



**Warm Healthy Homes**



**Northern Ireland  
Executive**

[www.northernireland.gov.uk](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk)

# Warm Healthy Homes Strategy Indicators

## Statistical Methodology and Definitions

February 2026

## Introduction

This statistical methodology report outlines the current definitions, data sources and methodologies for each strategic indicator that will be used to monitor the progress of the Warm Healthy Homes Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Stakeholder engagement throughout the development of this Strategy made it clear that better and more frequent data on fuel poverty and its impacts was needed. The Warm Healthy Homes Strategy 2026-36 therefore aims to improve our understanding of fuel poverty causes and impacts. It also commits to improving our use of data to design better policy, identify groups that need support and improve links between policies and fuel poverty outcomes. This will be supported by the introduction of a basket of indicators for fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty is the inability to heat or power a home to an adequate degree at a reasonable cost. It is affected by household income, the cost of energy and how much energy is needed, which is directly related to the energy efficiency of the home. In Northern Ireland the same methodology for calculating fuel poverty has been in use consistently since 2001: the 10% indicator. However, different methodologies have been introduced across the remainder of the UK. This makes direct comparisons of fuel poverty levels in different parts of the UK difficult.

Understanding fuel poverty better also means recognising its impacts. For example, cold, damp homes can cause and adversely impact physical and mental health conditions. People in fuel poverty may be more susceptible to damp, mould and poor air quality, while draughty, inefficient homes require more energy to heat, leading to higher carbon emissions.

This paper outlines the detailed definitions that lie behind the basket of indicators which will be used to measure strategic progress throughout the lifetime of the Strategy. While the existing 10% indicator on fuel poverty is still included, the additional indicators will provide a more holistic picture of population groups in, and impacted by, fuel poverty. While the official measure of fuel poverty is derived from the NI House Condition Survey, which is carried out every 5 years, many of the new strategic indicators come from annual surveys such as the Family Resources Survey and Living Costs and Food Survey.

We will keep this new approach for understanding fuel poverty under review. This is a live document and will be subject to revision if data sources or external policy changes.

The Strategic indicators are:

- i. Fuel poverty
- ii. Fuel poverty after housing costs
- iii. Extreme and Severe fuel poverty
- iv. Damp free homes
- v. Keep house warm
- vi. Keep up to date with bills

- vii. Household energy spend
- viii. Excess Winter Mortality
- ix. Low-income, low efficiency
- x. Energy Confidence

This methodology paper presents the following information per indicator:

- Definition
- Methodology
- Data Source
- Web Link to Statistical Publication
- Frequency of update
- Quality Report
- Historic Data and date available from
- Time-series trend or most recent data available
- Available data breakdowns
- UK/RoI/International comparisons
- Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology

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## i. Fuel poverty

### **Definition**

Number and percentage of Households in Fuel poverty

### **Methodology**

In Northern Ireland, fuel poverty has been defined under the 10% fuel poverty methodology since 2001. A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory level of heating (21°C in the main living room and 18°C in other occupied rooms), it is required to spend more than 10% of its household income on all fuel use. Fuel poverty assesses the ability to meet all domestic energy costs including space and water heating, cooking, lights and appliances. Fuel poverty under the 10% methodology is determined by three components: fuel prices, energy consumption (which combined with fuel prices, forms the household costs) and household income. When examined individually, these components influence fuel poverty to varying degrees, however, it is the combination of all three components that determines the fuel poverty estimate. The figures for Northern Ireland fuel poverty are derived from several models constructed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) and reported in the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey (NIHCS). The fuel poverty model calculates a fuel poverty ratio for each dwelling.

The NIHCS is a survey based on a stratified random disproportionate sample of 3,000 dwellings. The published data are estimates for Northern Ireland housing stock based on this sample. The sample design process, and the weighting and grossing process are carefully designed to ensure that the results are accurate and representative of the total housing stock.

The Housing Executive commissioned BRE to model estimates of the levels of fuel poverty in Northern Ireland in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. The 2016 NIHCS data has been used as a base in conjunction with the 2016 fuel poverty (10% definition) methodology to estimate the number of fuel poor households in Northern Ireland from 2017-2021.

The 2020 and 2021 estimates provide a further breakdown of the three fuel poverty components and their impact on fuel poverty. The [Estimates of fuel poverty in Northern Ireland in 2020 and 2021](#) project fuel poverty levels when fuel prices and incomes are adjusted without energy efficiency improvements, and fuel poverty levels if only fuel prices are considered, without any adjustments for income or energy efficiency measures.

### **Data Source**

Northern Ireland House Condition Survey, Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

### **Web Link to Statistical Publication**

[The Housing Executive - House Condition Survey \(nihe.gov.uk\)](https://www.nihe.gov.uk)

## Frequency of Update

Every 5 years

Modelled interim figures on an ad hoc basis.

## Accredited Official Statistics Status

Accredited Official Statistics

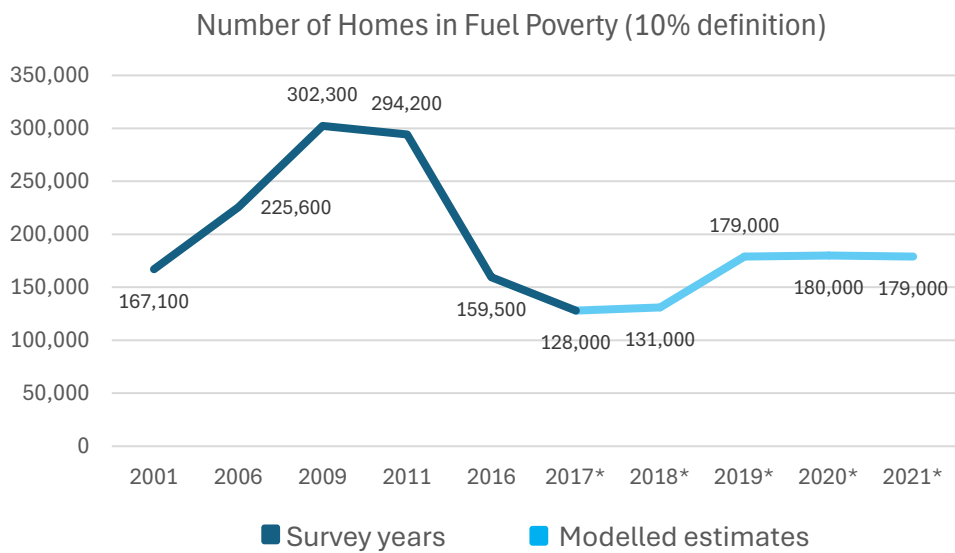
## Quality Report

[NIHCS BACKGROUND QUALITY REPORT \(nihe.gov.uk\)](https://www.nihe.gov.uk/nihcs-background-quality-report)

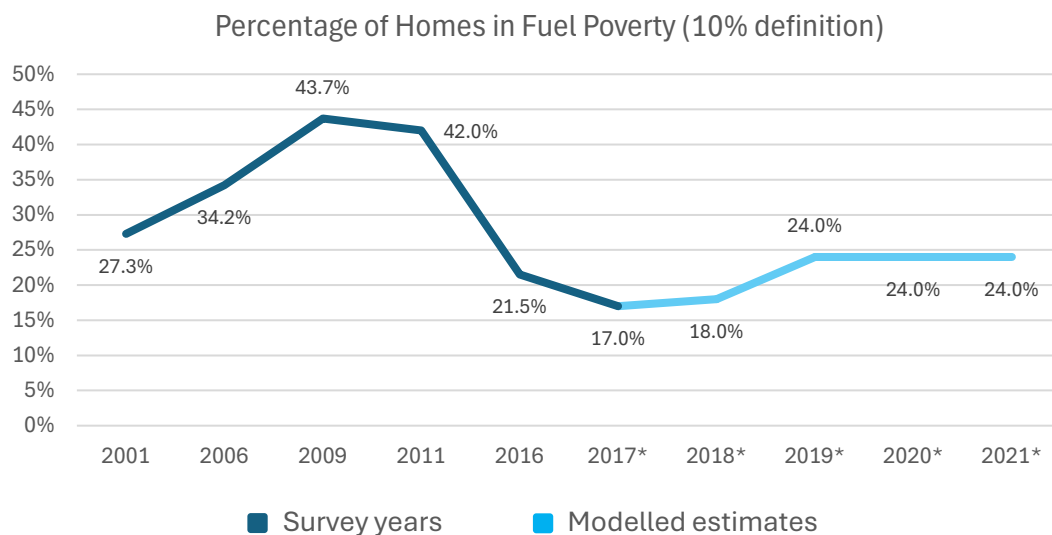
## Historic Data and date available from

2001

## Time series-trend



\*Modelled estimates for 2017-2021 are produced using 2016 NIHCS data.



\*Modelled estimates for 2017-2021 are produced using 2016 NIHCS data.

### Estimates of Fuel Poverty in Northern Ireland, Components of Fuel Poverty, 2020 & 2021

	2020		2021	
	Number of households	% of households	Number of households	% of households
Fuel prices only	206,000	28	219,000	30
Fuel prices and income only	196,000	26	199,000	27
<b>Fuel prices, income, and improvement measures</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>179,000</b>	<b>24</b>

#### Available data breakdowns

Chapter six in the NIHCS provides an analysis of households in fuel poverty. Fuel poverty rates are broken down by the following key dwelling characteristics: tenure, dwelling type, dwelling age, location, District Council area, and household characteristics.

#### Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:

In 2016 a random sample of 3000 dwellings was selected.

#### UK/RoI/International Comparisons:

Fuel poverty is a devolved issue, with each nation in the UK measuring fuel poverty under different definitions. Therefore, fuel poverty measures are not directly comparable across the United Kingdom.

Wales adopt a similar methodology to Northern Ireland, using a 10 per cent indicator. A household is defined as being fuel poor if they need to spend more than 10 per cent of their income on the fuel needed to heat their home to a 'reasonable' level.

In England, fuel poverty is defined using the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) methodology. Households are considered fuel poor if they are living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of band D or below, and when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

Scotland use a two-part definition to define fuel poverty. Under this definition, a household is considered fuel poor if after housing costs have been deducted, over 10 per cent of their net income is required to pay for their reasonable fuel needs; and if after deducting those fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability and childcare costs, the household's remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living.

### **Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

Surveyors working on the 2016 NIHCS received training and support to help ensure their collection of energy related data were consistent and robust. A refresher training session in 2016 explained the principles, how the form should be completed as well as conducting practical exercises with feedback sessions. While these measures ensure a good level of consistency in judgements, some surveyor variability is to be expected.

The next NIHCS was scheduled to take place in 2021. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fieldwork was postponed to 2023. The quality assurance process for the 2023 survey is ongoing and publication dates will be announced when available.

The fuel poverty estimates are based on the most recent NIHCS data, collected in 2016. For the modelled figures, the more time that passes from the year of data collection to the modelled year, the more uncertainty there will be with the estimates. In the calculation of the modelled fuel poverty estimates, it was assumed that household composition remained stable since 2016. This includes: the number of households in Northern Ireland, the composition of individual households, and the employment status of individuals in households. Further modelling and adjustments would be required using external data on demographic changes, to account for any compositional changes over time, and are subject to the quality of the base data and external data. Due to concerns with the complexity of undertaking such an adjustment process and assessing the robustness of the remodelled estimates, no adjustments have been made.

An updated methodology was used for the 2020 and 2021 fuel poverty estimates. Firstly, the external data used to calculate inflation factors was reviewed, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the reliability of survey estimates. In addition, additional modelling to simulate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individual household incomes was included. Secondly, the methodology used to model the number of energy efficiency improvements in the Northern Ireland housing stock was

improved, using additional external data sources, and analysing trends in the English Housing Survey (EHS) data.

The 2020 fuel poverty estimates were calculated using the best available information, and the methodology was broadly the same as for previous estimates. However, it is important to note that additional modelling was carried out to account for the impact of COVID-19, leading to a higher level of uncertainty in the 2020 fuel poverty estimates. Further information can be found at the following link: [Estimates of fuel poverty in Northern Ireland in 2020 and 2021](#)

## ii. Fuel poverty after housing costs

### **Definition**

Number and percentage of households in Fuel poverty after housing costs

### **Methodology**

Data on households in Fuel poverty after housing costs are derived from the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey (NIHCS). A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory level of heating (21°C in the main living room and 18°C in other occupied rooms), it is required to spend more than 10% of its household income on all fuel use after housing costs (mortgage and rent payments) have been deducted. Fuel poverty assesses the ability to meet all domestic energy costs including space and water heating, cooking, lights and appliances. Fuel poverty under the 10% after housing costs methodology is determined by three components: fuel prices, energy consumption (which combined with fuel prices, forms the household costs) and household income. When examined individually, these components influence fuel poverty to varying degrees, however, it is the combination of all three components that determines the fuel poverty estimate. The figures for Northern Ireland fuel poverty are derived from several models constructed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE). The fuel poverty model calculates a fuel poverty ratio for each dwelling.

The NIHCS is a survey based on a stratified random disproportionate sample of 3,000 dwellings. The published data are estimates for Northern Ireland housing stock based on this sample. The sample design process, and the weighting and grossing process are carefully designed to ensure that the results are accurate and representative of the total housing stock.

### **Data Source**

Northern Ireland House Condition Survey, Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

### **Web Link to Statistical Publication**

[The Housing Executive - House Condition Survey \(nihe.gov.uk\)](http://nihe.gov.uk)

### **Frequency of Update**

Every 5 years

### **Accredited Official Statistics Status**

Accredited Official Statistics

### **Quality Report**

[NIHCS BACKGROUND QUALITY REPORT \(nihe.gov.uk\)](http://nihe.gov.uk)

### **Historic Data and date available from**

Not yet published

**Time series-trend**

Not yet published

**Available data breakdowns**

Not yet published

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

TBC once published

**UK/RoI/International Comparisons:**

England - [English Housing Survey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Scotland - [Scottish House Condition Survey - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

Wales - [Welsh Housing Conditions Survey | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales)

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

Surveyors working on the 2016 NIHCS received training and support to help ensure their collection of energy related data were consistent and robust. A refresher training session in 2016 explained the principles, how the form should be completed as well as conducting practical exercises with feedback sessions. While these measures ensure a good level of consistency in judgements, some surveyor variability is to be expected.

The next NIHCS was scheduled to take place in 2021. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fieldwork was postponed to 2023. The quality assurance process for the 2023 survey is ongoing and publication dates will be announced when available.

### iii. Extreme and Severe fuel poverty

#### Definition

Number and percentage of households in Extreme and Severe fuel poverty

#### Methodology

Information on severe and extreme fuel poverty is taken from the House Condition Survey (NIHCS). A household is defined as being in severe fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory level of heating (21°C in the main living room and 18°C in other occupied rooms), it is required to spend 15-20% of its household income on all fuel use. Extreme fuel poverty is experienced when a household is required to spend over 20% of its household income on all fuel use in order to maintain a satisfactory level of heating. Fuel poverty assesses the ability to meet all domestic energy costs including space and water heating, cooking, lights and appliances. Fuel poverty is determined by three components: fuel prices, energy consumption (which combined with fuel prices, forms the household costs) and household income. When examined individually, these components influence fuel poverty to varying degrees, however, it is the combination of all three components that determines the fuel poverty estimate. The figures for Northern Ireland fuel poverty are derived from several models constructed by BRE. The fuel poverty model calculates a fuel poverty ratio for each dwelling.

The NIHCS is a survey based on a stratified random disproportionate sample of 3,000 dwellings. The published data are estimates for Northern Ireland housing stock based on this sample. The sample design process, and the weighting and grossing process are carefully designed to ensure that the results are accurate and representative of the total housing stock.

#### Data source

Northern Ireland House Condition Survey, Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

#### Web Link to Statistical Publication:

[The Housing Executive - House Condition Survey \(nihe.gov.uk\)](https://www.nihe.gov.uk/the-housing-executive-house-condition-survey)

#### Frequency of update:

Every 5 years

#### Accredited Official Statistics Status

Accredited Official Statistics

#### Quality Report:

[NIHCS BACKGROUND QUALITY REPORT \(nihe.gov.uk\)](https://www.nihe.gov.uk/nihcs-background-quality-report)

**Historical Data and date available from:**  
2011

**Time-series trend:**

In 2011, 41,000 (5.9%) households were in extreme fuel poverty. This number decreased to 13,400 (2%) in 2016.

Time-series trend data on severe fuel poverty is not available.

**Available data breakdowns**

No further data breakdowns available

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

In 2016 a random sample of 3,000 dwellings were selected.

**UK/RoI/International comparisons:**

England - [English Housing Survey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Scotland - [Scottish House Condition Survey - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

Wales - [Welsh Housing Conditions Survey | GOV.WALES](http://GOV.WALES)

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

Surveyors working on the 2016 NIHCS received training and support to help ensure their collection of energy related data were consistent and robust. A refresher training session in 2016 explained the principles, how the form should be completed as well as conducting practical exercises with feedback sessions. While these measures ensure a good level of consistency in judgements, some surveyor variability is to be expected.

The next NIHCS was scheduled to take place in 2021. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fieldwork was postponed to 2023. The quality assurance process for the 2023 survey is ongoing and publication dates will be announced when available.

## iv. Damp Free Homes

### Definition

Proportion of population able to keep home damp free

### Methodology

This indicator is sourced from the suite of Material Deprivation measures published within the Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report.

The Northern Ireland (NI) Poverty and Income Inequality report presents estimates of the proportion of people, children, working-age adults and pensioners in Northern Ireland living in poverty, and other statistics on household income and income inequality. The main source of data used in the report is the NI Family Resources Survey (FRS).

This indicator is based on the following question asked within the FRS and is the respondent's own interpretation:

- Is your home damp free?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

The Northern Ireland (NI) Family Resources Survey (FRS) collects detailed information on various household characteristics from approximately 2,000 households annually.

A systematic random sample of 4,080 addresses was selected for the 2023/24 NI FRS from the NISRA Address Register. Addresses are sorted by district council and ward, so the sample is effectively stratified geographically.

The fieldwork for the survey in NI is managed by DWP (on behalf of DfC) and is currently carried out by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Face-to-face interviewing is the preferred method of data collection; however, the option of a telephone interview is available as an alternative based on household preference and interviewer availability.

Households interviewed in the survey are asked a wide range of questions about their circumstances. The definition of a household used in the FRS is 'a single person or group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities, a living room, sitting room, or a dining area'.

A household will consist of one or more benefit units which is defined as 'a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children.' All adults aged 16 or over are interviewed (except 16–19-year-olds in full-time non-advanced education or training schemes, who are treated as dependent children).

### Data source

Family Resources Survey, Department for Communities

**Web Link to Statistical Publication:**

[Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report 2023-24 | Department for Communities](#)

**Frequency of update:**

Annual

**Accredited Official Statistics Status**

Accredited Official Statistics

**Quality Report:**

[Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report 2023-24 - Quality and Methodology Report](#)

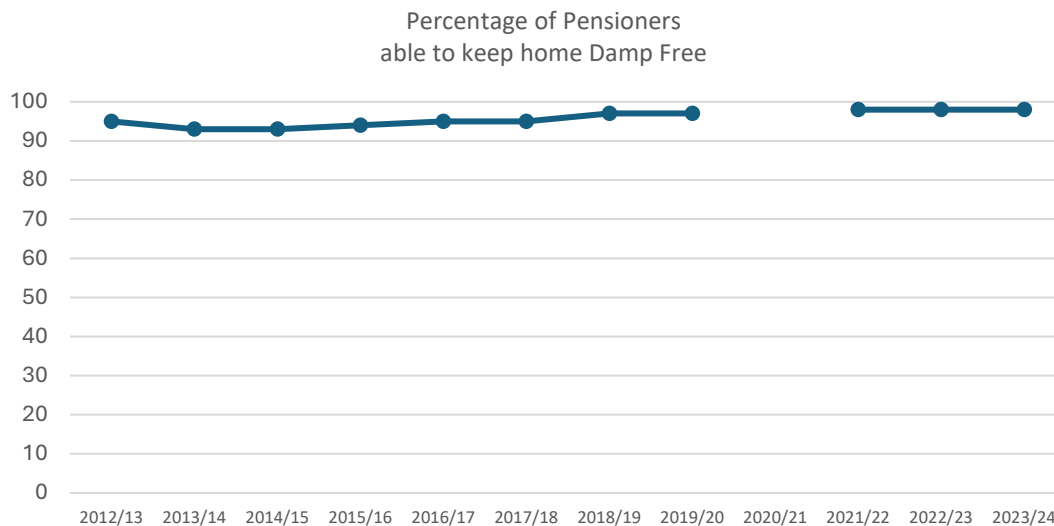
**Historical Data and date available from:**

2023/24

**Time-series trend:**

2023/24 - Percentage of overall population who reported their home was damp free was 92%

A time-series trend for the population as whole is not available as prior to 2023/24 this data was only collected for Pensioners. A time-series for Pensioners has been provided below.



Data not available for 2020/21 due to the COVID pandemic and reduced sample size in the FRS.

**Available data breakdowns**

This data is not currently published for the whole population but is provided by individual groups; Pensioner, Working Age and Children. However, going forward the Whole Population totals will be published within the Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report.

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

The FRS collects information on the incomes and circumstances of around 2,000 private households in NI. Information from approximately 1,800 households was collected in 2023/24.

**UK/Rol/International comparisons:**

UK Households Below Average Income (HBAI) report published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Rol poverty data is published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

EU-SILC (EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions).

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

N/A

## v. Keep house warm

### **Definition**

Proportion of population able to keep home adequately warm in cold weather

### **Methodology**

This indicator is sourced from the suite of Material Deprivation measures published within the Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report.

The Northern Ireland (NI) Poverty and Income Inequality report presents estimates of the proportion of people, children, working-age adults and pensioners in Northern Ireland living in poverty, and other statistics on household income and income inequality. The main source of data used in the report is the NI Family Resources Survey (FRS).

This indicator is based on the following question asked within the FRS and is the respondent's own interpretation:

- In cold weather, is your home kept adequately warm?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

The Northern Ireland (NI) Family Resources Survey (FRS) collects detailed information on various household characteristics from approximately 2,000 households annually.

A systematic random sample of 4,080 addresses was selected for the 2023/24 NI FRS from the NISRA Address Register. Addresses are sorted by district council and ward, so the sample is effectively stratified geographically.

The fieldwork for the survey in NI is managed by DWP (on behalf of DfC) and is currently carried out by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Face-to-face interviewing is the preferred method of data collection; however, the option of a telephone interview is available as an alternative based on household preference and interviewer availability.

Households interviewed in the survey are asked a wide range of questions about their circumstances. The definition of a household used in the FRS is 'a single person or group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities, a living room, sitting room, or a dining area.'

A household will consist of one or more benefit units which is defined as 'a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children.' All adults aged 16 or over are interviewed (except 16–19-year-olds in full-time non-advanced education or training schemes, who are treated as dependent children).

### **Data source**

Family Resources Survey, Department for Communities

**Web Link to Statistical Publication:**

[Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report 2023-24 | Department for Communities](#)

**Frequency of update:**

Annual

**Accredited Official Statistics Status**

Accredited Official Statistics

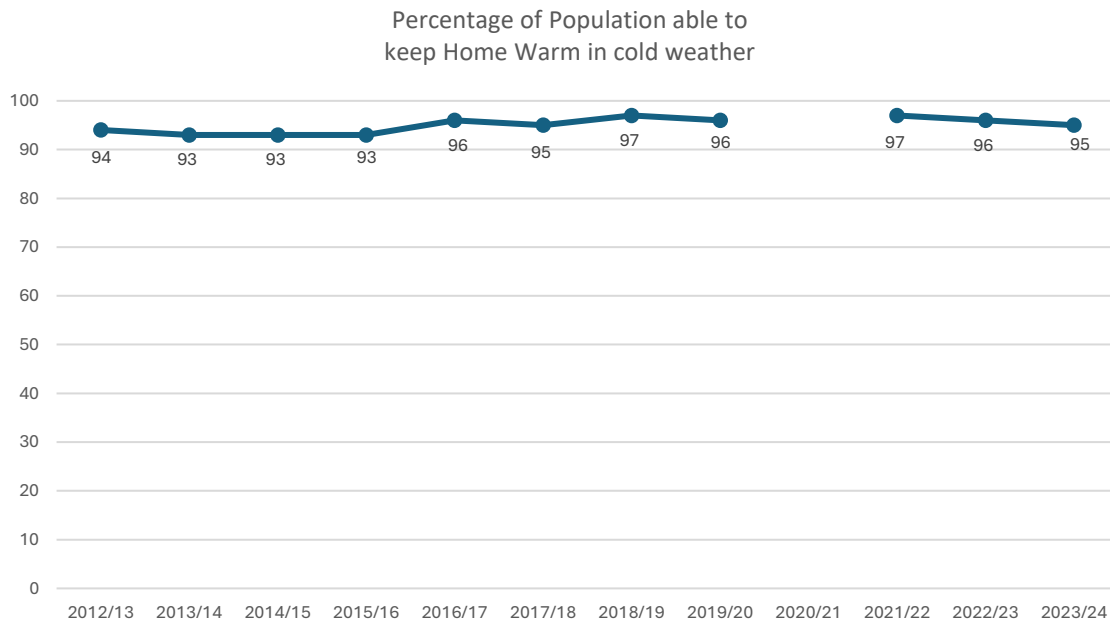
**Quality Report:**

[Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report 2023-24 - Quality and Methodology Report](#)

**Historical Data and date available from:**

2012-13

**Time-series trend:**



Data not available for 202/21 due to the COVID pandemic and reduced sample size in the FRS.

**Available data breakdowns**

This data is not currently published for the whole population but is provided by individual groups; Pensioner, Working Age and Children. However, going forward the Whole Population totals will be published within the Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report.

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

The FRS collects information on the incomes and circumstances of around 2,000 private households in NI. Information from approximately 1,800 households was collected in 2023/24.

**UK/Rol/International comparisons:**

UK Households Below Average Income (HBAI) report published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Rol poverty data is published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

EU-SILC (EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions).

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

Material deprivation estimates for 2023/24 are based on updated measures and therefore are not directly comparable to previous estimates. Users are advised not to make a direct comparison of changes in material deprivation estimates between 2022/23 and 2023/24. This update to material deprivation measures follows the inclusion of new questions in the FRS from April 2023 to March 2024.

## vi. Keep up to date with bills

### Definition

Proportion of population able to pay bills, including gas, electricity or oil, without cutting back on essentials

### Methodology

This indicator is sourced from the suite of Material Deprivation measures published within the Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report.

The Northern Ireland (NI) Poverty and Income Inequality report presents estimates of the proportion of people, children, working-age adults and pensioners in Northern Ireland living in poverty, and other statistics on household income and income inequality. The main source of data used in the report is the NI Family Resources Survey (FRS).

This indicator is based on the following question asked within the FRS and is the respondent's own interpretation:

- Without cutting back on essentials, are you able to pay regular bills like rent, mortgage, electricity or Rates?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

The Northern Ireland (NI) Family Resources Survey (FRS) collects detailed information on various household characteristics from approximately 2,000 households annually.

A systematic random sample of 4,080 addresses was selected for the 2023/24 NI FRS from the NISRA Address Register. Addresses are sorted by district council and ward, so the sample is effectively stratified geographically.

The fieldwork for the survey in NI is managed by DWP (on behalf of DfC) and is currently carried out by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Face-to-face interviewing is the preferred method of data collection; however, the option of a telephone interview is available as an alternative based on household preference and interviewer availability.

Households interviewed in the survey are asked a wide range of questions about their circumstances. The definition of a household used in the FRS is 'a single person or group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities, a living room, sitting room, or a dining area.'

A household will consist of one or more benefit units which is defined as 'a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children.' All adults aged 16 or over are interviewed (except 16–19-year-olds in full-time non-advanced education or training schemes, who are treated as dependent children).

## Data source

Family Resources Survey, Department for Communities

## Web Link to Statistical Publication:

[Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report 2023-24 | Department for Communities](#)

## Frequency of update:

Annual

## Accredited Official Statistics Status

Accredited Official Statistics

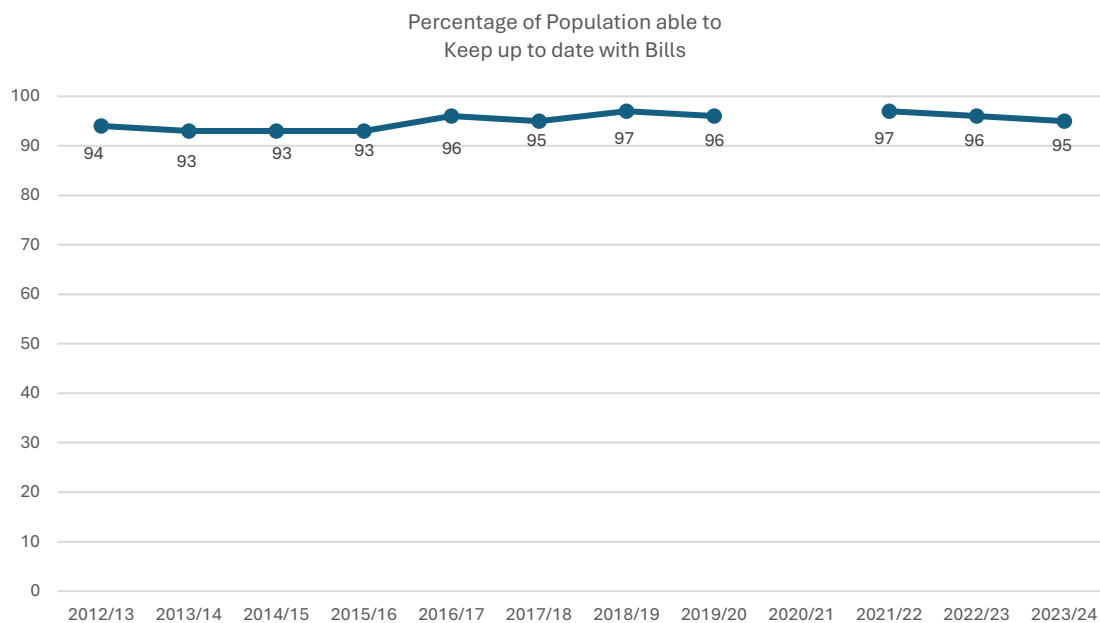
## Quality Report:

[Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report 2023-24 - Quality and Methodology Report](#)

## Historical Data and date available from:

2012/13

## Time-series trend:



Data not available for 202/21 due to the COVID pandemic and reduced sample size in the FRS.

## Available data breakdowns

This data is not currently published for the whole population but is provided by individual groups; Pensioner, Working Age and Children. However, going forward the Whole Population totals will be published within the Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality report.

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

The FRS collects information on the incomes and circumstances of around 2,000 private households in NI. Information from approximately 1,800 households was collected in 2023/24.

**UK/Rol/International comparisons:**

UK Households Below Average Income (HBAI) report published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Rol poverty data is published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

EU-SILC (EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions).

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

Material deprivation estimates for 2023/24 are based on updated measures and therefore are not directly comparable to previous estimates. Users are advised not to make a direct comparison of changes in material deprivation estimates between 2022/23 and 2023/24. This update to material deprivation measures follows the inclusion of new questions in the FRS from April 2023 to March 2024.

## vii. Household energy spend

### **Definition**

Northern Ireland average weekly household energy expenditure as a proportion of all average weekly household expenditure, transfers and savings.

Weekly household energy expenditure comprises direct household expenditure on electricity, gas, other fuels (including home heating oil) and petrol/diesel.

### **Methodology**

This indicator is also used to monitor progress of the Energy Strategy – The Path to Net Zero Energy.

Data are sourced from the Family Spending reports derived from the Living Costs and Food survey conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The Living Costs and Food survey (LCF) collects information on spending patterns and the cost of living that reflect household budgets. It is conducted throughout the year, across the whole of the UK, and is the most significant survey on household spending in the UK. The survey provides essential information for key social and economic measures, such as household spending patterns for the consumer prices index and for GDP figures. In the LCF survey, each individual aged 16 or over in the visited household is asked to keep a diary of daily expenditure for two weeks. Information about regular expenditure, such as rent and mortgage payments, is obtained during a household interview, along with retrospective information on certain large, infrequent expenditures such as those on vehicles. Detailed questions are asked about the income of each adult member of the household (aged 16 or over). Personal information such as age, sex and marital status is recorded for each household member. The LCF is a continuous survey with interviews spread evenly over the year to ensure that estimates are not biased by seasonal variation. LCF data for the UK as a whole is reported in the Family Spending reports for each separate financial year. For country and regional analyses within the UK, and given the smaller samples sizes at these levels, the data for analyses is comprised of three financial years. Therefore, the most recent annual estimate for 2024 includes the financial years ending 2022, 2023 and 2024.

In the calculation of this indicator, the total Weekly Household Expenditure includes in addition to the Total household Expenditure measure from the LCF; Life Assurance and contributions to pension funds, other insurance including friendly societies, purchase or alteration of dwellings/mortgages, and paying off loans to clear other debts.

Total Energy expenditure includes electricity, gas, other fuels and petrol, diesel and other motor oils.

### **Data source**

Living Costs and Food Survey, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

The Energy Strategy – The Path to Net Zero Energy Action Plan Report, Department for Economy

**Web Link to Statistical Publication:**

[Family spending in the UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

[Energy Strategy - Path to Net Zero Energy - 2024 Action Plan Report](#)

**Frequency of update:**

Annual

**Accredited Official Statistics Status**

Accredited Official Statistics

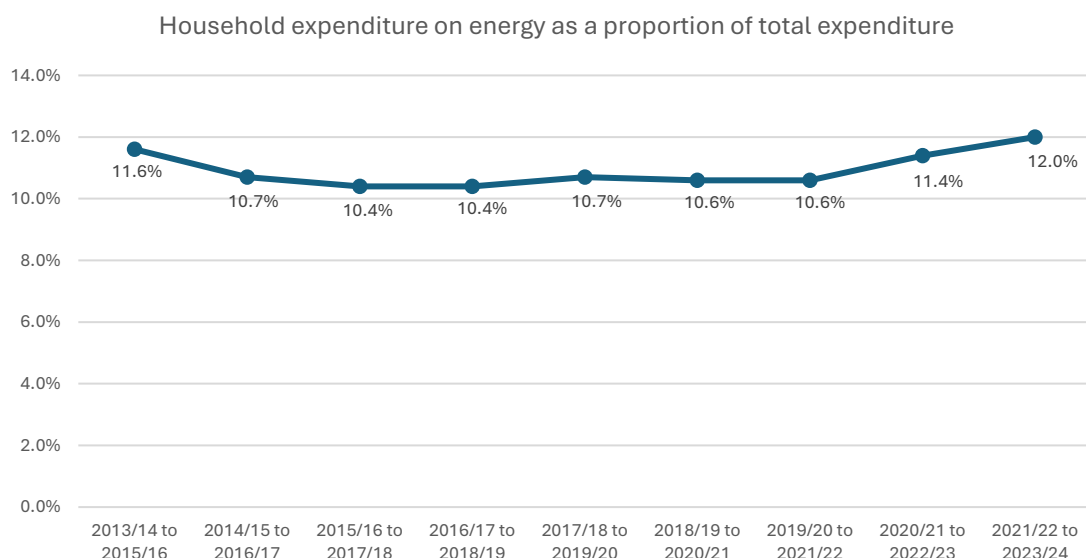
**Quality Report:**

[Living Costs and Food Survey QMI - Office for National Statistics](#)

**Historical Data and date available from:**

2001

**Time-series trend:**



**Available data breakdowns**

No further data breakdowns available

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

The LCF sample for Great Britain is drawn as a multi-stage stratified random sample with clustering using addresses on the Postcode Address File with 'small user' postcodes used as the sample frame for the LCF. A representative sample of the private household population is drawn, with Scottish offshore islands and the Isles of Scilly excluded from the sample. The LCF employs a two-stage sample design. Postcode sectors are used as the Primary Sampling Units (PSUs), with 18 addresses selected from each PSU to form the monthly interviewer quota. The GB initial sample of 11,484 households is made up of 638 quotas. Quotas are assigned (53 or 54 each month) to ensure a nationally representative sample for each quarter of the year. The Central Survey Unit (CSU) of the Northern Ireland Statistics and

Research Agency (NISRA) carries out sampling and fieldwork in Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland, the annual sample of addresses is drawn from the NISRA Address Register (NAR). The NAR is developed within NISRA and is primarily based on the Land & Property Services (LPS) POINTER database. NISRA (CSU) select a systematic random sample of 1,000 addresses each year from the NISRA Address Register (NAR) to be representative of the private household population in Northern Ireland. The sample is stratified geographically by District Council to ensure the number of addresses drawn from each region is proportional to the number of addresses in the region.

**UK/RoI/International comparisons:**

Outputs are produced for the UK as a whole and separately for the four constituent countries and nine sub-regions within England.

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

This is a new metric and as such represents data in development with the potential for change, refinement and revision.

## viii. Excess Winter Mortality

### Definition

Winter Mortality

### Methodology

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) produce estimates on Winter Mortality (WM) using deaths which are registered with the General Register Office (GRO). The number of deaths can vary depending on the season and in particular tend to increase in the winter. Winter Mortality defines the winter period as December to March and compares the number of deaths that occurred in this winter period with the average number of non-winter deaths occurring in the preceding August to November and the following April to July.

$$\text{Winter Mortality} = \text{Deaths Occurring Dec to Mar} - \left( \frac{\text{Deaths Occurring Aug to Nov} + \text{Deaths Occurring Apr to Jul}}{2} \right)$$

Winter Mortality statistics are based on provisional deaths that occurred within a 12-month period. Due to the nature of estimates based on death occurrences, for which late registrations of deaths may occur, NISRA do not 'close' the database. Each year NISRA produce an annual file showing the number of deaths occurring in the previous year and includes all deaths registered up to and including 31st August. This allows time for some late registrations (e.g. deaths that have been referred to the Coroner) to appear in the data. Using provisional data allows NISRA more timely data rather than over a year after the time period in question, which was the position with the previous registration-based series. The drawback to this approach is that deaths which have a delay in registration (e.g. deaths referred to the Coroner) may not appear in this data. Revisions are made to previous years in this series to account for delayed registrations. Similar arrangements pertain across the rest of the UK reflecting user needs in the respective territories. Provisional WM figures for the most recent winter and final figures for the previous winter are published annually.

Statistics which are produced from vital events registered in Northern Ireland are of a high quality and should have complete population coverage as it is a legal requirement to register any of these events that occur in Northern Ireland.

### Data source

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

### Web Link to Statistical Publication:

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/cause-death/winter-mortality>

### Frequency of update:

Annual

**Accredited Official Statistics Status**  
Accredited Official Statistics

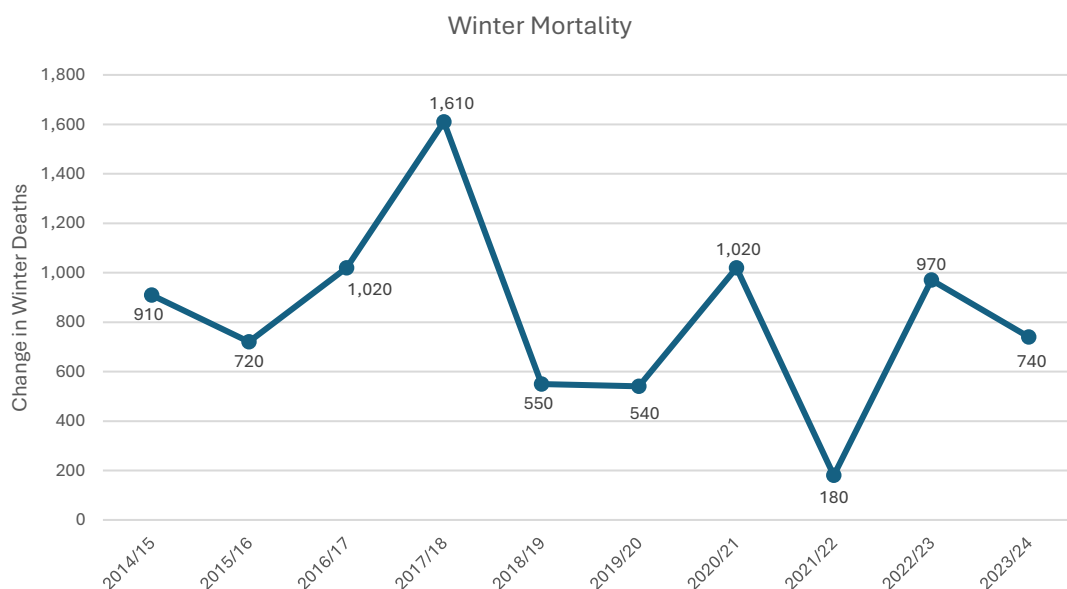
**Quality Report:**

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/quality-and-methodology>

**Historical Data and date available from:**

1980/81 – New methodology introduced from 2017/18

**Time-series trend:**



**Available data breakdowns**

The accompanying data tables to the Winter Mortality report provide further breakdowns by age group, sex, cause of death, Health and Social Care Trust and Local Government District.

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

N/A

**UK/RoI/International comparisons:**

The method used by NISRA to calculate Winter Mortality is consistent with that of the World Health Organisation. This is the standard method used by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to calculate [Excess Winter Mortality in England and Wales](#) (updates to this report are on hold pending a review of methodology), and by National Records of Scotland (NRS) to calculate [Increased Winter Mortality](#).

While ONS WM figures for England and Wales are produced using the same method in other jurisdictions, ONS adjust provisional figures for the most recent winter using a special calculated factor. NRS and NISRA do not apply this factor. Winter Mortality figures from Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales are therefore broadly comparable.

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

It should be noted that this definition does have a practical issue in that, if mortality starts to increase outside the winter period, for example if mortality rises in November due to an influenza outbreak, then the number of deaths in the non-winter period will increase, which in turn will decrease the winter mortality. These estimates should not therefore be interpreted as the number of people who died directly as a result of colder weather occurring during December to March. The situation is more complex than that – there are other seasonal issues such as influenza, air quality and lack of sunlight which impact health/mortality.

Up to 2016/17, Winter Mortality Statistics were based on the date the death was registered. From 2017/18, the methodology was updated so Winter Mortality was based on the date the death occurred. This aligned the statistics to Winter Mortality figures from other regions within the UK.

There have been unusually high numbers of additional deaths in some years, including 1,610 for 2017/18, which was the largest number of additional winter deaths since 1999/2000, both coinciding with influenza outbreaks.

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted WM estimates for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 due to the unexpectedly high number of deaths in the non-winter months of 2020 and 2021 as well as increased Covid-19 related deaths in winter 2020/21. This makes direct annual comparisons with subsequent years difficult, which have had minimal impact from Covid-19 related deaths.

## ix. Low-income, low efficiency (TBC)

### **Definition**

Low-income households in energy inefficient homes (TBC)

### **Methodology**

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive's statutory responsibility in relation to housing research is set out in the Housing (NI) Order 1981. Article 6 states that the Housing Executive "shall regularly examine housing conditions and need".

This legislation provides the statutory basis for the Housing Executive to undertake House Condition Surveys. Surveys are carried out approximately every 5 years and the information collected gives a full picture of the condition and energy efficiency of housing in Northern Ireland. Addresses are chosen at random from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Address Register (NAR). All tenures and types of housing are included, for example, owner occupied and rented housing, vacant dwellings, houses in multiple occupation, apartments, urban and rural properties.

The Housing Executive is also Northern Ireland's Home Energy Conservation Authority. In this role its primary objective is to improve the energy efficiency of the entire housing stock. The Northern Ireland House Condition Survey is the primary data source for assessing progress towards improved energy efficiency.

The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the Government's standard method of rating the energy efficiency of a dwelling. The Building Research Establishment (BRE) has developed the current and previous models on behalf of Government. The SAP takes into account a range of factors that contribute to energy efficiency such as materials used for construction, the efficiency and control of heating systems and fuel used for space and water heating. The SAP rating itself is on a logarithmic scale and provides a comparative measure of the energy efficiency of dwellings. The lower the score, the lower the energy efficiency and the higher the score (up to a maximum of 100), the higher the efficiency.

The House Condition Survey is made up of two parts: a physical survey of the exterior and interior of the dwelling, and a social survey to capture the demographics of the household. The information gathered in the physical section allows measurement of repair costs, the Fitness Standard, The Decent Homes Standard, Fuel Poverty, SAP and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Information from the social survey is cross-referenced with elements from the physical survey. This analysis is used to assess the housing needs of particular groups such as the elderly, families with young children, single person and low-income households. It also provides an indication of the types of households living in dwellings which are in the poorest condition, those that fail the Decent Homes Standard or the HHSRS, or those designated as fuel poor.

### **Data source**

Northern Ireland House Condition Survey

**Web Link to Statistical Publication:**

Not yet published

**Frequency of update:**

Every 5 years

**Accredited Official Statistics Status**

Accredited Official Statistics

**Quality Report:**

Not yet published

**Historical Data and date available from:**

Not yet published

**Time-series trend:**

Not yet published

**Available data breakdowns**

TBC

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

TBC once published

**UK/RoI/International comparisons:****Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

This is a new metric and as such represents data in development with the potential for change, refinement and revision.

## x. Energy Confidence (TBC)

### Definition

People know where to go for information and advice on how to make homes easier to heat (TBC)

### Methodology

It is proposed that this indicator will be measured by including two questions on the Continuous Household Survey (CHS).

The two questions that will be added to the 2026/27 CHS will be:

- How aware are you of practical ways to improve your home's energy efficiency and sustainability?
  - a. Extremely aware
  - b. Very aware
  - c. Moderately aware
  - d. Slightly aware
  - e. Not at all aware
  
- How confident are you that you can access good advice on improving your home's energy efficiency?
  - a. Extremely confident
  - b. Very confident
  - c. Moderately confident
  - d. Slightly confident
  - e. Not all confident

The CHS is designed to provide a regular source of information on a wide range of issues relevant to Northern Ireland. It has been running since 1983, with recent results covering housing characteristics, changing population, tourism, participation in sports, arts and culture and attitudes towards the environment.

The sample for the CHS consists of a systematic random sample of addresses selected from the NISRA Address Register (NAR). The NAR is developed within NISRA and is primarily based on the Land and Property Services (LPS) Pointer database.

Data is collected by personal interview using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), and the interviews are spread equally over the 12 months from April to March.

NISRA suspended all face-to-face household interviews in the middle of March 2020 due to the Coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic. The Continuous Household Survey returned to face-to-face household interviews in July 2022 but continues to interview by telephone in some cases.

**Data source**

Continuous Household Survey, NISRA and DfC

**Web Link to Statistical Publication:**

Not yet published

**Frequency of update:**

Annual

**Accredited Official Statistics Status**

Official Statistics

**Quality Report:**

Not yet published

**Historical Data and date available from:**

TBC

**Time-series trend:**

Not yet published

**Available data breakdowns**

TBC

**Sample size (if applicable) and confidence interval considerations:**

TBC once published

**UK/Rol/International comparisons:**

N/A

**Issues in relation to this data, e.g. data limitations, future data availability, changes to methodology**

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