

FOI DOF/2026-0107

**Request**

Please provide the following information, in table(s) format broken down for each Department and its ALBs, to cover the period 2020 to present.

- The number of applications received to move to an Alternative Working Pattern broke down first by category (reduced hours, job-sharing, term-time working, compressed hours, and job reshaping) and then further broken down by gender.
- The outcomes of the above applications (approved, rejected, pending) broke down first by category (reduced hours, job-sharing, term-time working, compressed hours, and job reshaping) and then further broken down by gender.
- The breakdown of successful applications first by category (reduced hours, job-sharing, term-time working, compressed hours, and job reshaping) and then further broken down by gender.
- The breakdown of refused applications first by category (reduced hours, job-sharing, term-time working, compressed hours, and job reshaping) and then further broken down by gender.
- The number of appeals received against a refused application broke down first by category (reduced hours, job-sharing, term-time working, compressed hours, and job reshaping) and then further broken down by gender.
- The number of people who have left the NICS and the reason for their exit, broke down by gender.
- The number of people who have been approved for Alternative Working Patterns but have yet to be placed in a suitable post, broken down first by Department and then by grade (AA through to G6), and then by gender. Provide an FTE total for each grade level (AA through to G6).
- The number of vacancies across the NICS broke down by Department and then by grade (AA-G6), and then by Standard Working Pattern and then by Alternative Working Pattern (AWP). Provide an FTE total for the AWP.
- The number of people currently working an Alternative Working Pattern broke down first by category (reduced hours, job-sharing, term-time working, compressed hours, and job reshaping) and then further broken down by gender.
- Following a period of maternity leave, the number of women who have submitted an application to move to an Alternative Working Pattern, broke

down first by category (reduced hours, job-sharing, term-time working, compressed hours, and job reshaping), and then by outcome (approved, rejected, pending).

### **Clarification Request**

Questions 1-5, 6-7, 9

Details of the Alternative Working Pattern (AWP) and Flexible working policy within the NICS is detailed within the Northern Ireland Civil Service Handbook section 3.10 [HR policy 3.10 Alternative Working Patterns v5.1 \(2\).pdf](#). There are various types of AWP for staff with arrangements covering staff who work full time hours (37 hours per week) and those who work Reduced hours (also known as part time). Reduced Hours refers to any arrangement where staff are contracted to work fewer than the full time conditioned (37) hours per week, or fewer than 52 weeks a year.

Can you confirm from the list below if you would like information on ALL types of AWP arrangements or just those where staff are reducing their working hours.

#### **Types of AWP arrangements for staff**

- Reduced Hours (part time working arrangement only)
- Job Share (part time working arrangement only)
- Term Time Working (part time working arrangement only)
- Job Reshaping [Partial Retirement] (part time working arrangement only)
- Personalised Hours (an arrangement whereby a member of staff comes to an agreement with your line manager regarding the number of hours and pattern he/she is to work on a temporary basis – this can be a part time or full time working arrangement)
- Compressed Hours (allows staff to compress their working week into fewer than the traditional five days without reducing the number of hours worked)
- For completeness, the NICS allows for Flexible working Time and Hybrid working however this will not be covered in the response as this has not been specifically requested.

### **Clarification Request**

Question 8

In respect of vacancies, a vacancy may be declared as full time or part time. Part time vacancies may be for a range of different Full Time Equivalents. Full Time Equivalent figures are calculated by expressing each part-time vacancy as a proportion of a full-time vacancy. Thus, for example, a vacancy required for 18.5 hours per week counts as 0.5, since a full-time vacancy is considered to be 37 hours per week.

In relation to full time vacancies, most offices operate a flexi-time system between 8am and 6pm (Standard Working Pattern (SWP)). Alternative Working Pattern means a full time vacancy which involves working shifts between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday, and in certain business areas, 9am to 5pm on one Saturday in

every four. (the Full Time Equivalent for an Alternative Working Pattern vacancy is 1.0)

Taking account of this explanation, can the requestor please advise if they wish to receive information:

- about full time and part time vacancies; OR
- about Standard Working Pattern and Alternative Working Pattern vacancies as defined above

### **Guidance on Information Held/ Not Held**

We would like to take this opportunity to provide some clarity on the information we hold regarding Alternative Working Pattern (AWP) arrangements. While the Department of Finance retains records of arrangements that have been approved and subsequently updated in the HR & Payroll System, we are unable to report on applications that are still at the application stage or those that were not approved, as these situations do not result in a change to the HR & Payroll System and therefore are not captured in our data.

Additionally, it is important to note that our current data does not specifically identify staff who have applied for or are working under a Job Share arrangement. In practice, staff who agree to share the responsibilities of a full-time post are recorded in the system as working reduced hours. There is no separate identifier for Job Share in the data we hold.

Please also note that the Department of Finance does not hold AWP data about staff working for other employers such as ALBs, as previously clarified.

### **Clarification received**

#### Questions 1-5, 6-7, 9 & 10

I require the information on ALL types of AWP arrangements as you have listed.

#### Question 8

I appreciate this explanation and request information about full-time and part-time vacancies.

#### Guidance on Information Held/Not Held

I understand that you do not hold AWP information for ALBs.

## DoF response

I can confirm the department holds some of the information requested. Please see above for further details.

- 2, 3, and 4.

As per the clarification provided, the Department is able to report successful applications that have led to changes on a Civil Service employee's HR & Payroll record.

Table 1 shows the number of successful requests to switch to an Alternative Working Pattern from April 2020 to February 2026, (the most recent data available at the time of the request). In total, 17,635 successful applications – each resulting in a change to an employee's record – were made by 4,798 individual employees. There is no limit on the number of applications/occasions on which a member of staff can make a request for a change in working pattern; in relation to requests for Term Time working, this requires a new request to be made annually.

**Table 1: A Breakdown of Successful Applications to move to an Alternative Working Pattern, by Department, AWP, and Gender.**

Department	Working Pattern		Gender		Total
	Previous	New	Female	Male	
DAERA	Compressed Hours	Compressed Hours	2	3	5
		Personalised Hours		2	2
		Reduced Hours	5	2	7
	Full Time – Standardised Hours	Compressed Hours	16	14	30
		Personalised Hours	22	31	53
		Reduced Hours	182	177	359
	Personalised Hours	Compressed Hours		1	1
		Personalised Hours	18	31	49
		Reduced Hours	3	1	4
	Reduced Hours	Compressed Hours	10	1	11
		Personalised Hours	13		13
		Reduced Hours	244	88	332
	Term Time	Reduced Hours	1		1
		Term Time	62	7	69
DE	Compressed Hours	Compressed Hours	3		3
		Reduced Hours	2		2
	Full Time – Standardised Hours	Compressed Hours	3	1	4
		Personalised Hours	5		5
		Reduced Hours	49	15	64
	Personalised Hours	Compressed Hours	1		1
		Reduced Hours	1		1

Department	Working Pattern		Gender		Total	
	Previous	New	Female	Male		
	Reduced Hours	Compressed Hours	4		4	
		Personalised Hours	1		1	
		Reduced Hours	47	7	54	
	Term Time	Term Time	13		13	
DfC	Compressed Hours	Compressed Hours	9	2	11	
		Personalised Hours	1		1	
		Reduced Hours	11	5	16	
	Full Time – Standardised Hours	Compressed Hours	22	11	33	
		Personalised Hours	3	3	6	
		Reduced Hours	572	204	776	
	Personalised Hours	Personalised Hours	4	3	7	
		Reduced Hours		1	1	
	Reduced Hours	Compressed Hours	11	2	13	
		Personalised Hours	7	2	9	
		Reduced Hours	837	108	945	
	Term Time	Reduced Hours	1		1	
		Term Time	272	16	288	
	DfE	Compressed Hours	Compressed Hours	4	3	7
Personalised Hours			3	1	4	
Reduced Hours			4	2	6	
Full Time – Standardised Hours		Compressed Hours	10	5	15	
		Personalised Hours	6	7	13	
		Reduced Hours	100	40	140	
Personalised Hours		Personalised Hours	2	5	7	
		Reduced Hours	2	1	3	
Reduced Hours		Compressed Hours	8		8	
		Personalised Hours	2	4	6	
		Reduced Hours	145	26	171	
Term Time		Term Time	42	2	44	
DfI		Compressed Hours	Compressed Hours	17	49	66
			Personalised Hours		1	1
	Reduced Hours		2	1	3	
	Full Time – Standardised Hours	Compressed Hours	3	5	8	
		Personalised Hours	6	129	135	
		Reduced Hours	88	168	256	
	Personalised Hours	Compressed Hours		1	1	
		Personalised Hours	189	11,025	11,214	
		Reduced Hours	2	3	5	
	Reduced Hours	Compressed Hours	1		1	
		Personalised Hours	5	1	6	

Department	Working Pattern		Gender		Total
	Previous	New	Female	Male	
		Reduced Hours	99	142	241
	<b>Term Time</b>	Reduced Hours	1		1
		Term Time	28	6	34
<b>DoF</b>	<b>Compressed Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	13	4	17
		Personalised Hours	2		2
		Reduced Hours	12		12
	<b>Full Time – Standardised Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	41	25	66
		Personalised Hours	8	6	14
		Reduced Hours	214	156	370
	<b>Personalised Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	1		1
		Personalised Hours	1		1
		Reduced Hours	6		6
	<b>Reduced Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	15		15
		Personalised Hours	18	1	19
		Reduced Hours	382	86	468
		Term Time	2		2
	<b>Term Time</b>	Term Time	95	4	99
	<b>DoH</b>	<b>Compressed Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	3	1
Personalised Hours				1	1
Reduced Hours			2		2
<b>Full Time – Standardised Hours</b>		Compressed Hours	8	7	15
		Personalised Hours	2	2	4
		Reduced Hours	37	22	59
<b>Personalised Hours</b>		Personalised Hours		1	1
		Reduced Hours	1		1
<b>Reduced Hours</b>		Compressed Hours	2		2
		Personalised Hours	2		2
		Reduced Hours	56	10	66
<b>Term Time</b>		Term Time	8	2	10
<b>DOJ</b>	<b>Compressed Hours</b>	Reduced Hours	4		4
	<b>Full Time – Standardised Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	14	4	18
		Personalised Hours	4	2	6
		Reduced Hours	145	56	201
	<b>Personalised Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	2		2
		Personalised Hours	7	1	8
		Reduced Hours	4	2	6
	<b>Reduced Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	2		2
		Personalised Hours	10		10
		Reduced Hours	226	21	247
Term Time		1		1	

Department	Working Pattern		Gender		Total
	Previous	New	Female	Male	
	<b>Term Time</b>	Term Time	22	2	24
<b>PPS</b>	<b>Compressed Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	1		1
	<b>Full Time – Standardised Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	2	1	3
		Personalised Hours	2		2
		Reduced Hours	35	7	42
	<b>Personalised Hours</b>	Personalised Hours	3		3
		Reduced Hours	1		1
	<b>Reduced Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	2		2
		Personalised Hours	5		5
		Reduced Hours	46	7	53
	<b>Term Time</b>	Term Time	25		25
<b>TEO</b>	<b>Compressed Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	1	1	2
		Personalised Hours		1	1
		Reduced Hours	1	1	2
	<b>Full Time – Standardised Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	2	3	5
		Personalised Hours	3		3
		Reduced Hours	24	14	38
	<b>Reduced Hours</b>	Compressed Hours	3	1	4
		Personalised Hours	2	1	3
		Reduced Hours	38	15	53
	<b>Term Time</b>	Reduced Hours	1		1
Term Time		7		7	
<b>Total</b>			<b>4,802</b>	<b>12,833</b>	<b>17,635</b>

Source: HRConnect 01 April 2020 - 28 February 2026

Figures based on Permanent, Fixed Term, & Casual Staff only - and excludes AGNI, HSENI, CSO, Prison Grades, and Staff who moved to 'Full Time' (Standardised Hours – Mon to Fri, 37 hr week).

Note: Job Reshaping (Partial Retirements) are not defined specifically in this data set and fall under 'Reduced Hours'.

- Table 2 details the number of Uniform Appeals submitted by employees and as recorded on the HR system, that relate to refused applications regarding Alternative Working Patterns, from April 2020 to February 2026, (the most recent data available at the time of the request).

**Table 2: A Breakdown of Uniform Appeals relating to Alternative Working Patterns, by Department, Uniform Appeal Type, and Gender.**

Uniform Appeal – Working Pattern Type	Gender	Department										Total
		DAERA	DE	DfC	DfE	DfI	DoF	DoH	DOJ	PPS	TEO	
Flexible Working Request	Female	2		45		1	4	1	11	3		67
	Male	1		21	1	3	2	1	7	8		44
<b>Flexible Working Request Total</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>111</b>
Job Reshaping (Partial Retirement)	Female	3	1	75	1	2	2		4		1	89
	Male	8		11	2	1	6		3	2	1	34
<b>Job Reshaping (Partial Retirement) Total</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>123</b>
Term Time Working	Female	1		5					1	1		8
	Male	1		2		2			1			6
<b>Term Time Working Total</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>2</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>14</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>248</b>

Source: HRConnect 01 April 2020 - 28 February 2026

Figures based on Permanent, Fixed Term, & Casual Staff only - and excludes AGNI, HSENI, CSO, & Prison Grades.

- Table 3 shows the number of Leavers from the NICS, broken down by Department, Leaving Reason, and Gender, from April 2020 to December 2025, (the most recent data available at the time of the request).

**Table 3: A Breakdown of Staff who have left the NICS, by Department, Leaving Reason, and Gender.**

Reason for leaving	Gender	Department										Total
		DAERA	DE	DfC	DfE	DfI	DoF	DoH	DOJ	PPS	TEO	
Resignation	Female	91	6	285	35	35	103	17	137	13	27	749
	Male	119	13	290	44	229	156	20	85	5	27	988
<b>Resignation Total</b>		<b>210</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1,737</b>
Retirement	Female	161	67	675	116	99	222	48	176	14	33	1611
	Male	306	36	350	66	419	245	47	105	19	23	1616
<b>Retirement Total</b>		<b>467</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>3,227</b>
Other	Female	17	3	129	9	11	18	4	26	6		223
	Male	27	6	108	9	65	34	2	22	3	3	279
<b>Other Total</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>502</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>721</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>1,837</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>5,466</b>

Source: HRConnect FY 2020/21 - 2025/26 (Dec25)

Figures based on Permanent, Fixed Term, & Casual Staff only - and excludes AGNI, HSENI, CSO, & Prison Grades.

'Other' reasons include Death In Service, Disciplinary, Inefficiency, End of Temporary or Fixed Term Contract.

- NICSHR does not hold this information.
- Following clarification request, the requestor has advised that they are requesting information about full-time and part-time vacancies.

Details of the total vacancies in each department is not held centrally by Department of Finance. Each Civil Service department is responsible for managing its resources – both financial and staff. Each department determines its individual workforce needs and is responsible for ensuring that any additional staffing resources are affordable. When a department identifies a vacancy that needs filled, the request is referred to NICS HR to initiate the process to fill the post. NICS HR liaises with all departments on an ongoing basis to seek to prioritise recruitment activity within allocated financial and staff resources.

As at the end of February 2026, (the most recent figures available at time of clarification of the request), NICS HR was managing a caseload of 5053 full time vacancies and 14 part time vacancies at grades AA-G6 (including analogous grades). The total full time equivalent of the part time vacancies was 8.41. The breakdown by grade, department and working pattern is shown in Tables 4 and 5 below.

**Table 4: Full Time Vacancies**

Analogous Grade	DAERA	DE	DfC	DfE	DfI	DoF	DoH	DOJ	PPS	TEO	Grand Total
G6	12	16	3		11	10	5	3	3		63
G7	127	6	22	12	33	33	13	16		15	277
DP	161	28	65	52	53	88	21	40	7	6	521
SO	226	33	98	45	86	83	16	57	1	19	664
EO1	175	7	111	23	106	62	3	31	6	2	526
EO2	100	17	624	27	91	45	11	52	12	9	988
AO	79	9	1,210	18	64	120	1	123	15	8	1,647
AA	54		150	19	79	46		12	5	2	367
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>2,283</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>5,053</b>

**Table 5: Part Time Vacancies**

Analogous Grade	DAERA	DfC	DfE	DoF	DOJ	Grand Total
G7			1			1
DP	1		2	1		4
SO			1			1
EO1		1			1	2
EO2			2			2
AO	1			1	2	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>

- Table 6 below shows all NICS Staff and their current Working Pattern as recorded on the HR & Payroll system, at month end February 2026 (the most recent data available at the time of request).

**Table 6: Working Pattern of all NICS Staff, broken down by Department, and Gender, at Month End February 2026**

Working Pattern	Gender	Department										Total
		DAERA	DE	DfC	DfE	DfI	DoF	DoH	DOJ	PPS	TEO	
Full Time	Female	1,178	234	2,921	415	536	1,104	232	1,256	179	187	8,242
	Male	1,549	186	3,205	460	1,616	1,505	212	1,485	130	160	10,508
<b>Full Time Total</b>		<b>2,727</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>6,126</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>2,152</b>	<b>2,609</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>2,741</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>18,750</b>
Compressed Hours	Female	28	6	26	15	6	45	18	13	7	6	170
	Male	14	6	18	17	7	28	7	5	1	2	105
<b>Compressed Hours Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>275</b>
Personalised Hours	Female	32	3	14	9	14	23	5	40	8	7	155
	Male	40		6	5	373	10	5	35		3	477
<b>Personalised Hours Total</b>		<b>72</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>632</b>
Reduced Hours	Female	315	65	1,192	201	189	427	79	361	74	48	2,951
	Male	191	15	309	56	182	172	23	126	11	13	1,098
<b>Reduced Hours Total</b>		<b>506</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>1,501</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>4,049</b>
Term Time	Female	139	26	327	40	46	145	14	57	36	10	840
	Male	26	4	58	11	7	22	5	12	2	2	149
<b>Term Time Total</b>		<b>165</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>989</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>3,512</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>8,076</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>2,976</b>	<b>3,481</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>3,390</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>24,695</b>

Source: HRConnect and COMPASS Month End February 2026

Figures based on Permanent, Fixed Term, & Casual Staff only - and excludes AGNI, HSENI, & CSO.

Note: Partial Retirements are counted under 'Reduced Hours'.

- Table 7 details all Staff who on return from 'Maternity' absence, commenced a new Working Pattern arrangement, including those who moved to the standard Full Time working pattern, from April 2020 to February 2026 (the most recent data available at the time of the request).

**Table 7: Staff who returned from Maternity Absence and commenced a new Working Pattern**

New Employment Category	Department								Total
	DAERA	DE	DfC	DfE	DfI	DoF	DOJ	PPS	
Compressed Hours			1	1	1				3
Full Time	2		1					1	4
Reduced Hours	5	1	12	1	2	6	4	1	32
Term Time			1						1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>40</b>

Source: HRConnect 01 April 2020 - 28 February 2026

Figures based on Permanent, Fixed Term, & Casual Staff only - and excludes AGNI, HSENI, CSO, & Prison Grades.

## ANNEX B - INTERNAL REVIEWS

An Internal Review request examines the response based on applied exemptions, search adequacy, or response timeliness.

### It is not the following, which will be treated as specified:

- Questions asking for clarification on information provided: Will be treated as part of the original FOI request.
- Additional questions about the information in the response: Will be treated as a new FOI request.
- Questions about the subject not related to the original request: Will be treated as new FOI request.
- Questions regarding how a service operates or why a decision was made: Will be treated as normal business and responded to accordingly.
- Complaints or concerns raised in response to information provided: Will be treated in line with relevant complaints procedure.

### To make an Internal Review request:

- **Clearly state:** That you want an internal review of a previous FOI response and provide the necessary details.
- **Follow the timeline:** Be sure to submit your request within 40 working days of receiving the original response. If the Department has not responded at all, you have 40 working days after the original 20-day response period has passed.
- **Wait for a response:** The review is typically completed within 20 working days but can take up to 40 working days in exceptional circumstances. The Department should inform you of any delays.

### What the review includes

- A fresh decision based on a reconsideration of all relevant factors.
- An assessment of whether the request was handled correctly and if exemptions were applied appropriately.
- The review will be conducted by someone who was not involved in the original decision.

**If you wish to request an internal review, please email [foi@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:foi@finance-ni.gov.uk) or write to FOI/EIR Team, Department of Finance, 2nd Floor, Craigantlet Buildings, Stoney Road, Belfast, BT4 3SX.**