) – £29,410m – this shows that 31% of Northern Ireland's GVA is attributed to the Belfast region. Further analysis (Figure 16, Statistical Appendix 1, page 8) shows that each region contributed less than 1% to the total UK GVA (as a whole Northern Ireland contributed 2.1%). Data on GVA per capita (Figure 17, Statistical Appendix 1, page 9) shows that Belfast GVA per capita (£32,737) is more than twice that of Northern Ireland as a whole (£16,127).

Strategic Investment Board

The Strategic Investment Board provides data on planned expenditure in each Northern Ireland PCA between 2011 and 2021. This data (Figure 18, Statistical Appendix 1, page 9) shows, for example, that the largest levels of investment are forecast to be in Foyle (£586m), while the lowest levels are anticipated in Lagan Valley (£151m). The available data also allows forecast investment to be investigated by theme as it is broken down into a number of groupings:

- Networks;
- Skills;
- Health;

- Social;
- Environment;
- Productive;
- Justice; and
- Other.

3   Labour market, education and benefits

Table 2 outlines the data that was located on the labour market, education and benefits and the geographical level it is available at. This section will briefly note what can be said about data in this area. The comments refer to the figures included in Statistical Appendix 2.

Table 2: Data sets – Labour market, education and benefits

Dataset	Geographical level
Total Employee Jobs September 2012 Including public/private split	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Labour Force Survey	Local Government District
Civil Servants per 1,000 Economically Active Population Home and Work location	Local Government District
Vacancies notified to Job Centres/Jobs and Benefits Offices 2010 - 2012	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Confirmed Redundancies by Parliamentary Constituency 2010 – 2012	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Participants on Apprenticeships NI 2012	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Economically Active by Assembly Area, Census 2011	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Claimant count October 2013	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Percentage of working population receiving income support February 2013	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Percentage of population 16+ receiving housing benefits June 2013	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Percentage of population receiving disability benefits February 2013	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Census Qualifications DATA	Parliamentary Constituency Area
Full-time first degree Northern Ireland domiciled students by LGD of domicile 2011/12	Local Government District
Northern Ireland NEET Rate by NUTs3 region 2011	NUTs
Actual draw down of Enterprise Ireland NEETS grants up to May 2013	Enterprise NI Contract Area
UK Commission Employer Skills Survey 2011 - Skills gaps	Work Development Forums

3.1 Labour Market

The data on total employee jobs and public/private sector split (Figure 1,2 and 3, Statistical Appendix 2, pages 1 and 2) are sourced from the Census of Employment and provide a snapshot of the jobs market at a specific date. The Census of Employment has been operational since 1987 and is a statutory survey carried out every two years. It provides the fullest count of jobs in Northern Ireland, although the agricultural sector is excluded (although animal husbandry service activities and

hunting, trapping and game propagation are included). The Census does not include self-employed persons. It should also be noted that:

> *Sub-Northern Ireland analysis from the Census of Employment is primarily based on the location of the jobs, not on the home address of the employees.[4]*

In addition:

> *The Census of Employment counts the number of jobs rather than the number of persons with jobs. Therefore a person holding both a full-time and a part-time, or someone with two part-time jobs, will be counted twice.[5]*

The data can shows us, for example, in 2011 there were 681,641 employee jobs recorded in Northern Ireland. Furthermore it shows that highest number of employee jobs in Northern Ireland is located in Belfast South which is home to 100,355 employee jobs, or approximately 15% of all employee jobs in Northern Ireland. Outside of the Belfast region the highest number of jobs is to be found in the Upper Bann PCA, which is the location of 43,947 jobs, or approximately 6% of total employee jobs in Northern Ireland (Figure 1, Statistical Appendix 2, page 1). Moreover, as the data is produced biannually, it would be possible to track trends over time.

The data also shows the number of jobs in the public and private sector. In Northern Ireland there were 213,352 public sector jobs and 468,289 private sector jobs in 2011. That is, just under one third of the jobs in Northern Ireland were in public sector in that year. The highest number of both public and private sector jobs were located in Belfast South (36,692 public sector jobs and 63,663 private sector jobs). Outside of Belfast, Upper Bann has the highest number of private sector jobs (30,449 jobs in the sector, whilst Foyle had the highest number of public sector jobs (14,617) (Figure 2, Statistical Appendix 2, page 1).

Public sector employee jobs are also available on a proportional basis. In Northern Ireland 31% of all jobs are in the public sector. Of the 18 PCAs, five have a greater proportion of jobs in the public sector than Northern Ireland as a whole (Belfast East, Belfast South, Belfast West, Foyle, and West Tyrone). The PCA with the highest proportion of public sector jobs is Belfast West at 47%. In a further five PCAs the proportion of public sector jobs is equal to that of Northern Ireland as a whole (Belfast North, East Londonderry, Newry and Armagh, South Antrim, and Upper Bann) (Figure 3, Statistical Appendix 2, page 2).

There are two alternative sources of labour market data in Northern Ireland the – Labour Force Survey and the Quarterly Employment Survey.

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[4] http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/stats-surveys/stats-census-of-employment/stats-census-of-employment-background.htm
[5] *Ibid*

Individuals are classed as employed in the Labour Force Survey if they have done at least one hours work in a specific reference week. The definition of employment is broader than that of the census of employment as it includes *'covers all employees, self-employed, Government training & employment schemes and unpaid family workers'.* Being a survey the final data is an estimate based upon a sample of the population. The publically available data sourced from the survey is broken down by LGD and is available on an annual basis up to 2012. This data can be used to compare each LGD's employment rate. For example, the Northern Ireland employment rate in 2012 for those aged 16 plus was 56.1%. The lowest employment rate was in Strabane (48.1%) and the highest was in Antrim (72.3%) (Figure 4, Statistical Appendix 2, page 2). Data on this measure is available for all LGDs in 2012 apart from Moyle which is excluded due to the small sample size (this figure was available in other years 2008, 2010 and 2011, but was again absent in the 2009 results).

The Quarterly Employment Survey (QES), like the census of employment, measures the number of employee jobs, this definition excludes all self-employed jobs. The QES is a measure of quarterly changes in employee jobs. This data could not be located on a sub-regional level.

Additional data on the public private split in the jobs market is also available in the form of the Civil Servants per 1,000 Economically Active Population based upon Home and Work location. The data shows a relatively high concentration of civil servants working in Belfast in comparison to the number of civil servants who actually live in the LGD. This applies to a lesser degree to Derry LGD and Lisburn LGD. (Figure 5, Statistical Appendix 2, page 3)

Data on the number of vacancies reported to Job Centres or Jobs and Benefits Offices provides an indication of vacant jobs within local job markets. The data does not, however, provide a full picture as jobs advertised through other means (in newspapers but not Job Centres of Jobs and Benefits Offices for example) are not included. The vacancies recorded are assigned to geographical location according to the employer's postcode. It is not always possible to assign a location to the vacancy, for example 2,491 records in 2012 were not assigned to a geography. The data is available at a number of geographical levels, including PCA, and is available from 2007 to 2012.[6] It can be used to compare vacancies at PCA level and how these change over time. For example, the data for 2010 to 2012 shows that Belfast South had consistently the highest number of vacancies of Northern Ireland's PCAs (Figure 5, Statistical Appendix 2, page 3).

Redundancy data provides a comparison of the number of confirmed redundancies in each PCA over time (although PCA data is only available from 2010 onwards). It does not, however, equate to a measure of total job losses. For example, *'employees who do not qualify for a redundancy package, those on temporary contracts, will not be*

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[6] http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/MetaData.aspx

incorporated into the redundancy figures'.[7] The data shows, for example, that confirmed redundancies were consistently highest in the Belfast South PCA each year from 2010 to 2012. It shows also that the number of redundancies fell each year of the same period in Belfast East and that North and East Antrim both experienced a spike in redundancies in 2012 (Figure 6, Statistical Appendix 2, page 4).

A range of data is available on economic activity and inactivity. Statistical Appendix 2 includes a table (Table 1) of data relating to this area (sourced from Census 2011) as well as figures showing what the data might be used to show. For example Figure 9 of the Appendix (page 5 of appendix 2) compares levels of economic inactivity in each PCA, listing them according to the reason for the inactivity. This shows us, for example, that North Down has the highest number of economically inactive people who are retired, that Belfast South has the highest number of economically inactive people who are students, and that Belfast West has the highest number who are 'looking after a home or family'. The data also allows for a measurement of percentage of unemployed in each PCA who have never worked. This is highest in Belfast West, followed by Foyle, and lowest in Lagan Valley (Figure 10, Statistical Appendix 2, page 6).

3.2 Benefits

The range of benefit data is broad. Statistical Appendix 2 provides a number of examples of that data (sourced from NINIS) – claimant count, percentage of working population receiving income support, percentage of population 16+ receiving housing benefits and percentage of population receiving disability benefits. Each of the figures included in the Appendix provide a snapshot of the numbers or proportion of people in a PCA receiving a specific benefit at a specific time allowing for comparisons between PCAs.

Other data sources in this area are available from the Department of Social Development, including datasets relating to:

- Attendance Allowance;
- Carer's Allowance;
- Client Group Analysis;
- Disability Living Allowance;
- Employment and Support;
- Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement;
- Income Support;
- Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Pension Credit; and,
- State Pension.[8]

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[7] http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/MetaData.aspx
[8] http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research/benefit_publications.htm

3.3 Education

A range of data on education has been sourced and is included in figures 14 to 17 of Statistical Appendix 2. The data also provides a comparison of those residents in specific PCAs aged 16+ with level four qualifications and above. It shows that the proportion of those with such qualifications is highest in Belfast South and lowest in Belfast West. It also shows that attainment of this level of qualification is higher than the Northern Ireland as a whole (Northern Ireland level is 23.7%) in six PCAs (Belfast South, North Down, Lagan Valley, Belfast East, South Antrim and South Down) (Figure 14, Statistical Appendix 2, page 9).

Additionally the available data allows for a comparison of qualifications gained by school leavers in each constituency. For example Belfast South has the highest proportion of school leavers achieving 5 GCSE's grades A*-C (82%) (Figure 15, Statistical Appendix 2, page 10). It shows too that Belfast East has the highest proportion of School leavers with no GCSEs (3.1%) followed closely by East Antrim (3%) (Figure 16, Statistical Appendix 2, page 10).

Data sourced from Higher Education Statistical Authority shows number of students starting degrees in UK universities according to the LGD of domicile (Figure 17, Statistical Appendix 2, page 11). This data is, however, not publically available and can only be accessed at a cost.

3.4 NEETs

Data on NEETs (referring to those Not in Employment, Education or Training) is limited. It is available from the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and is recorded by NUTs 3 area. DEL, in a scoping study on NEETs, commented that gathering data on this group is inherently difficult as a result of its members being disengaged from traditional systems where data is normally gathered (such as education, training and employment).

The data used to establish NEETs figures is sourced from the Labour Force Survey. DEL have commented that:

> *LFS is a sample survey and the estimates of NEET numbers are subject to sampling error. The sample size limits quarterly disaggregation by age, gender or geographical area.*[9]

The latest published data provides figures for 2011 which show total NEETs number and the proportion of those aged 16 to 24 who are classified as NEET. The proportion of those classified as NEET in Northern Ireland 19.9%, the Belfast, Outer Belfast and North NUTs 3 regions have a higher proportion of NEETs (26%, 23.10% and 20.7%

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[9] http://www.delni.gov.uk/statistics-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.pdf

respectively). The proportion of 16 to 24 population classified as NEET is lowest in the East NUTs 3 (Figure 18, Statistical Appendix 2, page 10)

3.5 Skill gaps

Sub-regional data on skills gaps has been sourced from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills: Northern Ireland National Report 2011 (the report was sponsored by DEL). The data is derived from a survey (based on 4,000 respondents) and is broken down according to 'Work Development Forums'. These Work Development Forums were established in conjunction with the Department for Employment and Learning to address skills development needs on a regional basis. They sub-divide Northern Ireland into six separate regions as shown in the map below.

The survey data provides three measures of skills gap:

- The percentage of firms in each region recording a skills gap – highest in the Belfast and South Western regions (13%) (Figure 20, Statistical Appendix 2, page 12);

- The number of skills gaps identified in each region – highest in the Belfast region (Figure 20, Statistical Appendix 2, page 13); and

- The skills gap density which measures *'number of staff reported as being not fully proficient as a proportion of all employment'.* This is highest in the South Western region (Figure 20, Statistical Appendix 2, page 13).

The Northern Ireland report on skills conducted by the UK Commission is not an annual publication. The 2011 edition, which is the latest, does however include comparisons with previous Northern Ireland Skills Monitoring Surveys from 2005 and 2008.[10]

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[10] http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/ukces/docs/publications/evidence-report-60-employer-skills-survey-11-ni.pdf

4   Housing and personal finance

The range of data gathered on housing and personal finance is summarised in Table 3 below. This section will briefly comment on the data which is contained in Statistical Appendix 3. The data has been divided into two broad headings – income and social grade, and housing and household data.

Table 3: Datasets Housing and Personal Finance

Dataset	Geographical level
Gross Disposable Household Income	NUTs 3
Income Thresholds	Local Government District
Gross Weekly pay	Parliament Constituency Area
Multiple deprivation	Parliament Constituency Area
Household social grades	Parliament Constituency Area
Housing tenure	Parliament Constituency Area
Number of mortgage cases received and disposed	Parliament Constituency Area
Average capital values of domestic properties	Local Government District
Average rates bill	Local Government District
Central heating data	Parliament Constituency Area
Car or van availability	Parliament Constituency Area

4.1 Income and social grade

Gross disposable household income (GDHI) is a measure of *'money that all of the individuals in the household sector have available for spending or saving after income distribution measures (for example taxes, social contributions and benefits) have taken effect'.* It does not, however, measure the income of *'actual households or family units'*, rather includes a wide range of individuals within the economy, including:

> *…people living in traditional households as well as those living in institutions such as retirement homes and prisons. The sector also includes sole trader enterprises (the self-employed) and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH). Examples of the latter include charities and most universities.*[11]

GDHI is the sum of two income elements – the allocation of primary income (which includes income of households generated through assets or employment) plus the secondary distribution of income (which is the government distribution of income through taxes and social benefits). The statistical Appendix contains two figures which refer to this data. Total GDHI at NUTs 3 level and GDHI per capita at NUTs 3 level (Figures 1 and 2, Statistical Appendix 3, page 1).

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[11] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/regional-accounts/regional-household-income/spring-2013/stb-regional-gdhi-2011.html#tab-About-this-release

From the data it is evident that the East of Northern Ireland has the highest GDHI of all the Northern Ireland regions (£6,387m), the North of Northern Ireland by contrast has the lowest (£3,678m). On a per capita basis, Northern Ireland has a GDHI of £13,966. Three regions have a GDHI above this, with Outer Belfast being the highest (£15,124). The West and South of Northern Ireland has the lowest GDHI per capita at £12,500.

Income threshold data (Figures 3 and 4, Statistical Appendix 3, page 2) shows the proportion of individuals in Northern Ireland LGDs with an income that in a specific income grouping, either:

- Below 50% of median income;
- Below 60% of median income; or,
- Below 70% of median income.

It considers incomes both before housing costs (BHC) are taken out and after housing costs (AHC) are taken out. In 2011/12 the median weekly UK was £427 BHC and £367 AHC. The data shows therefore the proportion of the LGD population that was below 50%, 60% or 70% of these figures. The Department of Social Developments commentary accompanying these figures notes that the *'most commonly used poverty threshold'* is 60% of median income. The Department adds that this data can be used as:

> *…a proxy for material living standards. More precisely, it is a proxy for the level of consumption of goods and services that people could attain given the disposable income of the household in which they live.*[12]

The data shows that Limavady had the highest proportion (32%) of individuals living with incomes below 60% of the UK median before and after housing costs in 2011/12. Castlereagh had the lowest proportion of individuals with incomes 60% of median income – 11% BHC and 12% AFC.

The above data refers to the whole population. It should be noted that the DSD data breaks down further to include children, working-age population and pensioners.

Data on median gross weekly pay (Figure 5, Statistical Appendix 3, page 3) shows variations in weekly pay across Northern Ireland constituencies. This data is sourced from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earning, which was most recently published in December 2013.[13] The latest data shows that median gross weekly income was highest in Belfast East (£461.1/week) and lowest in North Down (£280.3/week). This data is also further broken down into male and female categories. Figures which exclude overtime, or are presented as hourly rates are also provided. The data is also an annual release which would allow comparison over time.

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 *'provides a relative measure of deprivation in small areas across Northern Ireland'.* It combines 52 indicators relating

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[12] http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/1_introduction_and_key_findings.doc
[13] http://www.detini.gov.uk/northern_ireland_ashe_2013_bulletin.pdf

to *'domains of deprivation'* including income, employment, health, education proximity to services, living conditions, and crime and disorder. The measure *'identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Northern Ireland'.*[14] The data ranks 890 super output areas in Northern Ireland from the most deprived to the least. At PCA level the data can be used to measure the extent of deprivation in each constituency. Figure 6 in Statistical Appendix 3 (page 3) shows this measure. Belfast West is ranked as the most deprived PCA and North Down as the least.

The final data set in the income and social grade category (Figure 7, Statistical Appendix 3, page 4) shows the approximate proportion of PCA households at specific social grades. This data is sourced from Census 2011, which recorded the approximate social grade of the Household Reference Person (HRP) (a concept which replaced "head of the household" in the 2001 Census). Four social grades are measured:

- Approximated social grade AB: Higher and intermediate managerial/ administrative/professional occupations – Belfast South had the highest proportion of HRPS in this grouping (32%) and Belfast West the lowest (9%);

- Approximated social grade C1: Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial / administrative/professional occupations – North Down had the highest proportion of HRPs in this grouping (37%). Mid Ulster and West Tyrone both recorded the lowest proportions (22%);

- Approximated social grade C2: Skilled manual occupations – Mid Ulster had the highest proportion of HRPS in this grouping (34%) and Belfast South the lowest (12%) and,

- Approximated social grade DE: Semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations - Belfast West had the highest proportion of HRPs in this grouping (46%). Belfast South and Mid Ulster both recorded the lowest proportions (21%).

The Census guidance notes that:

> *A person's approximated social grade is based primarily on their occupation but also includes information about their employment status, qualifications gained, tenure and whether they work full-time, part-time or are not working.*

4.2 Household and housing

The data on housing tenure (Figure 8, Statistical Appendix 3, page 4) is sourced from the 2011 Census. It shows proportion of households of specific tenure in each PCA. The data shows that across all Northern Ireland PCAs the highest proportion of housing tenure is owner occupied. Belfast West has the highest proportion of social

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[14] http://www.nisra.gov.uk/deprivation/archive/Updateof2005Measures/NIMDM_2010_Guidance_Leaflet.pdf

rented accommodation. Belfast south has the highest proportion of private rented accommodation.

Data on mortgages (Figure 9, Appendix 3, page 5) shows the number of mortgage cases received and disposed by the high-court in Northern Ireland on an annual basis. The data covers both Northern Ireland Housing Executive and private mortgages, and relates to both domestic and commercial properties. NISRA's metadata states that:

> *Not all writs and originating summonses lead to eviction. A plaintiff begins an action for an order for possession of property. The court, following a judicial hearing, may grant an order for possession. This entitles the plaintiff to apply for an order to have the defendant evicted. However, even where an order for eviction is issued the parties can still negotiate a compromise to prevent eviction.*

The data shows that the highest numbers of mortgage cases were received in Newry and Mourne, while the highest numbers of cases disposed were in South Antrim. Mortgage data is annual, allowing for comparisons over time. The metadata states, however, that it is not directly comparable with similar data in GB and RoI.

Further data is available on the average capital values of domestic properties (Figure 10, Appendix 3, page 5). The data is available at both LGD and ward level, going back to 2008. The information is sourced from the Valuation List, as maintained by the Valuation Directorate of Land and Property Services. Only properties with capital values of £15,000 and above were included in the analysis. It shows that the highest average domestic property capital value is to be found in North Down (£157,955), while the lowest is to be found in Strabane (£93,891).

Data on average rates bills is available at LGD level (Figure 11, Appendix 3, page 6). The data is provided by the Department of Finance and Personnel's Rating Policy Division. The average rates bill in each Local Government District reflects the type of property to be found within it.[15] As such it also reflects the capital value data, with North Down having the highest average rates bill (£1,107 2011/12) and Strabane have the lowest (£664 2011/12).

Data on the central heating source is collected by the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey and is available at PCA level for the years 2006 and 2009.[16] The data (Figure 12, Statistical Appendix 3, page 6) shows that oil was the predominant form of central heating across Northern Ireland in 2009, with the exception of Belfast North, Belfast South, and Belfast East where gas was the most common fuel source.

The same data shows the proportion of households without any form of central heating in 2009 (Figure 13, Statistical Appendix 3, page 7). In every PCA less than 1% of

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[15] http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/MetaData.aspx
[16] http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/MetaData.aspx

households were recorded as having no central heating. The highest proportion of households without central heating is in Strangford (0.71%).

5   Discussion

5.1   Business and the Economy

The data located on business and the economy allows for comparison of geographical areas across a number of individual indicators, as outlined in Table 1. Some of these datasets have shortcomings. The data on business demography, for example, is reliant on VAT and PAYE registration and does not capture businesses which fall outside of these thresholds.

There are also issues of comparability. It has not been possible to locate all datasets at PCA level. As such, whilst analysis of individual indicators is possible, an analysis of the data in its totality is difficult.

Data at a sub-regional level on a number of additional business and economic indicators was sought but could not be located, namely:

- Research, Development and Innovation spending by business, academia and the public sector;
- Export and import data;
- Indexes of output – production, services, constructions and purchasing managers index;
- Labour productivity which provides data on GVA per hour worked and GVA per filled job for the UK and UK's sub-regions. This data is available at NUTs 2 and NUTs 3 level from the Office of National Statistics. NUTs 3 data is not available for Northern Ireland regions; and,
- Government expenditure at PCA level. ONS has produced experimental data on sub-regional government expenditure in the past. This provided information at NUTs 2 level. Only one release of this data could be located. The release was published in 2002 and included data from 1998.

5.2   Labour Market, Education and Benefits

As is the case with data on business and the economy a wide range of data is available on individual indicators as outlined in Table 2. Whilst some of this data does have shortcomings – the exclusion of sections of the agriculture section and self-employed persons in Census of Employment data, for example – sufficient data exists to enable a comparison of Northern Ireland's sub-regions across a number of datasets.

A greater number of datasets in the labour market, education and benefits grouping were available at PCA level than in the business and the economy grouping. This

ensures that cross indicator analysis. Not all data was available at PCA level however, and some datasets were only available for unique geographical groupings – the skills gap data for example.

An additional data set was sought in this grouping but could not be located, namely:

- Data which further breaks down public sector jobs into local authority, civil service, etc.

5.3   Housing and personal finance

A similar picture emerges in the housing and personal finance grouping. That is, a broad range of data is available on individual indicators enabling specific sub-regional comparisons to be carried out. The data is not available at PCA level consistently ensuring broader comparisons are problematic.

No additional data sets were sought in this grouping.

5.4   Overall

Overall a wide range of data is available on the Northern Ireland sub-regional economy which enables analysis and comparison across specific indicators and for the most part across a number of years.

Where "desirable" data is not available it tends to be in the area of business and the economy.

Not all data is available at the same geographical level making a more holistic approach to sub-regional analysis difficult.

6   Additional information

The UK Competiveness Index is an *'integrated measure of competitiveness focusing on both the development and sustainability of businesses and the economic welfare of individuals'*. The index, which has been compiled since April 2000, is produced by the Centre for International Competiveness at the Cardiff University. It provides an *'authoritative benchmarking of the competitiveness of the UK's regions and localities'.*[17] Northern Ireland localities are, however, excluded from the index. The latest edition of the index (2013 Edition) explains this by stating:

> It should be noted that although the term UK is used, due to a lack of compatible data localities from Northern Ireland are excluded from the index.[18]

When asked to expand on this, Index author Professor Robert Huggins commented:

> The main issues we have encountered are the availability of detailed employment data allowing the identification of the knowledge intensive industries, as the BRES [Business Register and Employment Survey] *data is only available on a biennial basis and there is no indication of where 2 or 3 digit data might be accessed. Also, we found missing data for some council areas in the Annual Survey of Hours and Employment used to derive the median income measures. In addition when undertaking further analysis, e.g. rural and urban comparisons have been hard to make between countries given their differing definitions. Combination is possible, but it is imperfect.*[19]

This paper was motivated by briefing on a Cross-border Economic Renewal Strategy presented by Dr John Bradley from Centre for Cross Border Studies to the Enterprise, Trade and Investment Committee in April 2013. Dr Bradley was asked for further comment to assist in the drafting of this paper. Perhaps most significant amongst these comments was the following statement:

> It is important not to get too preoccupied with NI sub-regional data. The sub-regional data situation would be difficult to improve in the absence of considerable work on the "national" data situation, i.e., the situation for Northern Ireland as a whole. It would be a mistake to detach the national and sub-regional issues from each other. They are very inter-dependent.[20]

Finally, it should be noted that the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action is due to publish a Review of Economic Data in Northern Ireland on the 28 February 2014.

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[17] http://www.cforic.org/pages/uk-competitiveness.php
[18] http://www.cforic.org/downloads.php
[19] Email correspondence with Professor Robert Huggins 06 December 2013
[20] Email correspondence with Dr John Bradley 04 December 2013

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