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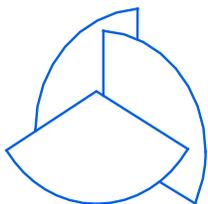
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## **Poverty and Social Exclusion Project**

**Social Exclusion in Northern Ireland  
Fiona Scullion and Paddy Hillyard**

**Bulletin No 4 April 2005**



*Northern Ireland*  
**Statistics &  
Research**  
Agency

## Introduction

This bulletin examines social exclusion of individuals in Northern Ireland. It is based on the analysis of the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey which was carried out in 2002/2003<sup>1</sup>.

The following indicators of social exclusion are examined:

- Labour Market Exclusion
- Civic Engagement
- Social Support
- Social Relations
- Service Exclusion

Each of these indicators are analysed by a number of different themes, these include age, gender, household type, housing tenure, consensual measure of poverty, income and Noble Multiple Deprivation Measure. Only the more important relationships are described.

Poverty forms another dimension of social exclusion. However as all the bulletins include information on poverty for specific groups it is not considered separately in this bulletin.

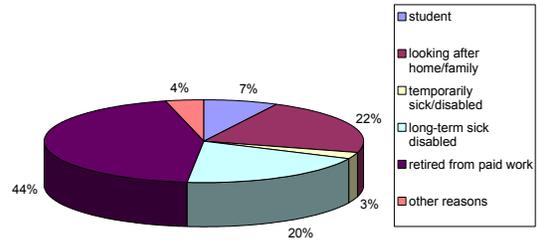
### Labour Market Exclusion

Exclusion from the labour market is an important issue for society. People out of work have low levels of financial resources. In this analysis economic inactivity of individuals is used to measure labour market exclusion.

Some 60 per cent of individuals are economically active and the remaining 40 per cent are economically inactive. Of the

economically active, 53 per cent of these are in employment and the remaining 7 per cent are unemployed. The main reasons why people are economically inactive is due to looking after the home/family, retirement and being long-term sick/disabled (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Economically Inactive Individuals**



### Demographics

There are significantly more females than males - 47 per cent and 32 per cent respectively - excluded from the labour market because of economic inactivity. The main reasons for males being economically inactive are retirement (52%) and being long-term sick/disabled (27%). For females the main reasons are retirement (40%) and looking after the home/family (32%)

Age is related to economic inactivity. Older people are more likely to be economically inactive. The rates of economic inactivity for those aged 65-74 and 75 plus are 92 and 97 per cent respectively.

This is also reflected in the composition of the economically inactive where individuals aged 65 and over make up 39 per cent of those who are excluded from the labour market.

Labour market exclusion varies with different household types. Due to circumstances of age and retirement individuals living in pensioner households have the highest rate of economic inactivity (93%). Some 51 per cent of lone parents are

<sup>1</sup> The PSENI was designed and directed by Professor P Hillyard, Professor E. McLaughlin and Mr M. Tomlinson, Queen's University Belfast. The project originated and was funded by OFMDFM and HM Treasury.

economically inactive, over a third (36%) of persons living in couple households 28 per cent of those in childless households and a quarter of those in family households.

Individuals living in social housing are most likely to be excluded from the labour market: 71 % of tenants in Northern Ireland Housing Executive dwellings are excluded and 73% in housing association dwellings.

The main reasons for their inactivity are: looking after the home/family, being long-term sick disabled and retired. Some 58 per cent persons in homes owned outright, 45 per cent of private renters and 18 per cent of persons living in homes owned with a mortgage are economically inactive.

#### *Poverty*

Poverty is measured using the consensual measure (households lacking three or more necessities). The nature and extent of poverty can be described using this measure in two ways. First, it is possible to explore the risk of poverty: what groups are most likely to be poor? Secondly we can look at the composition of those who are poor.

Poverty is strongly related to individuals who are excluded from the labour market. The risk of poverty for the economically inactive is 38 per cent in contrast to 19 per cent of the economically active. Of those who are economically inactive over half (58%) are living in poverty in contrast to 42 per cent of the economically active.

#### *Noble Index*

The Noble Index is a spatial measure of deprivation for Northern Ireland. It is made up of seven domains, income, employment, health & disability, education, skills and training, access to services and housing stress. These domains are incorporated into an overall measure of deprivation. Wards are ranked according to their level of deprivation and then grouped into five bands from most deprived to the least deprived.

Each household in the PSENI study was allocated into one of the five bands. Each individual in the household was given the same band.

The distribution of all individuals across the five bands is evenly distributed. The dispersion of those excluded from labour market is quite uneven. Some 44 per cent are living in the most deprived and next most deprived band however a similar proportion (40%) are living in the more affluent areas (bottom two bands).

#### *Rural/Urban Differences*

There are slightly more individuals living in an urban area excluded from the labour market (42%) than those living in a rural area (38%). The main reasons for the inactivity of people living in an urban area are: retirement (45%) looking after the home/ family (21%) and being long term sick/disabled (20%). This pattern of results is similar for the inactivity of individuals living in a rural area.

This analysis suggests that those persons who are excluded from the labour market are more than likely to be female, in the older age groups, lone parents and live in social housing. Not surprisingly the results indicate that being excluded from the labour market will have a financial burden on a person's life and increase the risk of poverty.

#### **Civic Engagement**

##### *Membership of Groups*

A sub sample of respondents was asked about membership of various organisations and groups. These included political parties, social/community/religious organisations and women's groups.

**Table 1. Current Active Membership of Organisations**

Membership	% active member
Religious group/church	17
Sports club	14
Trade Union	6
Voluntary Service Group	6
Any other group/organisation	6
Parents/School Association	4
Women's group/organisation	4
Social/working men's club	3
Other community or civic group	3
Environmental Group	2
Other Pressure Group	1
Women's Institute/townswomen guild	1
Political Party	1

Table 1. shows that the highest proportion of people are members of either a religious group/church or a sports club. Only one per cent of respondents are an active member of a political party or other pressure group. In a similar study in Great Britain membership of sports clubs (18%) was higher than membership of a religious group/church organisation (12%).<sup>2</sup>

The number of organisations to which individuals belonged to varied. The sample was divided into three groups those with 2 or more memberships (16%), those with one membership (57%) and those with no memberships (28%). These figures differ from findings in Britain<sup>2</sup>. Some 25 per cent have 2 or more memberships, 31 per cent have one membership and 44 per cent have no memberships.

#### *Civic Engagement in Activities*

A sub-sample of respondents was asked if they had presently or in the last three years,

<sup>2</sup> Bradshaw, J. and Williams, J. (2000) *Active Citizenship, Social Exclusion and Social Norms. Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain. Working Paper No.17*

engaged in a range of civic activities from voting to standing in public office (Table 2.). Over half (58%) had voted in the last local election and 55 per cent in the last general election. A fifth of all respondents have taken part in fundraising activities. Some 27 per cent have undertaken none of these activities.

**Table 2. Civic Activities undertaken in the last three years**

Activity	% undertaking activity in the last 3 years
Voted in the last local election	58
Voted in the last general election	55
Helped in fund raising drives	21
Made a speech in front of an organised group	16
Been in office/club/organisation	13
Urged someone to get in touch with counsellor or MP	10
Presented views to local counsellor/MP	10
Urged someone outside family to vote	9
Written letter to editor	4
Taken part in political campaign	2
Stood for public office	0.2
None of these	27

Activity rates were each calculated for individuals in the sample based on their involvement with the activities listed in Table 2. Individuals were divided into three groups:

- Inactive – those who had not undertaken any of the listed activities
- Fairly Active – those who had undertaken 3 or less of the activities.

- Very Active – those who had undertaken four or more of the activities.

Some 17 per cent of individuals are very active, 55 per cent are fairly active and the remaining 28 per cent are inactive. This is very different to the pattern of findings in Great Britain<sup>2</sup> where some 48 per cent of respondents were very active, 39 per cent are fairly active and 18 per cent are inactive.

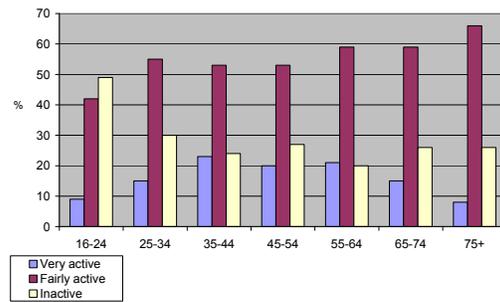
### Demographics

Some 55 per cent of males and the same proportion of females are fairly active in civic activities. Men are more likely to be fairly active or very active than women.

However the distribution of men and women who are inactive is somewhat different with 61 per cent being women and 39 per cent being men. This suggests that women may not place as much importance or have as much time for the undertaking of such activities.

Engagement in civic activities becomes more important to people as they get older (Figure 2.). Almost half of young adults (16-24) are inactive in contrast to 24 per cent of those aged 35-44 and 26 per cent of those aged 75 and over. Individuals aged 35-44 and 45-54 are most likely to be very active in civic engagement while those in the older age groups are most likely to be fairly active.

**Figure 2. Age and Civic Activities**



Individuals living in a household with no children, a couple household or family household are most likely to be very active (Figure 3). Lone parent households have the highest rate of inactivity (47%) and this is almost twice that of all persons in all households (28%)

**Figure 3. Household Type and Civic Engagement**

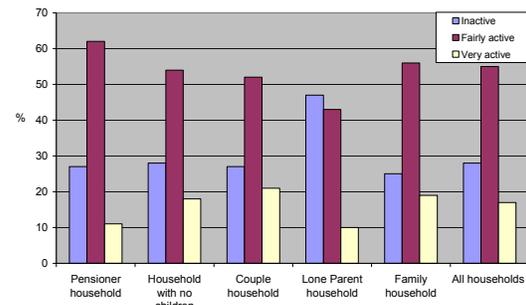
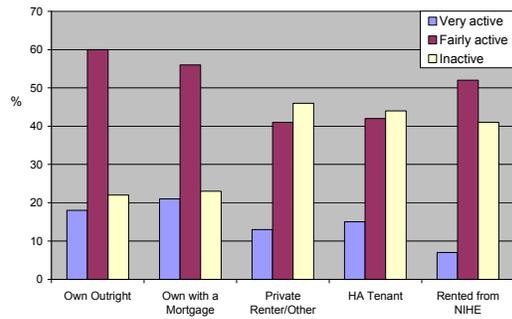


Figure 4 shows that those individuals living in houses privately rented, rented from a Housing Association or the Northern Ireland Housing Executive are most likely to be inactive in civic activities. In contrast it is those living in homes owned outright or with a mortgage who are most likely to be fairly active and very active.

**Figure 4. Tenure and Civic Engagement**



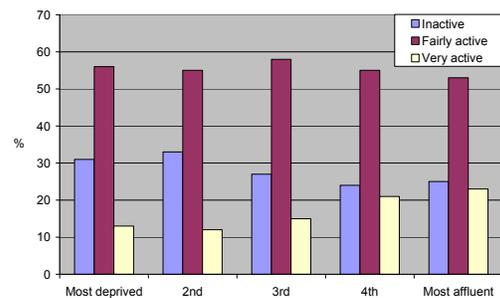
*Poverty*

There are significant differences between the poor and not poor in their activity rates. Individuals who are in poverty are more likely to be inactive (34%) or fairly active (58%) in civic activities than individuals not in poverty (26% and 53% respectively).

*Noble Index*

Individuals living in the most deprived wards and second band of most deprived wards are most likely to be inactive in civic engagement while those living in the most affluent areas are most likely to be very active (Figure 5).

**Figure 5. Level of Deprivation and Activity Rates**



*Rural/Urban Differences*

Persons living in an urban area are more likely to be inactive in civic engagement than those living in a rural area – 30 per cent and 26 per cent respectively.

*Participation*

An overall participation rate was calculated based on the total number of activities and memberships of organisations and groups. Individuals were divided into three groups

Non participation – no involvement in activities and/or memberships.

Moderate participation – involvement in 1-3 activities and/or held 1-3 memberships.

Extensive participation – involvement in four or more activities and/or held 4 or more memberships.

Some 23 per cent of respondents have no participation, 60 per cent have moderate participation and 17 per cent have extensive participation in activities and/or members of clubs/groups. This pattern is quite different than findings in Britain<sup>2</sup> where 12 per cent of respondents have no participation, 48 per cent have moderate participation and 40 per cent have extensive participation.

**Social Support**

The level of social support available in times of need is an indicator of social exclusion. A sub-sample of respondents was asked how much support they would receive in certain situations. These items were divided into two categories:

- (i) Practical support – items included help when ill, help with heavy household/gardening jobs, help with caring responsibilities and someone to look after home/possessions when away.
- (ii) Emotional support – items included needing advice about life change, someone to talk to if depressed and someone to talk to about problems with a spouse/partner.

Three levels of support were calculated according to responses to items in each of

the categories: good, reasonable and poor support.

**Figure 6. Level of Social Support**

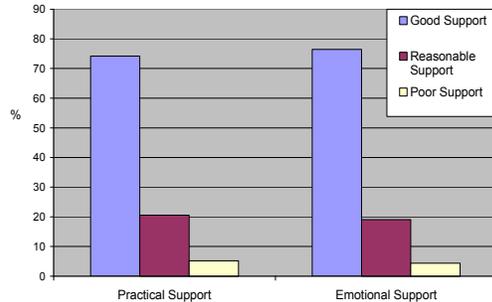


Figure 6 shows the majority of all individuals have good levels of both practical and emotional support. There are no marked differences between males and females with 73 per cent of males and a similar amount – 75 per cent – of females with a good level of practical support. However for levels of emotional support a different picture emerges. More females (81%) than males (70%) had good levels of emotional support.

Household type is significantly related to both categories of social support. More lone Parents (75%), persons in couple households (76%) and individuals living in family households (83%) have a good level of practical support than those living in pensioner households (70%) and childless households (68%). A similar pattern is indicated for household type and levels of emotional support.

**Figure 7. Tenure of Home and Level of Practical and Emotional Support.**

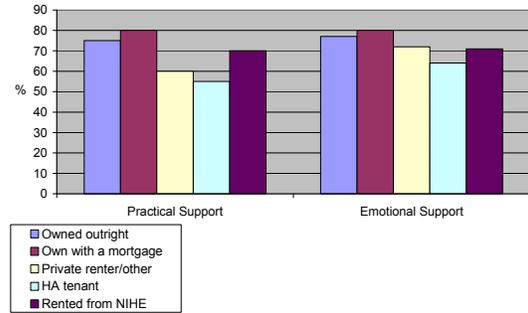


Figure 7 shows that private renters and social renters are least likely to have good levels of practical support in contrast to those who live in homes owned with a mortgage or outright. A similar pattern is indicated for emotional support.

The consensual measure of poverty is significantly related to both categories of social support. Individuals living in poverty are less likely to have a good level of practical support (66%) or emotional support (69%) in contrast to those who are not poor – 77 and 79 per cent respectively.

#### *Noble Index*

The Noble Multiple Deprivation Measure relates to levels of practical and emotional support. Individuals living in the most deprived wards were least likely to have a good level of emotional (69%) or practical support (68%) compared with those living in the less deprived bands. For instance some 73 per cent of those living in the most affluent wards have a good level of practical support and 78 per cent have a good level of emotional support.

#### *Rural/Urban Differences*

The type of area a person resides in relates to both categories of social support. Those living in a rural area are more likely to have a good level of practical support than those who live in an urban area – 78 per cent and 72 per cent respectively. A similar pattern is shown for levels of emotional support.

## Social Relations

The relations an individual has with other individuals in their life such as family and friends are an important factor in social exclusion. A sub sample of respondents was asked the frequency with which they spoke to or saw family, friends and neighbours. These responses were divided into three categories: daily, weekly and less than weekly.

**Table 3. Frequency of Contact with Friends, Family and Neighbours.**

	Daily %	Weekly %	Less than weekly %
Speak to relative on the phone	41	49	10
See relative	27	56	18
Speak to friend on the phone	24	60	16
See friends	22	57	21
Speak to neighbours	30	52	18

The majority of individuals have regular contact with their friends, family and neighbours on a daily or weekly basis (Table 3.). Similar findings are indicated in the PSE in Great Britain, some 91 per cent have daily or weekly contact with family and 93 per cent with friends.

### *Demographics*

Women are more likely to keep up social relations with their relatives than men. Some 93 per cent of women speak to their relatives on a daily and weekly basis in contrast to 85 per cent of men. A similar pattern exists for seeing relatives – 86 per cent of women compared with 78 per cent of men.

Age and social relations reveal that young adults (those aged 16-24) view their friends as an important part of their social network. Some 96 per cent see their friends and 94 per cent speak to their friends on a daily and weekly basis. However as people get older seeing friends or speaking to friends on the phone becomes less important. For instance some 28 per cent of individuals aged 55-64 see their friends less than weekly and 21 per cent speak to their friends less than weekly. This pattern remains very similar for the older age groups.

Findings indicate that for the older age groups relations with family is of more importance. For example 91 per cent of these aged 55-64 will speak to their relatives on a daily or weekly basis. This pattern remains similar for the older age groups of 65-74 and 75 and over.

There are significant differences between household types and their patterns of social relations. Lone parent households are most likely to be in daily contact via the phone with relatives (59%) than the other types of households. For example individuals in childless households (33%) and couple households (39%). This pattern is similar for those who see relatives on a daily basis.

Pensioners and lone parents are more likely to be in contact with their neighbours than individuals in other types of households. Some 87 per cent of lone parents and the same proportion of individuals in pensioner households speak to their neighbour on either a daily or weekly basis in contrast to 78 per cent of those in households with no children, 81 per cent in couple households and the same proportion in family households.

### **Service Exclusion**

This section will examine exclusion from both private and public services in relation to constraints and inadequacies that may be an obstacle to an individual using them. A sub-sample of household respondents was

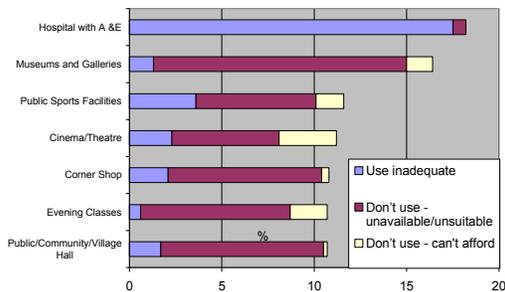
asked if they used a range of services. If they answered 'yes' they were then asked whether they believed them to be adequate or inadequate. If they answered 'no' they were asked the reason why not. Aspects of social exclusion were analysed for public and private services:

- (i) Collective exclusion - where services were unavailable or unsuitable to everyone in a certain area.
- (ii) Individual exclusion - where services exist but individuals cannot use them because of lack of money.
- (iii) Inadequate – where services exist and the individuals use them but find them inadequate.

In Figure 8 public and private services were included where at least ten per cent of the sample indicated exclusion or inadequacy.

Lack of availability and perceived inadequacy are the main barriers to the use of public and private services indicated in Figure 8. For instance some 17 per cent perceive the public service of the Hospital with A&E as inadequate. For the remaining services it is lack of availability which is the main reason for exclusion.

**Figure 8. Exclusion or Inadequacies for Public and Private Services**



*Usage rates of public and private services*

A usage rate of services was constructed. It was defined as the proportion of individuals using a particular service (irrespective of

whether it was adequate/inadequate) divided by total number of individuals.

Figure 9 indicates the most commonly used public services are those related to the medical services and the post office. Less than half of all individuals use the library, public transport or museum/galleries.

**Figure 9. Usage of Public Services**

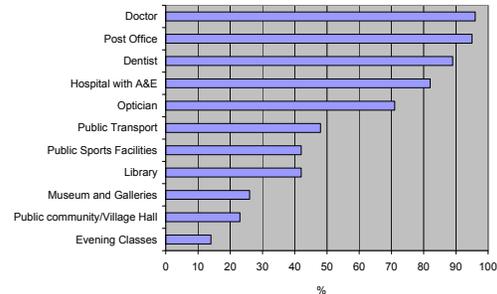
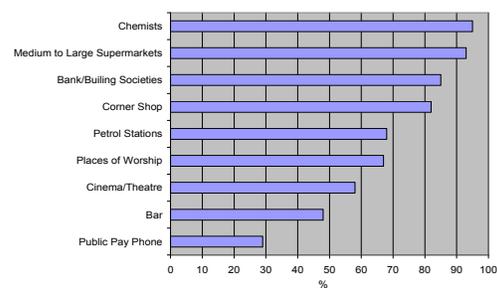


Figure 10 shows the usage of private services. Services related to food and amenities are most commonly used by the majority of individuals. An interesting finding is that religion is still an important part of people's lives with more persons using places of worship than services related to their social life such as a bar or cinema.

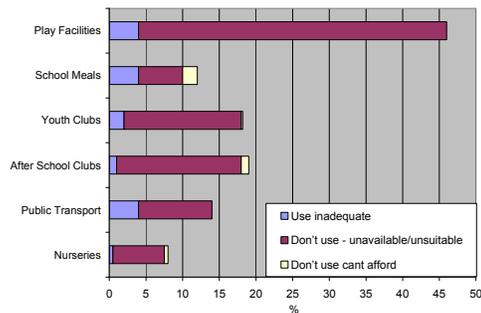
**Figure 10. Usage of Private Services**



*Services for Children*

Those who lived in households with one or more children were asked questions on use of services particular to children. These included questions on nurseries, public transport to school, after school clubs and safe play facilities nearby (Figure 11).

**Figure 11. Exclusion or Inadequacies for Services for Children**



Individuals with children indicate that the main obstacle for use of services for children is that they are unsuitable or unavailable. This is most apparent for nearby children’s play facilities where 42 per cent do not use this service due to it being unavailable or unsuitable.

The usage rates of each of the services for children were calculated. The most commonly used service for children is school meals (56%). Approximately a third of persons in households with children use the remaining services for children.

## REFERENCES

1. Hillyard, P., Kelly, G., McLaughlin, E., Patsios, D. and Tomlinson, M. (2003) *Bare Necessities Poverty and Social Exclusion in Northern Ireland – key findings*, Belfast: Democratic Dialogue Report No. 16
2. Bradshaw, J. and Williams, J. (2000) *Active Citizenship, Social Exclusion and Social Norms*. Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain. Working Paper No.17

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about the bulletin can be obtained by writing to:

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