

Annual publication

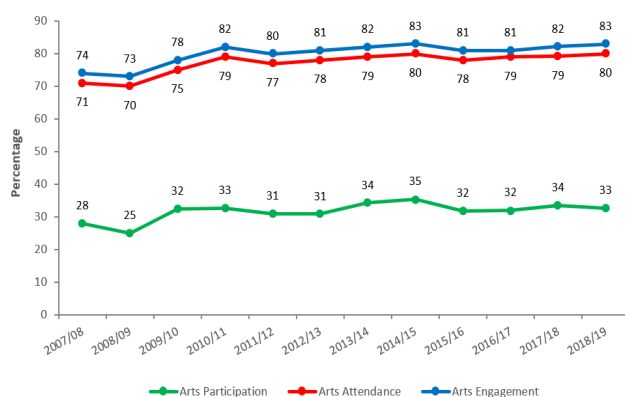
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Coverage: Northern Ireland

Main stories

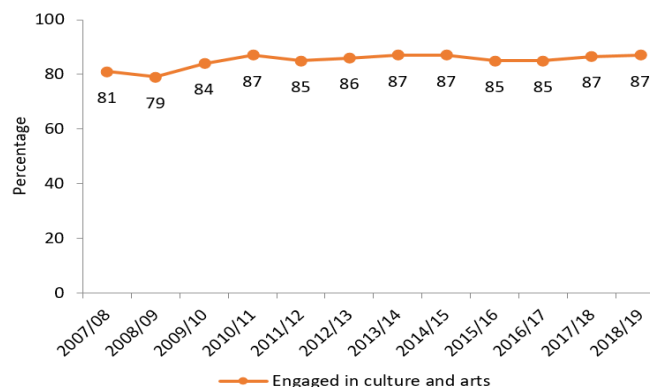
- The proportion of the adult population engaging in culture and arts remained consistent at 87% in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18. The proportion of children (aged 4-15 years) engaging in culture and arts also remained consistent at 96% in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18.
- In 2018/19, just over four-fifths (83%) of all adults in Northern Ireland engaged with the arts.
- Over half (51%) of all adults in Northern Ireland had visited a museum or science centre in 2018/19, an increase on 2017/18 (49%).
- Usage of the public library service has remained at around a quarter of all adults (25%) from 2015/16 onwards.
- In 2018/19, 5% of adults used PRONI services within the last 12 months, an increase compared to 2017/18 (4%).

Engagement with the arts Similar to the previous years' figures



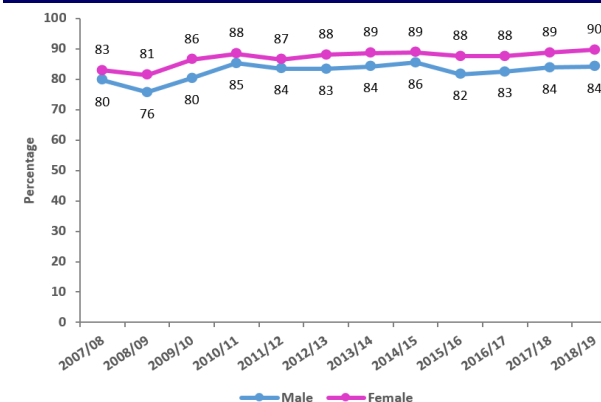
Just over 8 in every 10 adults had engaged with the arts at least once within the previous year since 2010/11. Engagement with the arts is largely driven by attendance at arts events.

Engagement in culture and arts Similar to the previous years' figures



Almost 9 out of every 10 adults (87%) in Northern Ireland had engaged with culture and the arts at least once within the previous year. This proportion has remained relatively consistent since 2009/10.

Engagement in culture and arts Women more likely to engage in culture and arts than men



Women were more likely to have engaged in culture and the arts within the previous year (90%) than men (84%). This difference has continued over much of the trend period.

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Introduction

The Department for Communities (DfC) is the lead department for arts and creativity, museums, libraries and public records. This bulletin follows a headline bulletin released in May 2019 and brings together information on the experience of the arts, libraries, museums and PRONI. The publication will be of interest to a wide variety of users but has particular relevance in informing cultural and arts activities as defined in the draft Programme for Government for Northern Ireland 2016-21.

Engagement in culture and arts includes:

- Engagement in the arts (includes both arts participation and arts attendance)
- Usage of the public library service
- Visits to museums and science centres
- Visits to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

Continuous Household Survey

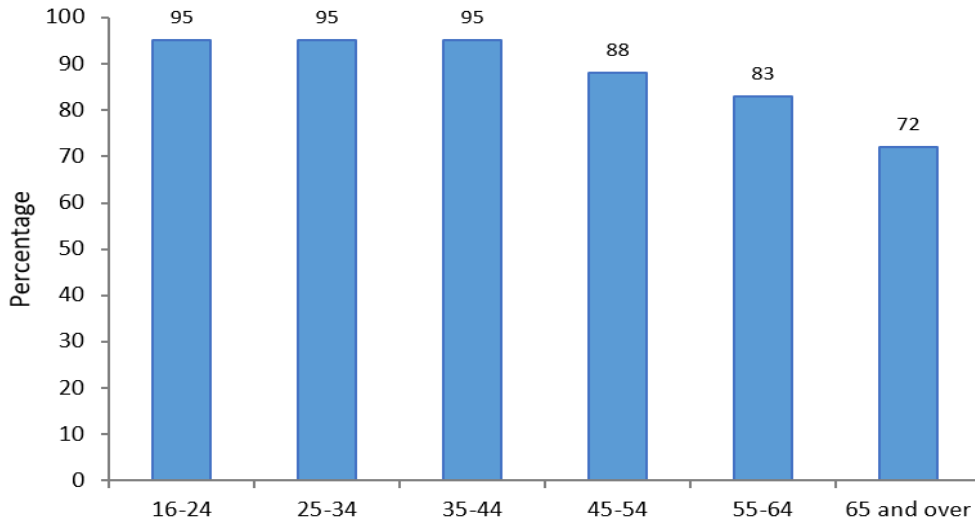
This report presents the findings from the 2018/19 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) in relation to engagement with culture and arts in Northern Ireland which are used to inform the development, monitoring and evaluation of policy. More information relating to the CHS, an annual household survey, including the methodology, definitions and interpretation of the figures can be found in the [definitions and technical notes](#) section. Data tables are available in [Excel](#) and [ODS format](#). The questions that were asked in 2018/19 CHS are available [here](#).

Engagement in culture and arts

In 2018/19, almost nine out of ten adults in Northern Ireland (87%) had engaged with culture and the arts at least once within the previous year. There were increases in engagement rates within the last year among adults with dependents (93%) and adults living in the most deprived areas (84%) in comparison to 2017/18 (91% and 80% respectively).

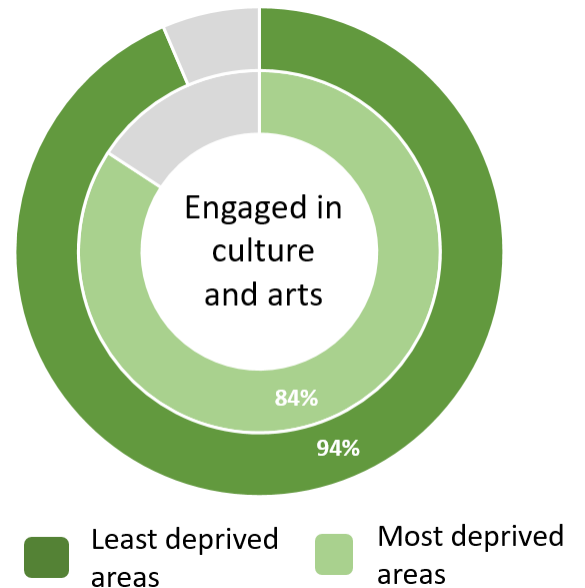
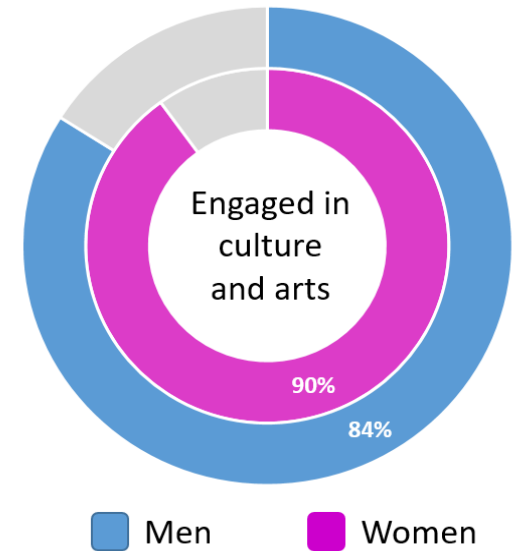
Women were more likely to have engaged with culture and arts activities within the last year than men (90% and 84% respectively). The proportions of adults who engaged with culture and the arts generally decreased as age group increased, particularly beyond the 35-44 years age group.

Engaged in culture and arts by age group



For adults from the Catholic or Protestant communities there were similar engagement rates within the last year (86% and 87% respectively).

Adults who lived in the least deprived areas were more likely to have engaged with culture and the arts within the previous year, with 94% having engaged, compared to 84% of those who live in the most deprived areas.



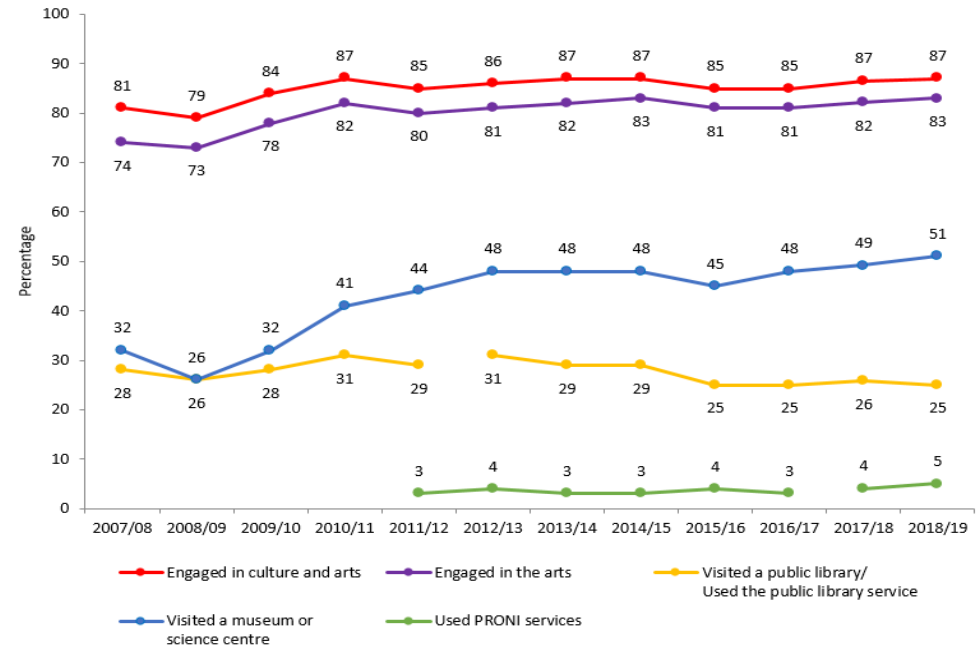
Trends

Culture and arts engagement

Almost nine out of every ten adults (87%) engaged in activities associated with culture and the arts. This proportion has remained fairly consistent over the majority of the trend period.

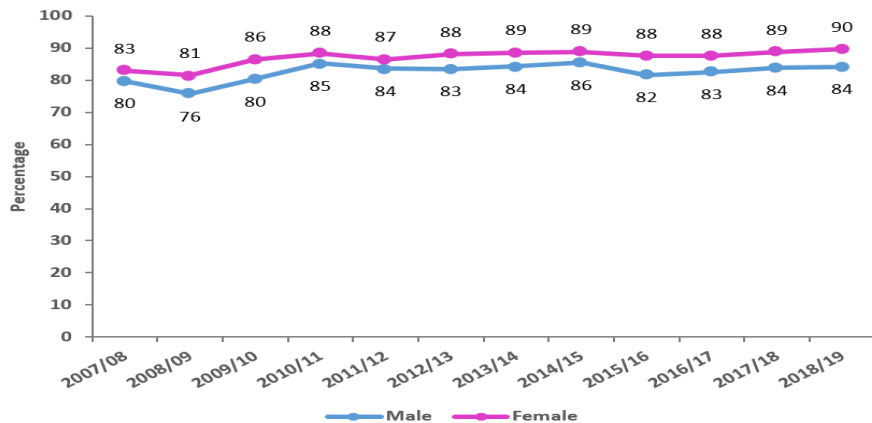
Engagement in the arts among adults within the previous year (83%) has also remained consistent over the majority of the trend period, where just over 8 in every 10 adults had engaged with the arts at least once within the previous year since 2010/11.

In 2018/19, just over half of all adults (51%) had visited a museum or science centre, an increase compared to 2017/18 (49%). Use of the public library service has remained consistent since 2015/16 at around a quarter of all adults (25% in 2018/19). The longer term trend has seen a drop in the proportions using the public library service.



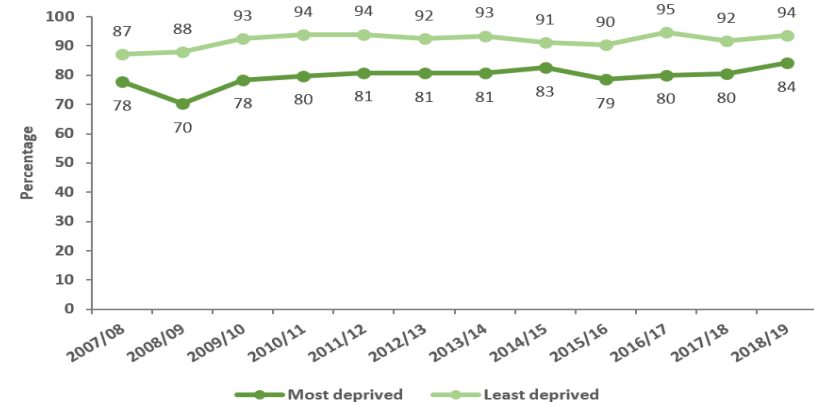
Gender

Women were more likely than men to have engaged in culture and the arts within the previous year (90% and 84% respectively). This difference has remained consistent over the entire trend period.



Deprivation

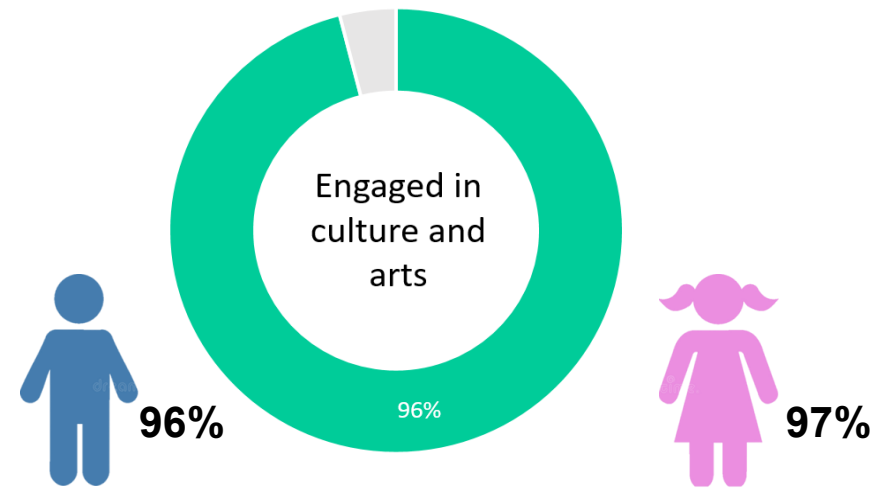
Adults who lived in the least deprived areas (94%) were more likely to have engaged in culture and the arts than those who live in the most deprived areas (84%). As with gender, this difference has remained consistent over the reporting period.



Children's engagement with culture and arts

In 2018/19, nearly all children in Northern Ireland aged 4 to 15 years old had engaged with culture and the arts at least once within the previous year (96%). There were no differences in the culture and arts engagement rates among children in comparison to 2017/18.

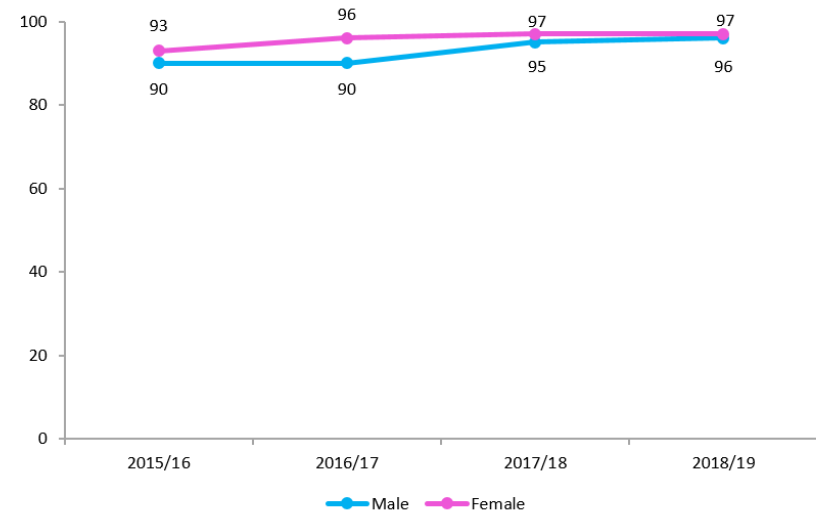
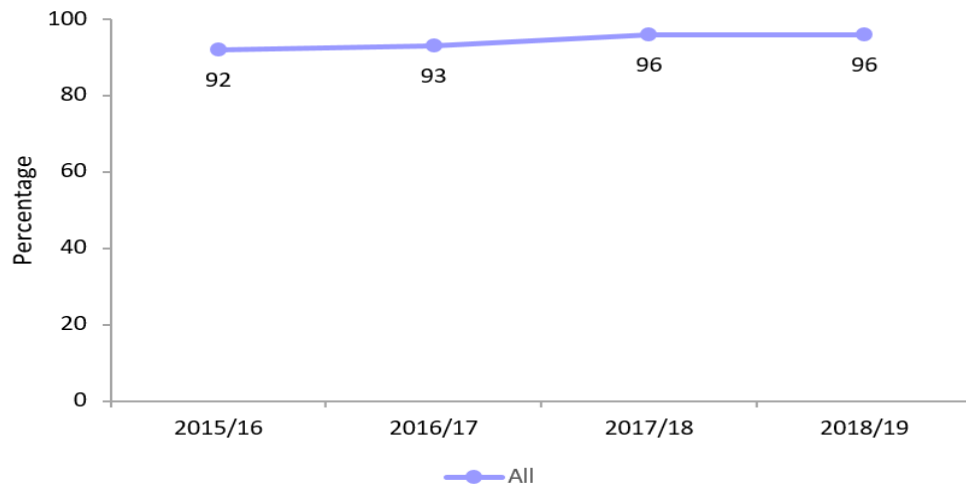
There was no significant difference between the proportions of boys (96%) and girls (97%) who had engaged with culture and arts activities within the last year. Engagements rates by gender have also remained the same from last year with similar proportions for both boys and girls in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18 (95% and 97% respectively).



Trends

The culture and arts engagement for children aged 4 to 15 years old in 2018/19 (96%), remains unchanged on 2017/18 comparable figures. However, engagement rates for children aged 4 to 15 years old were lower in both 2016/17 and 2015/16 (93% and 92% respectively).

While there was no significant difference between the proportions of boys (96%) and girls (97%) who had engaged with culture and arts activities within the last year, there has been an increase from the 2015/16 figure for girls (93%) and for boys from both the 2016/17 and 2015/16 figures (each at 90%).



Arts

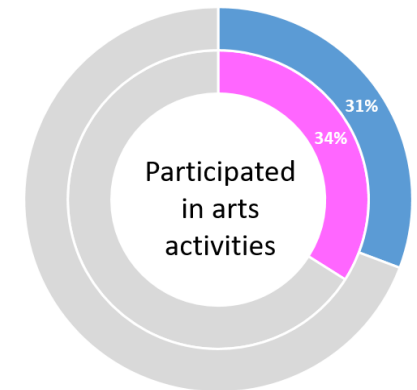
Participation in arts activities

In 2018/19, over a third of all adults (34%) participated in an arts activity at least once within the previous year. This is the same proportion who had participated in 2017/18. Adults who are 65 and over were more likely to have participated in an arts activity in the last year when compared with 2017/18. The proportion of single adults who participated in the arts returned to more expected levels in 2018/19, following an increase on 2017/18.

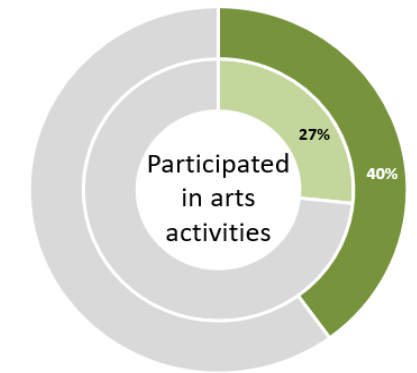
A higher proportion of females than males participated in arts activities in 2018/19 (34% and 31% respectively). In addition, relatively more Protestant adults (34%) participated in an arts activity at least once within the previous year than those from the Catholic community (28%).

Adults who lived in the least deprived areas were more likely to have participated than those who lived in the most deprived areas (40% and 27% respectively).

There were no differences in the arts participation rates over the last year among adults living in urban or rural areas.



Men Women



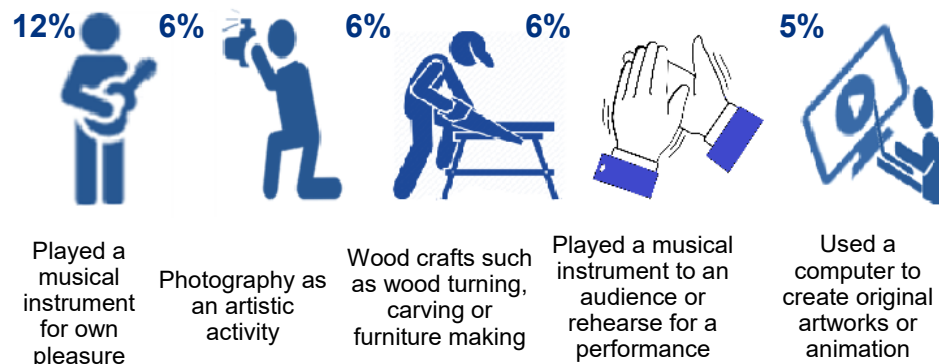
Least deprived areas Most deprived areas

Types of arts activities

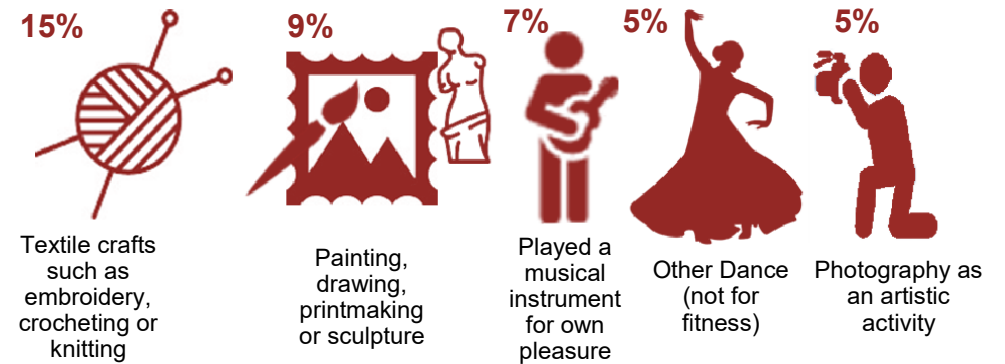
The five most popular arts activities that adults participated in within the previous year were: 'Played a musical instrument' (9%), 'Textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting' (8%), 'Painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture' (7%), 'Photography as an artistic activity' (5%) and 'Played a musical instrument to an audience or rehearsed for a performance' (4%).

When analysed by gender the five most popular were:

Males:



Females:



Arts

Attendance at arts events

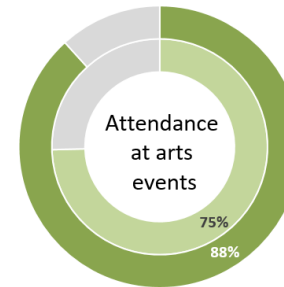
In 2018/19, four-fifths of all adults (80%) indicated that they had attended at least one arts event over the previous year. This is similar to the proportion in 2017/18. Analysis by demographic group shows an increase in the attendance at arts events for those adults with dependents in 2018/19 (87%) when compared to 2017/18 (85%).

Women (83%) were more likely than men (77%) to have attended the arts. There is a relationship between arts attendance and age, with attendance generally decreasing as age increases from age 45 and upwards.

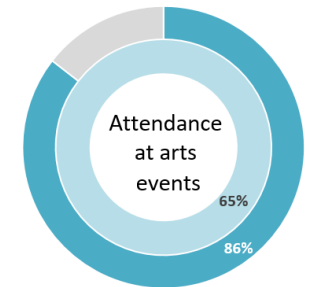
Adults with a disability were less likely to attend an arts event than those who do not have a disability (65% and 86% respectively). A greater proportion of adults with dependants (87%) had attended an arts event than those without dependants (75%).

Concerning where people lived, adults who lived in the least deprived areas were more likely to have attended an arts event (88%) than those who live in the most deprived areas (75%).

When adults who only attend a cinema are excluded from the analysis attendance at arts events reduces to 66%.



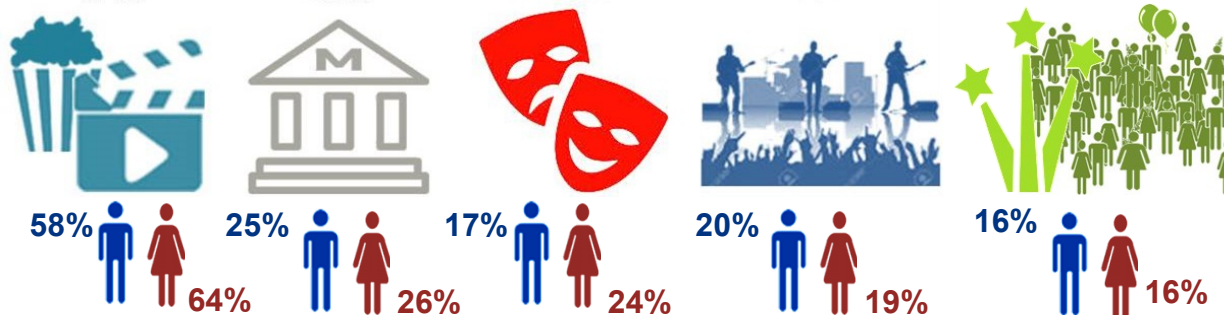
Living in most deprived areas
Living in least deprived areas



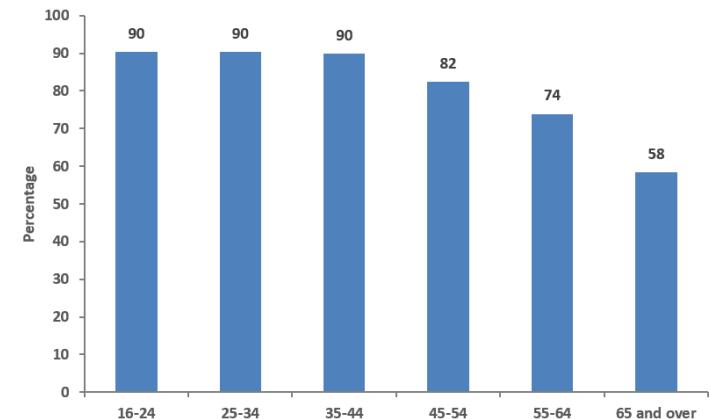
Have a disability
Do not have a disability

Types of arts events

The most popular arts events attended by adults over the last year were 'Film at cinema or other venue' (62%), 'a museum' (26%), 'Play or drama' (21%), 'Rock or pop music performance' (20%) and 'Community festivals' (16%). The same five events were analysed by gender:



Attendance at arts events by age



Arts

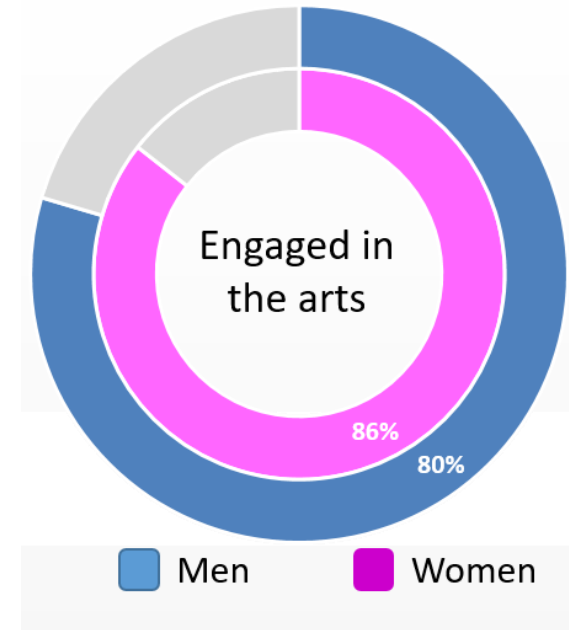
Engagement in the arts

In 2018/19, just over four-fifths (83%) of all adults in Northern Ireland engaged with the arts, similar to the proportion in 2017/18. Compared with 2017/18, arts engagement rates have remained similar across most demographic groups, apart from increases in those aged 65 and over, adults who have dependents and those who live in the least deprived areas.

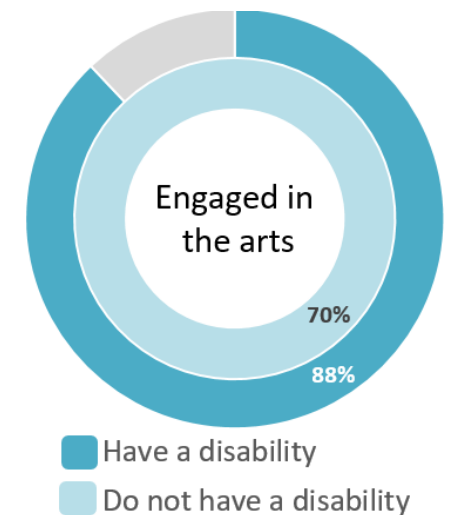
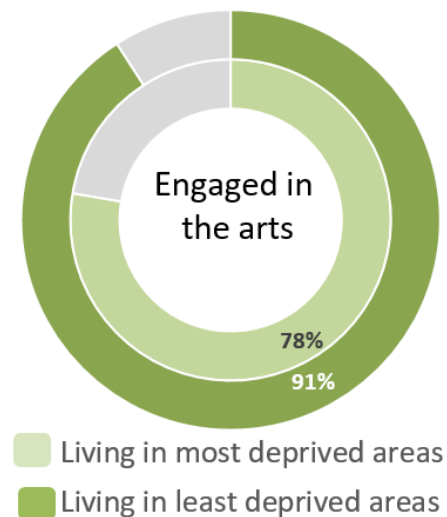
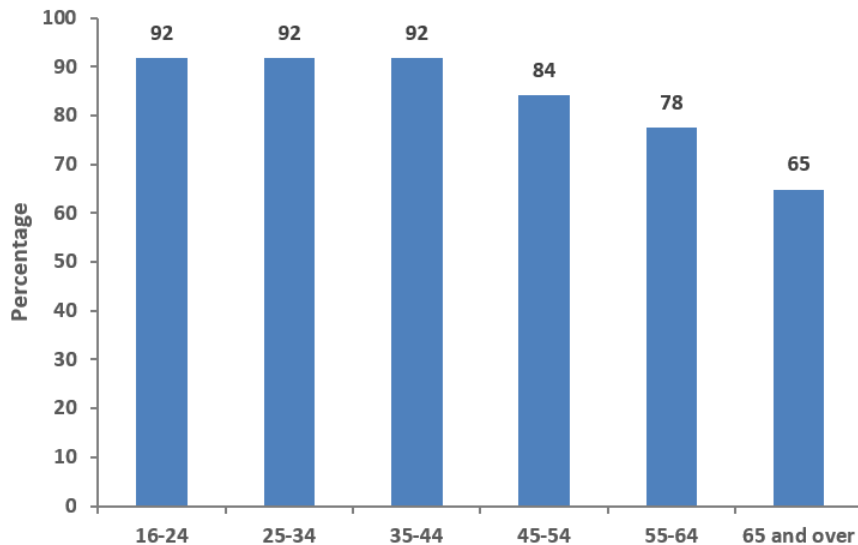
In 2018/19, 86% of all females engaged with the arts compared with 80% of males. Regarding age, the trend was similar to that for attending arts events, engagement rates tended to drop as age increased from age 45 onwards.

Similar proportions of Catholics (82%) and Protestants (82%) engaged with the arts. However, adults with a disability were less likely to have engaged than those without a disability (70% and 88% respectively).

Concerning where people lived, adults who lived in the least deprived areas were more likely to have engaged with the arts in the previous year (91%) than those who live in the most deprived areas (78%).



Engagement in the arts by age

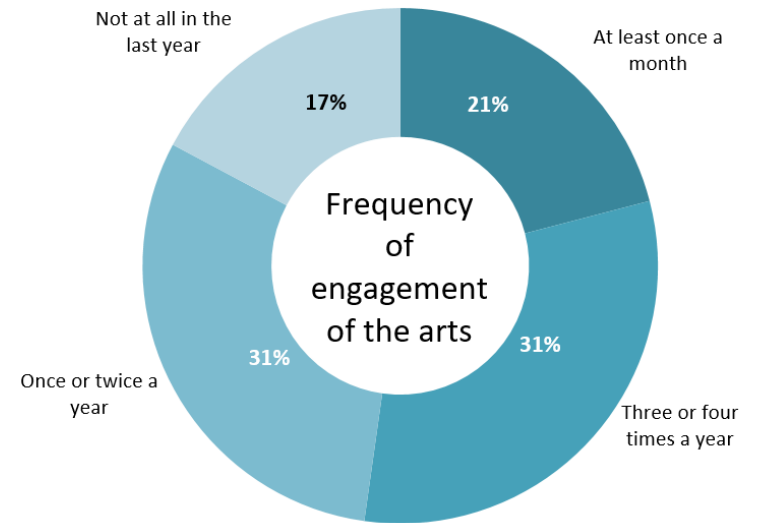


Arts

Frequency of engagement

Just over a fifth (21%) of all adults engaged with the arts at least once a month over the previous year.

Just under a third had engaged either three or four times a year or engaged once or twice a year (both 31%).



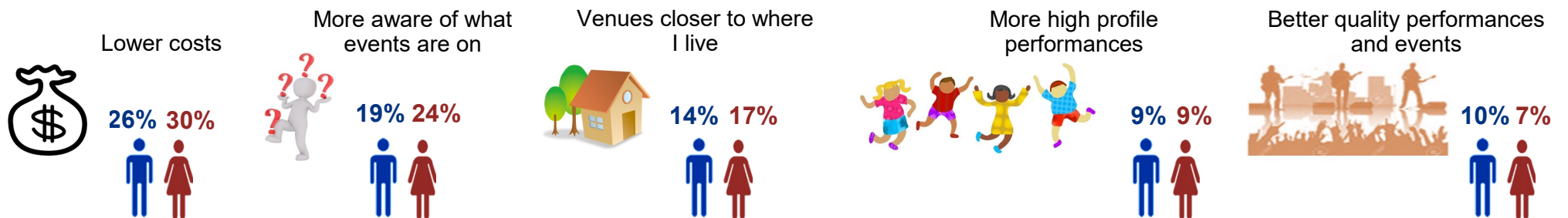
Encouraging arts attendance

Almost a third (28%) of all adults cited “Lower costs” as a factor that would encourage them to attend the arts or attend the arts more.

Just over a fifth of adults (22%) cited being “More aware of what events are on” as an encouraging factor for attendance at arts events. Other encouraging factors of engagement that were stated by respondents include “Venues closer to where I live” (16%), “More high profile performances” (9%) and “Improved transport/access” (9%).

Almost a tenth of adults cited “Better quality performances and events” and “Someone to go with” as encouraging factors of attendance (8% and 7% respectively).

When analysed by gender, females were more likely to cite “Lower costs”, “More aware of what events are on”, “Venues closer to where I live” and “Someone to go with” as encouraging factors for attending arts events. However, males were more likely to cite “Better quality performances and events” as an encouraging factor for attendance at arts events.



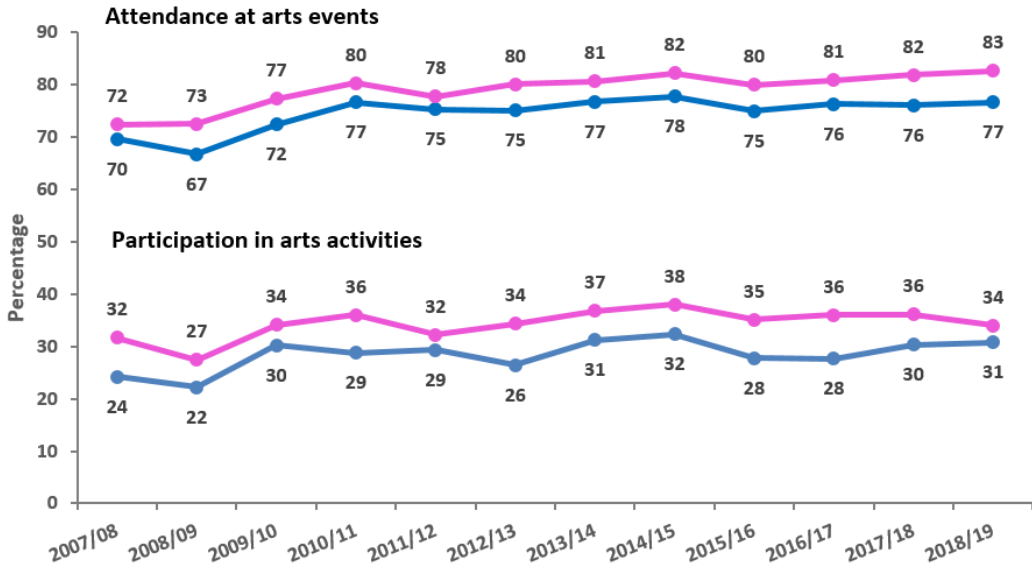
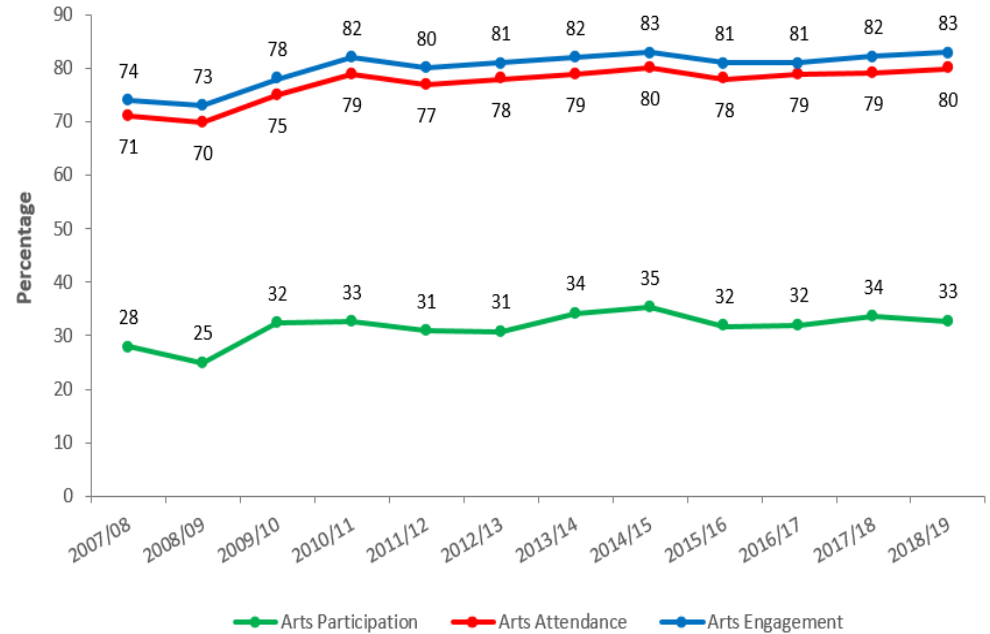
Trends

Engagement with the arts

Just over 8 in every 10 adults had engaged with the arts at least once within the previous year since 2010/11. This trend followed an increase from the rates in 2007/08 (74%) and 2008/09 (73%) to 78% in 2009/10.

Engagement with the arts is largely driven by attendance at arts events. Consistently over the trend period, only 3% of adults had participated in an arts activity without also having attended an arts event within the year.

The latest figure for engagement with the arts (83%) is similar to the previous years figure of 82% and an increase on the 2016/17 figure of 81%.



Gender

Women were more likely to have engaged with the arts within the previous year (86%) than men (80%). This is a result of both their greater likelihood of having participated in an arts activity (34%) and having attended an arts event (83%) within the previous year than men (31% and 77% respectively).

This has also been the case throughout the entire trend period with a higher proportion of women engaging with the arts than men year on year.

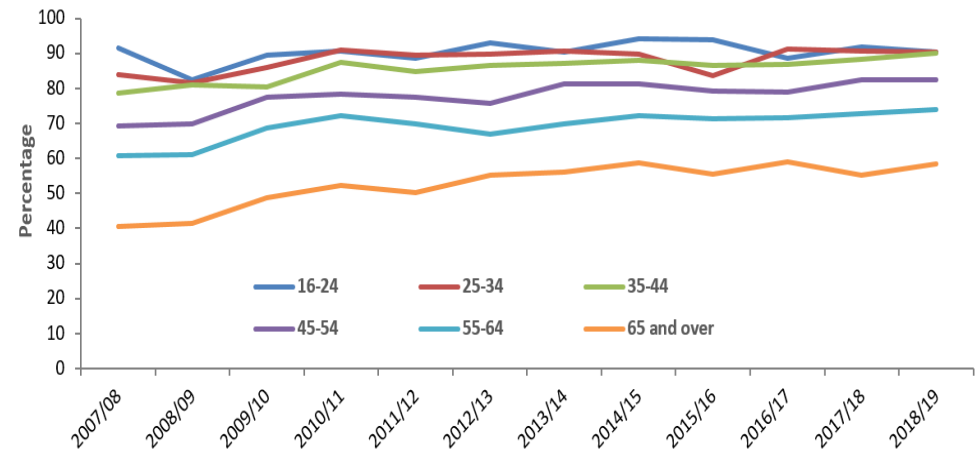
Trends

Age group

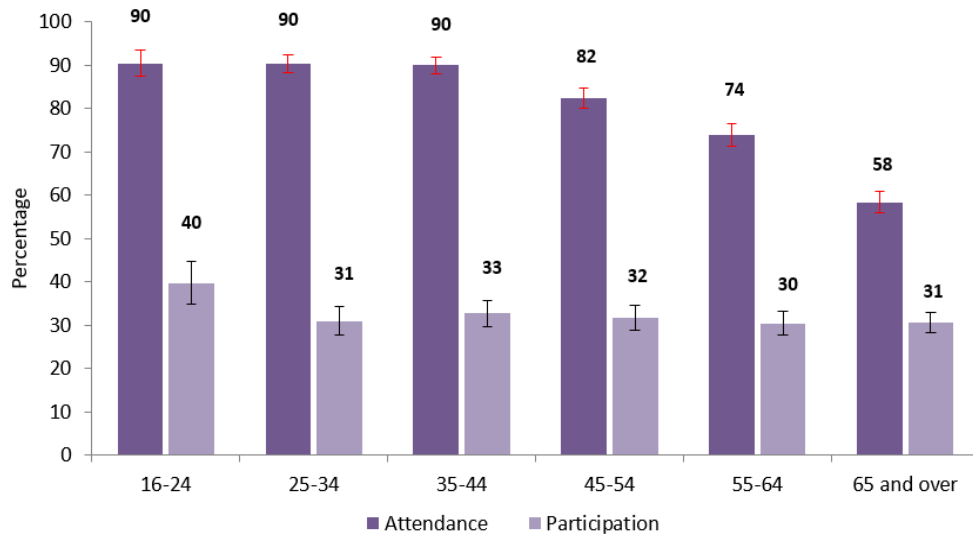
Generally speaking 'attendance at an arts event' decreases with age. This is especially true beyond the 45-54 age group with lower proportions from successive age groups attending an arts event within the previous year since 2007/08. Adults aged 65 years and over have consistently been the least likely to have done so.

Looking at arts participation within the previous year by age group shows that around a third of all age groups had participated in the arts at least once within the previous year. Looking at the longer term trend, those aged 16-24 years were generally more likely to have participated than other age groups.

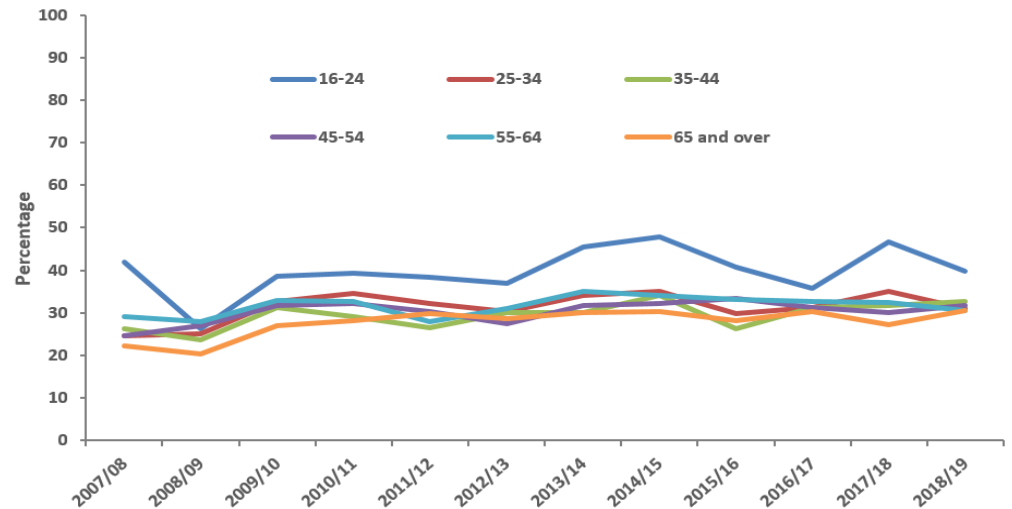
Arts attendance



Attendance and participation in the arts by age



Arts participation



Children's engagement with arts outside of school

Parents of children aged 4 to 15 years old were asked about their children's engagement with the arts outside of school. According to their parents, 92% of children had engaged with the arts outside of school, with similar proportions of girls (94%) and boys (90%) having done so.

Almost two-thirds of children (64%) had attended an arts event and also participated in an arts activity outside of school within the last year. Just over a quarter of children (26%) had attended an arts event outside of school but had not participated in an arts activity outside of school. Less than one in every twenty children (3%) had participated in an arts activity but had not attended an arts event outside of school. Less than one in ten (8%) did not engage with the arts outside of school within the previous year.

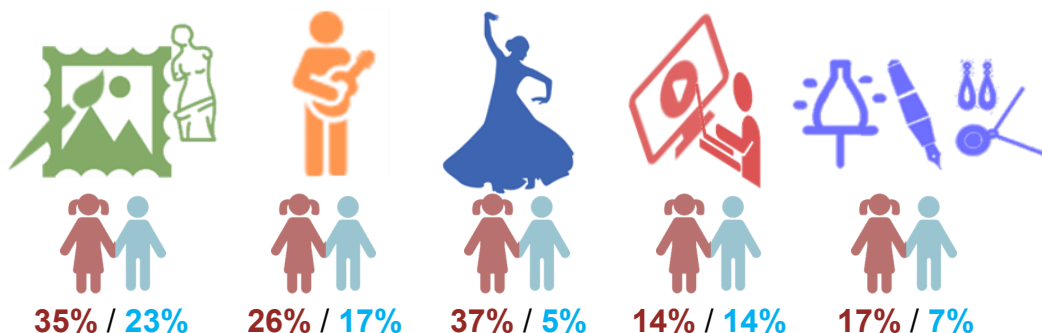


Participation in arts activities

Two-thirds of children (66%) had participated in an arts activity outside of school, with girls more likely to have participated than boys (77% and 56% respectively).

Almost three-tenths (29%) of children had participated in 'painting, drawing, sculpture or printmaking outside of school', making it the most popular activity. Other popular arts activities include 'playing a musical instrument' (22%), 'dancing (not for fitness),' 'using a computer to create original artworks/animation' (20% and 14% respectively) and 'crafts such as textiles, wood, pottery or jewellery making' (12%).

The same five activities were analysed by gender:

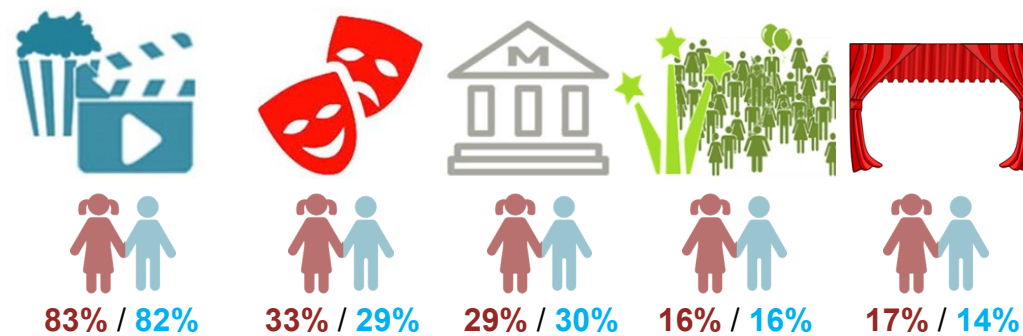


Attendance at arts events

Nine out of ten children (90%) had attended an arts event outside of school within the previous year, with similar proportions of boys (88%) and girls (91%) having done so.

Just over eight out of every ten children had attended a 'Film, at a cinema or other venue' (83%), making it by far the most popular event. Other popular events attended by children include 'a pantomime or musical' (31%), 'a museum' (29%), an 'arts/community festival' and 'play or drama' (both 16%).

The same five events were analysed by gender:



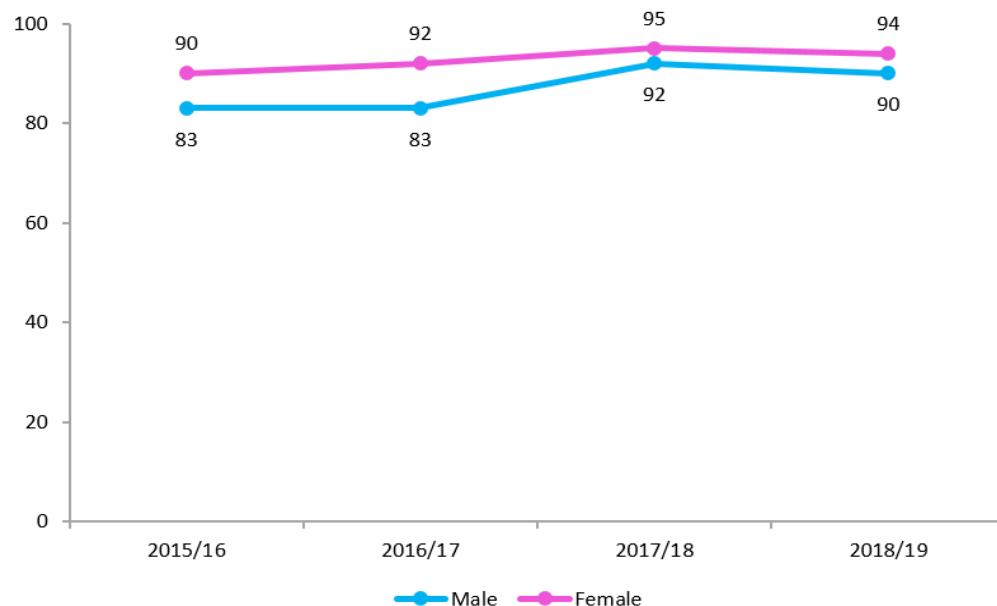
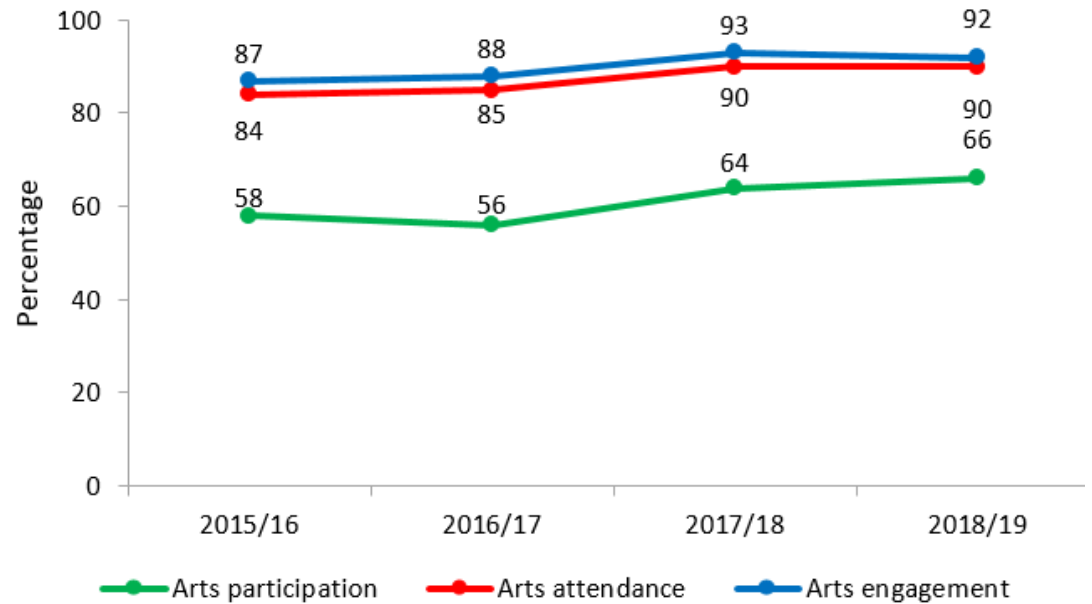
Children's engagement - trends

Engagement with the arts

Over nine out of every ten (92%) children had engaged with the arts outside of school over the last year, similar to those who had reported engaging with the arts in 2017/18 (93%).

No year on year differences were found in arts participation, arts attendance or engagement with the arts outside of school for children in Northern Ireland from 2017/18 to 2018/19.

Engagement with the arts has increased over the trend period, since the questions were first asked in 2015/16.



Gender and engagement with the arts

In 2015/16 and 2016/17 the engagement rates amongst girls were higher than engagement rates amongst boys. In 2017/18, following into 2018/19, this gap closed and there was no significant difference in the proportions of girls and boys who had engaged with the arts (94% and 90% respectively).

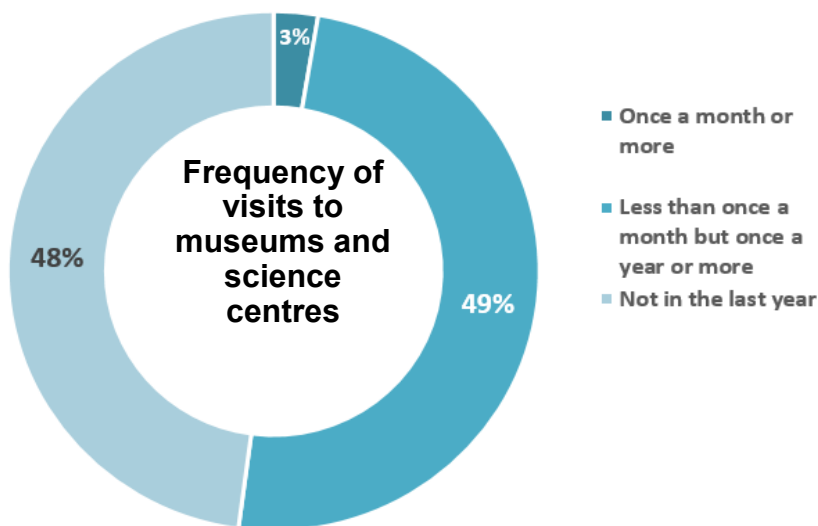
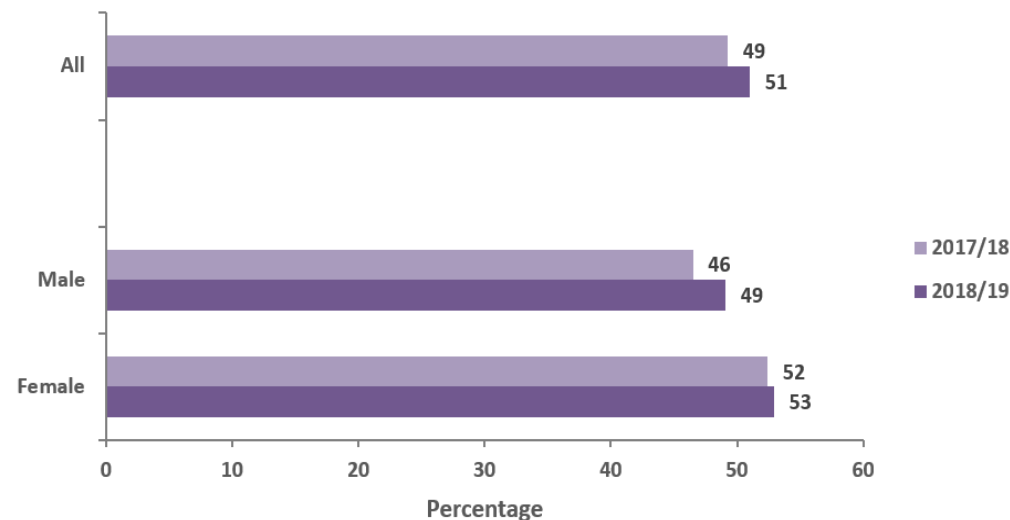
Museums and science centres

Visited a museum or science centre

Around a half of all adults (51%) in Northern Ireland had visited a museum or science centre at least once within the last year, an increase on the proportion who had visited in 2017/18 (49%). Analysis by demographic group and by area highlights a number of groups with increases in the proportion of adults who had visited a museum or science centre when compared with 2017/18; namely those who are male, 65 and over, from the Protestant community, have dependents, and those living in the least deprived or rural areas.

Women were found to be more likely to have visited a museum or science centre than men (53% and 49% respectively).

There were also differences by age and disability in the proportions of adults who visited a museum or science centre. Adults who have a disability (41%) were less likely to have visited a museum or science centre than those who do not have a disability (55%).



Frequency of visits to museums and science centres

Nearly half of all adults had visited a museum or science centre at least once in the last year with only 3% having visited at least once a month.

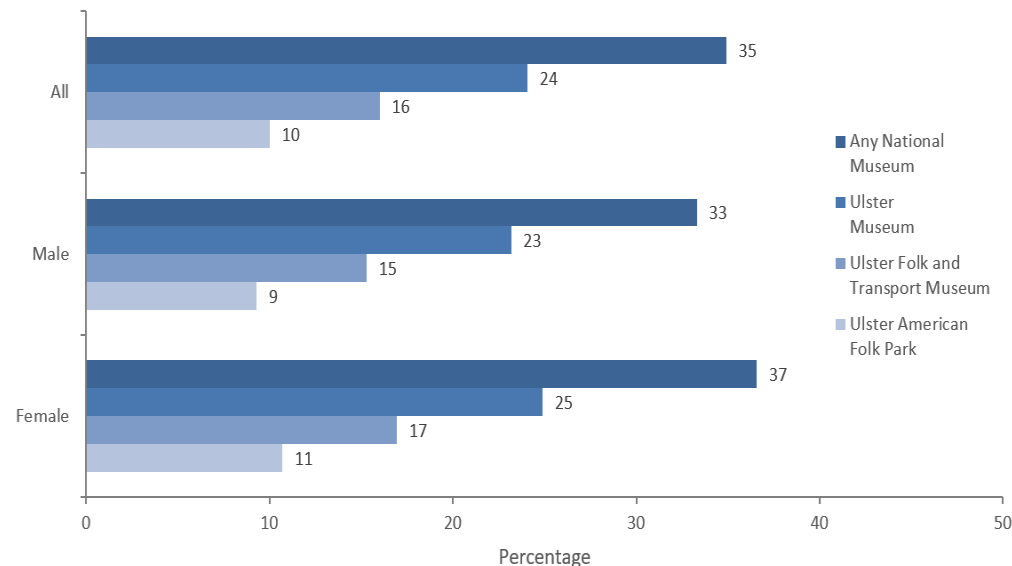
Museums and science centres

Visited a National Museums Northern Ireland museum

National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) has three museums across Northern Ireland. Just over a third of all adults (35%) had been to a NMNI museum within the last year, similar to the proportion of adults who had visited a NMNI museum in 2017/18 (34%).

Women were more likely to have visited a NMNI museum in the last year than men (37% and 33% respectively). Also, adults aged 45 and over (30%) were less likely to have visited than those aged under 45 (41%).

Adults who have a disability (28%) were less likely to have visited a National Museum than those who do not have a disability (38%). Similarly, adults who live in the most deprived areas were less likely to have visited a NMNI museum at least once in the last year than those who live in the least deprived areas (28% and 50% respectively).

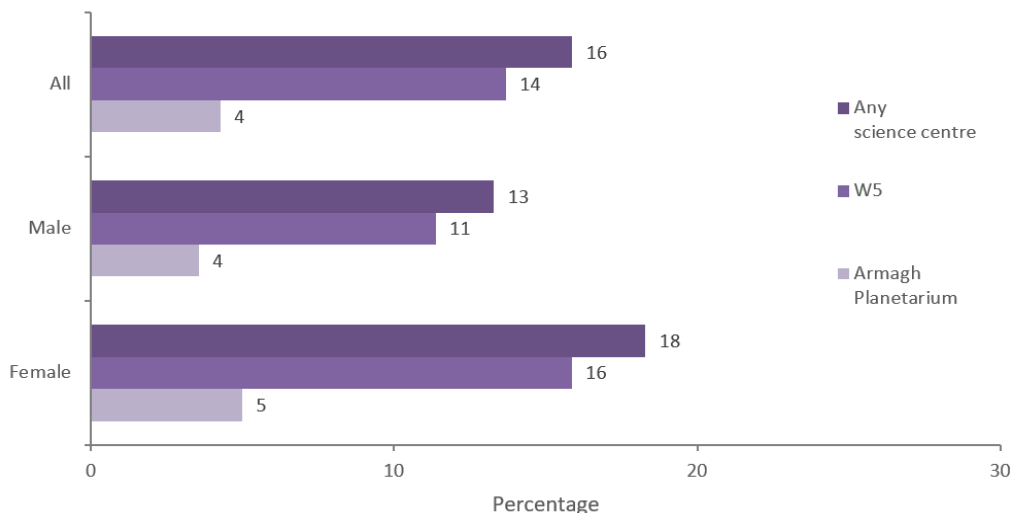


Visits to science centres

Fewer than a fifth (16%) of all adults in Northern Ireland visited a science centre at least once within the last year, similar to the proportion of adults who had visited a science centre in 2017/18 (15%).

Women were more likely to have visited a science centre than men (18% and 13% respectively), as well as adults aged under 45 (25%) compared to those aged 45 and over (7%).

Adults with a disability were less likely to have visited a science centre in the last year than those who do not have a disability (9% and 18% respectively).



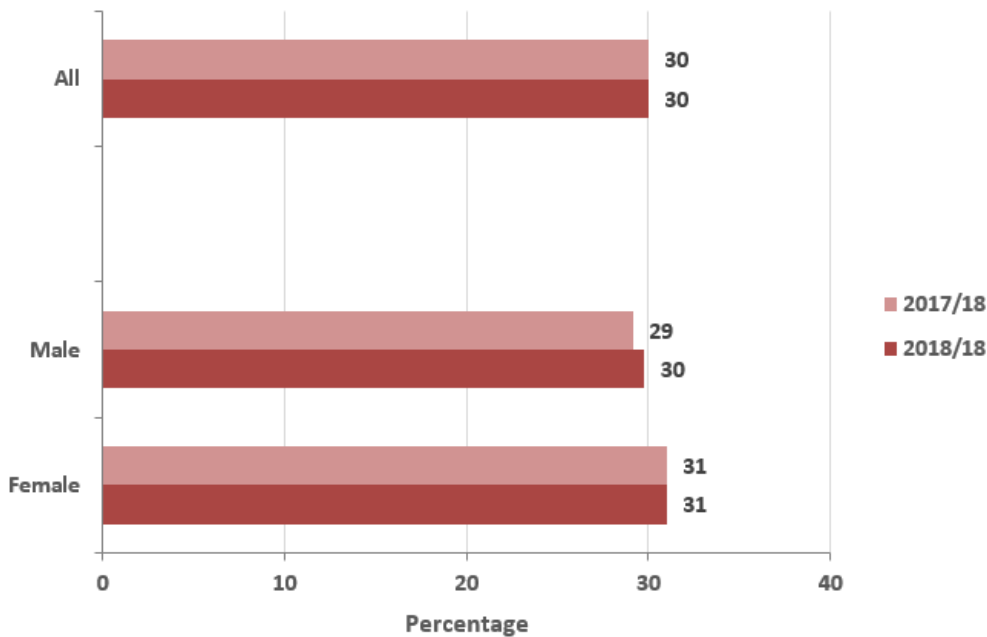
Museums and science centres

Visited a local museum

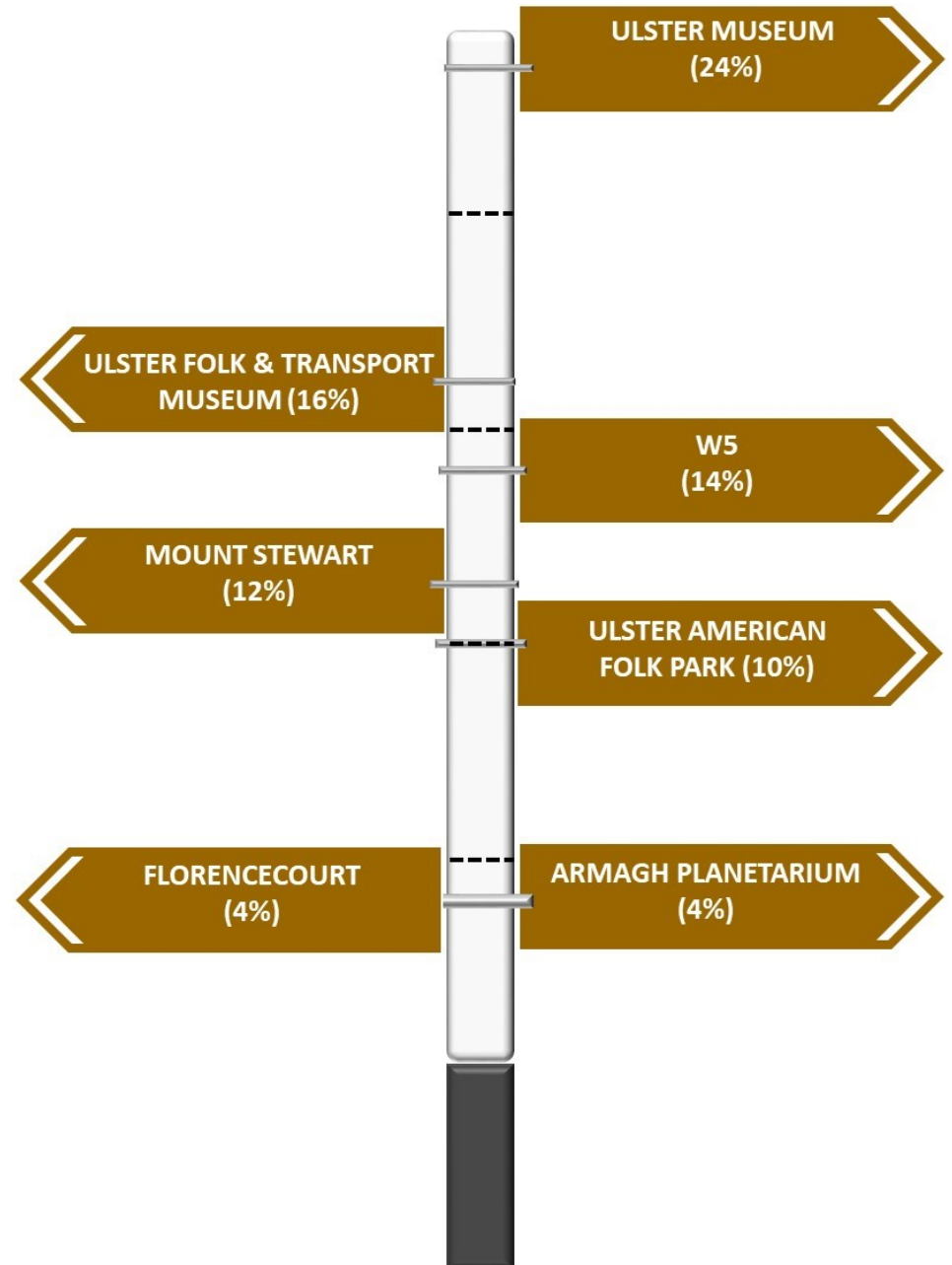
Three out of ten adults (30%) in Northern Ireland had visited a local museum at least once within the last year, unchanged from the proportion who had visited in 2017/18 (30%).

There were no statistical differences in the proportion of men and women who had visited a local museum in the last year (30% and 31% respectively). Similarly, when looking at age, there was no difference between adults aged 45 and over and those aged under 45 (both 31%).

Adults with a disability (27%) were less likely to have visited a local museum in the last year than those who do not have a disability (32%). Also adults who live in the most deprived areas were less likely to have visited than those who live in the least deprived areas (19% and 43% respectively).



Popular museums and science centres



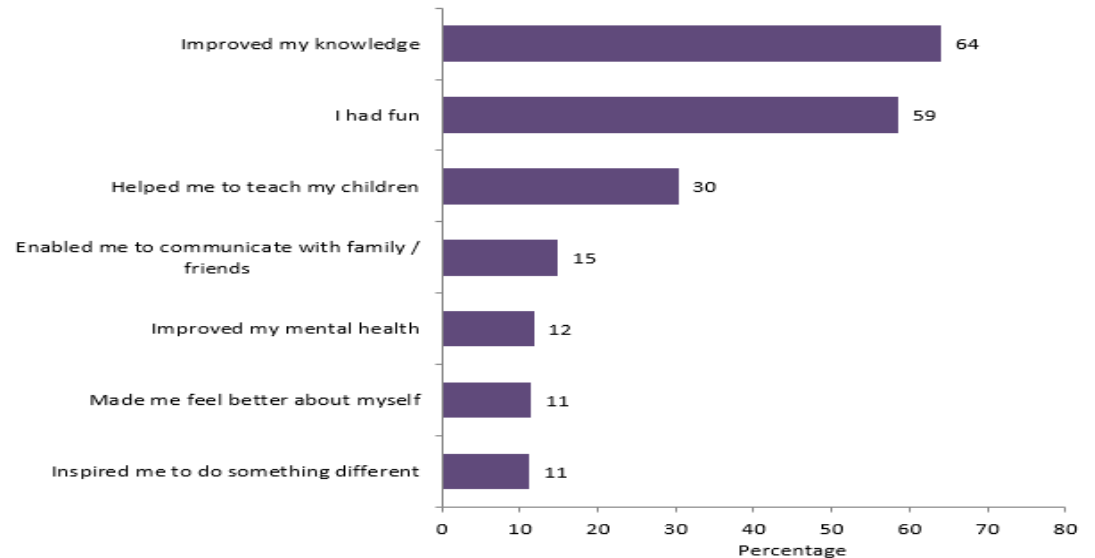
Museums and science centres

Benefits experienced from visiting a museum or science centre

Almost two-thirds of all adults (64%) who had visited a museum or science centre in the last year said that a benefit was they had improved their knowledge, whilst 59% cited 'having fun' as a benefit of their visit. Three-tenths (30%) said that it helped them to teach their children and 15% said that it enabled them to communicate with family/friends. However, 3% of adults stated that they felt no benefits from having visited a museum or science centre in the last year.

Looking at the differences in gender, women were more likely than men to have said that that the visit helped them to teach their children and men more likely to have said that it helped improve their knowledge along with thinking about a future career.

Most frequently cited benefits

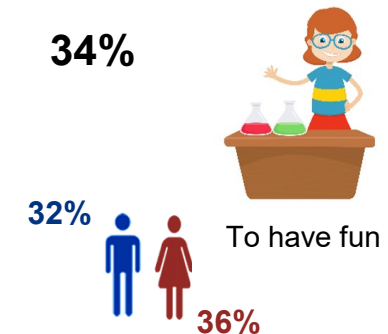
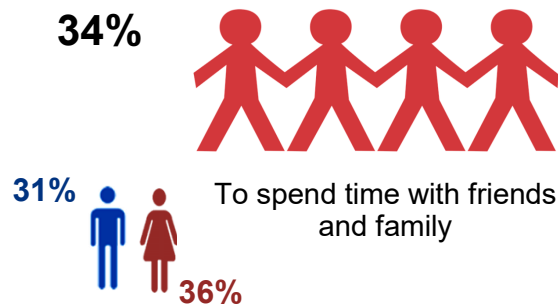
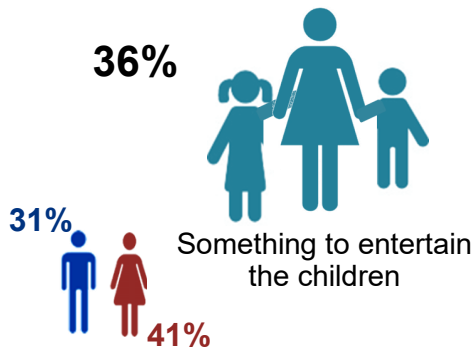


Reasons for visiting a museum or science centre

The three most frequently cited reasons adults gave for visiting a museum or science centre were 'To entertain the children', 'To spend time with friends and family' and 'To have fun.' Since this question has been introduced to the CHS, these have been the most frequently cited reasons for visiting a museum or science centre.

When analysed by gender, women were more likely to have visited for the following purposes: 'To educate the children'; 'To entertain the children'; 'As part of a group or tour'; 'To take part in a creative activity'.

Men more likely to have a 'general interest in the subject of the museum or collection'.



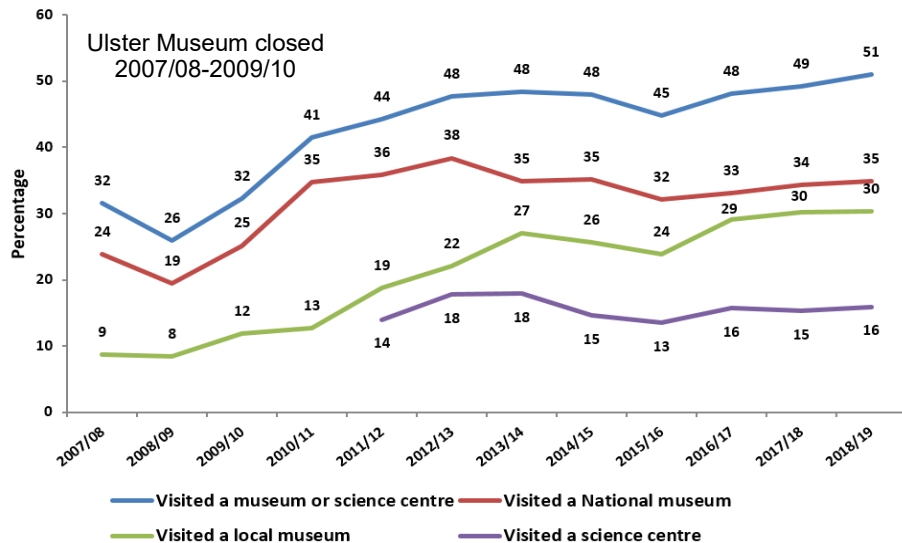
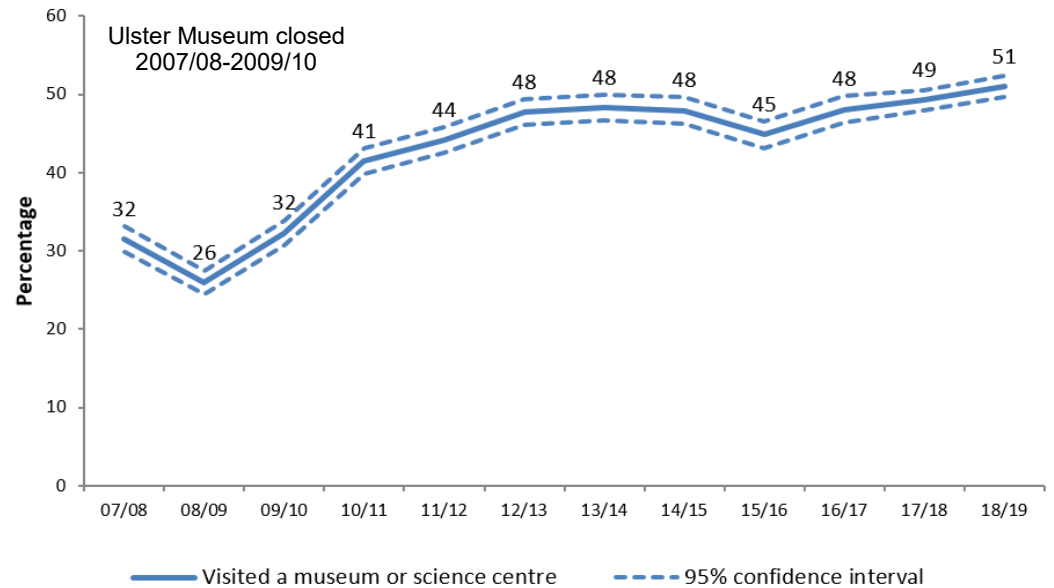
Trends

Visits to museums and science centres

Just over four-fifths (82%) of adults have visited a museum at some stage in their life, while just over half (51%) have visited a museum or science centre in the last year.

In 2018/19, the proportion of adults visiting a museum or science centre in the last year increased in comparison to 2017/18 (49%).

The longer term trend was less consistent, although it is important to note that Ulster Museum was closed for refurbishment over the years 2007/08-2009/10.



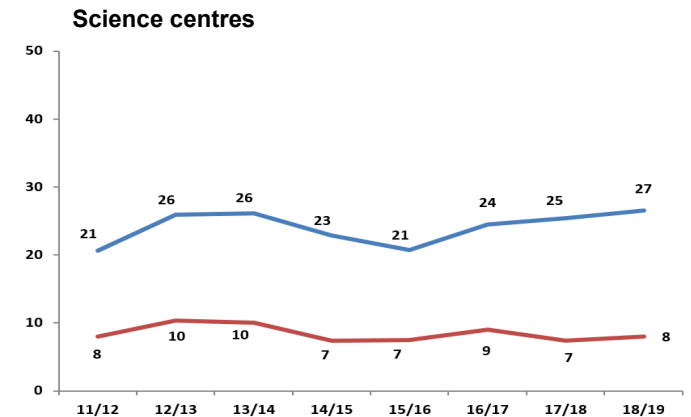
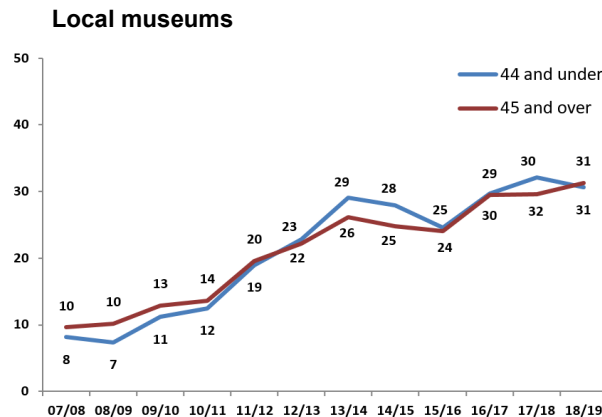
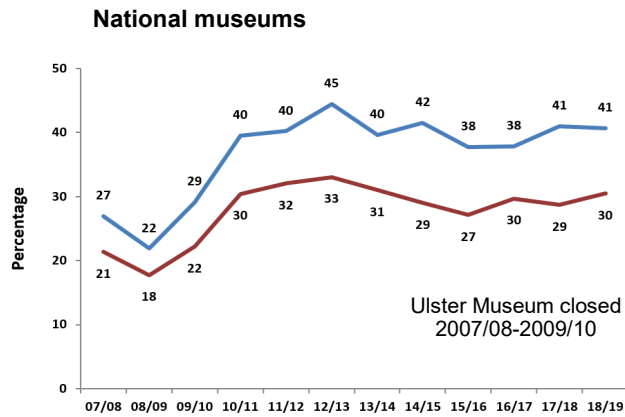
The proportion of adults visiting a local museum in the last year also remains consistent with the proportion in 2017/18 (both 30%). This follows a gradual increase in visits over the entire trend period.

Visits to science centres over the previous year by adults also remained similar to the figure in 2017/18 (16% v 15%), and to that in 2016/17 (16%).

Visits to one of the three National Museums have remained consistent with 2017/18 (35% v 34%), following a period of decline in visits to National Museums from a peak of 38% in 2012/13.

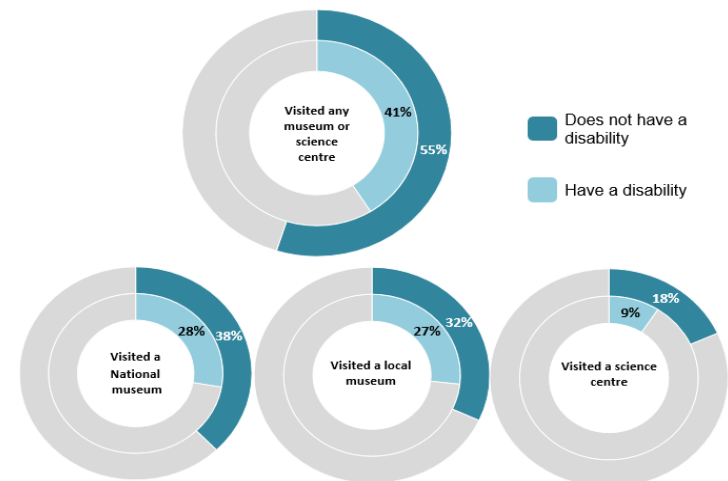
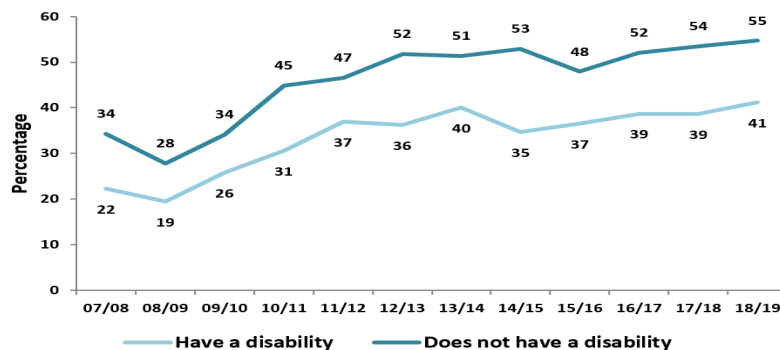
Visits to museums and science centres and age

Younger adults were more likely than older adults to visit a museum or science centre (Aged 44 and under: 58%; Aged 45 and over: 45%). This trend has remained consistent over the longer term since figures were first available from the CHS in 2007/08. Further analysis by museum type, however has revealed that while younger adults were more likely to have visited a National museum or science centre than those aged 45 and over, there was no difference in the age groups when looking at visits to local museums (both 31%)



Visits to museums and science centres and disability

A lower proportion of adults who have a disability visited a museum or science centre in 2018/19 than adults who do not have a disability (41% and 55% respectively). This was the case for all types of museum or science centre. The longer term trend, from 2007/08 onwards, has been consistent, with adults who have a disability being less likely to visit a museum or science centre than those who do not have a disability.

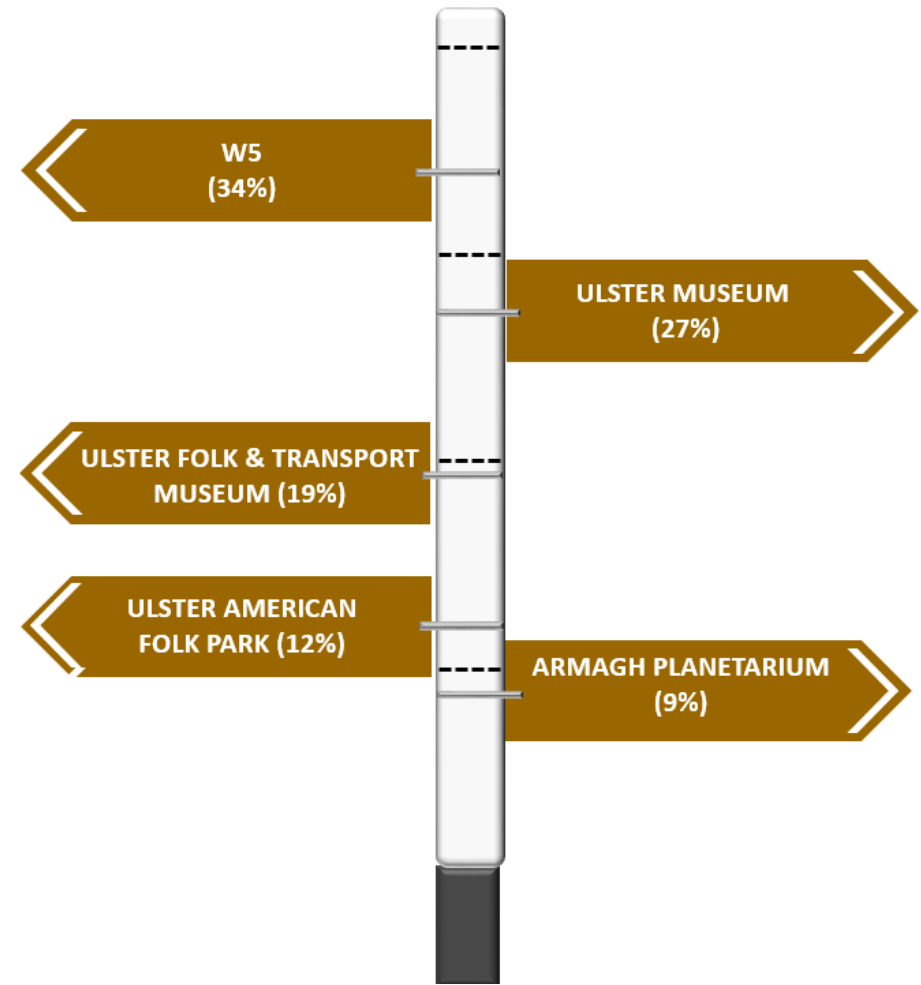


Children's experience of museums and science centres

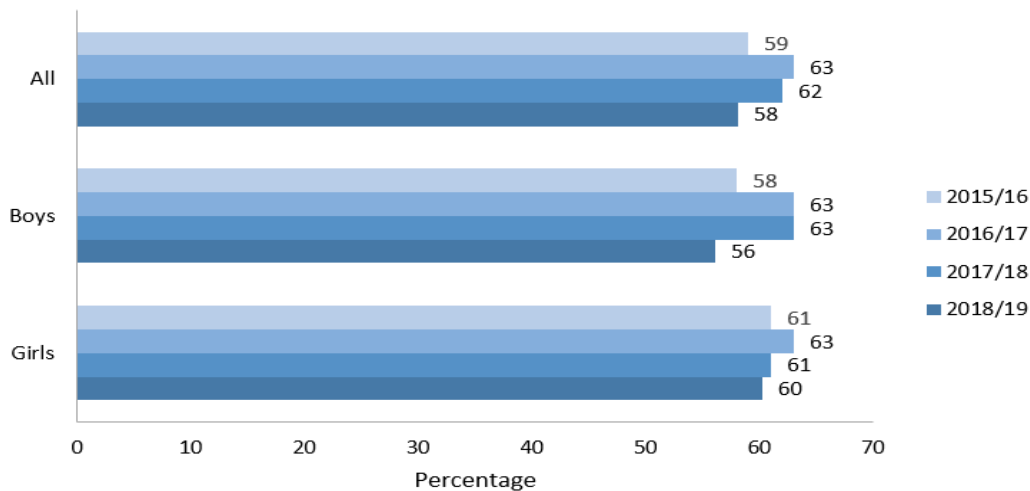
According to heads of households with a child(ren), 58% of children aged 4-15 years old had visited a museum or science centre outside of school within the previous year. There was no difference found between the proportions of boys (56%) and girls (60%) who had done so .

The most popular museum or science centre was W5 where over a third of children (34%) had visited outside of school within the previous year. Almost three in every ten children (27%) had been to the Ulster Museum outside of school within the previous year, making this venue the second most popular museum or science centre for children.

The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum was the third most popular museum or science centre with just under a fifth of children (19%) having visited this venue at least once over the previous year.



Gender and visits to museums and science centres



The proportion of children who had visited a museum or science centre over the last year has remained relatively consistent since the question was first asked in 2015/16. Year on year the proportion of boys who had visited a museum or science centre has decreased from 63% in 2017/18 to 56% in 2018/19.

Libraries

Use of the public library service

A quarter of adults in Northern Ireland (25%) had used the public library service at least once within the previous year, unchanged from 2017/18 (25%).

Women were more likely to have used the public library service than men (30% and 20% respectively). Usage of the public library service decreased with age, with those aged 44 and under (31%) more likely to have used the service within the previous year than those aged 45 and over (21%).

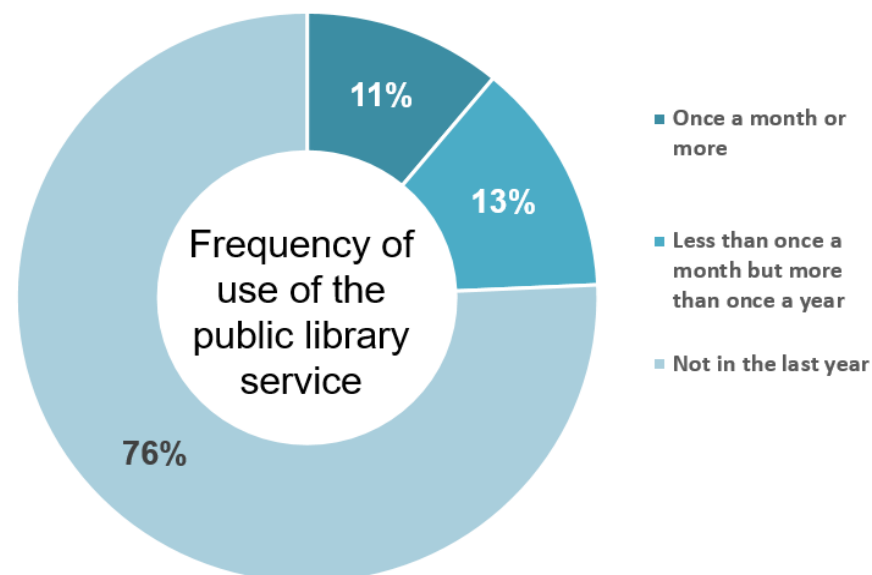
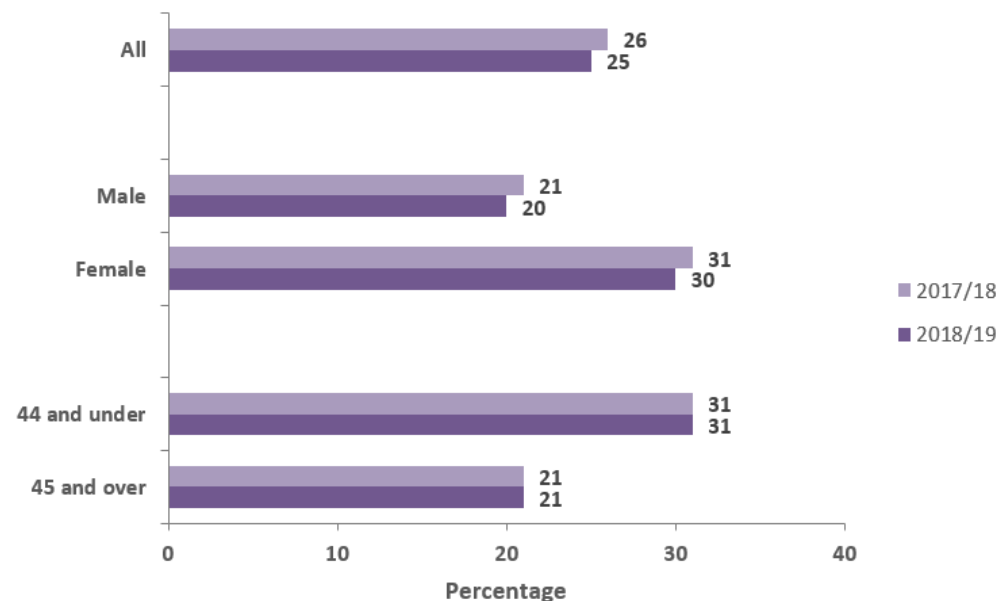
Adults who have a disability were less likely to have used the public library service than those who do not have a disability (22% and 26% respectively).

Adults who have dependants (31%) were more likely to have used the public library service compared to those who don't (21%). Similarly, those who lived in urban areas were more likely to have used the service than those who live in rural areas (27% and 21% respectively).

There were no differences in the use of public library services when comparing the least deprived with the most deprived areas.

Frequency of use of the public library service

Over one in every ten of the adult population (11%) used the public library service once a month or more within the last year, while three quarters (76%) of all adults in Northern Ireland had not used the public library service at all within the last year.

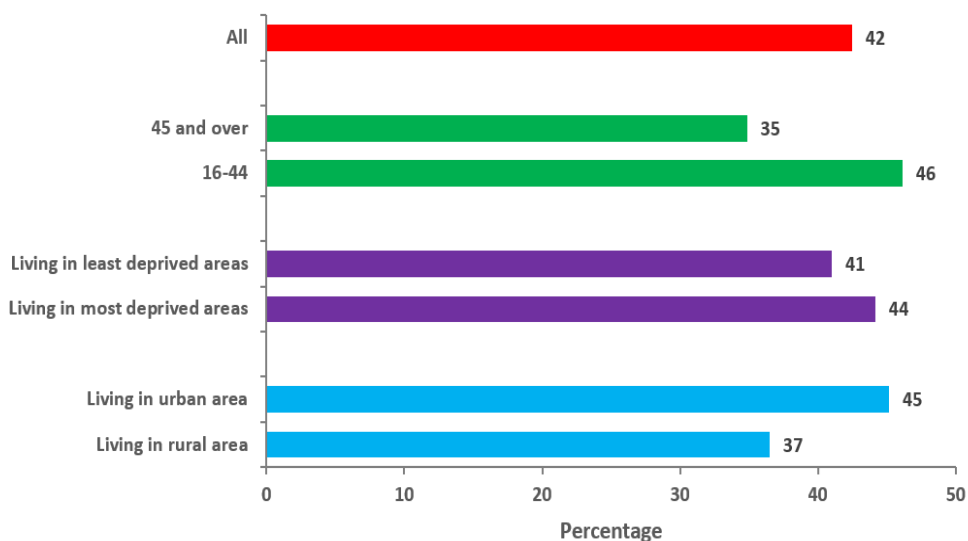


Libraries

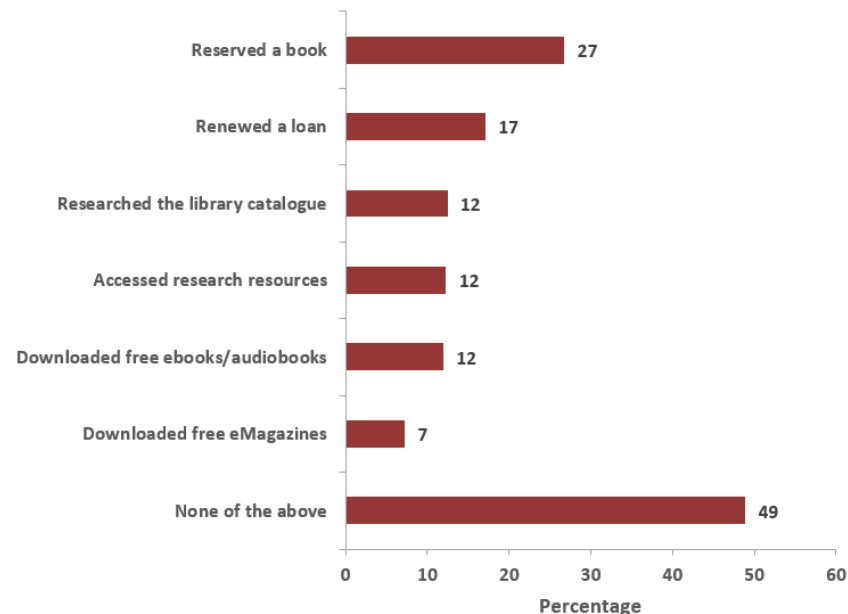
Online services used

More than a quarter of adult public library users (27%) had used the public library online services for the purposes of reserving a book. The second most popular use of online services was to renew a loan (17%).

Following this, just over a tenth of public library users used the online service to search the catalogue, to access research resources and to download ebooks and audiobooks (all 12%).



Reasons for using public library online services



Used public library service Wi-Fi

Of those adults who used the public library service within the last year just over four out of every ten (42%) used the free Wi-Fi.

Younger adults aged 44 and under were more likely to have used the free Wi-Fi than those aged 45 and over (46% and 35% respectively).

In 2018/19, of those adult public library users, 45% of those living in urban areas had used the free wifi, this is a significant increase on the proportion in 2017/18 (38%).

There are no differences in the use of the free Wi-Fi when comparing the least deprived with the most deprived areas and urban with rural areas.

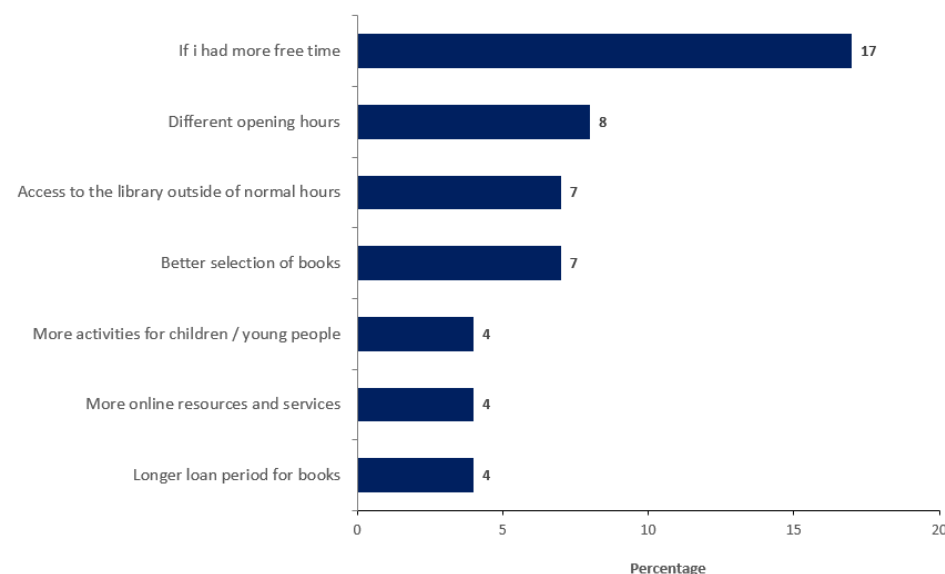
Libraries

Encouraging the use of the public library service

When asked what would encourage you to use the public library service more often, almost one-fifth of all adults (17%) cited “if I had more free time” as an encouraging factor.

Less than a tenth of adults (8%) said that different opening hours, access to the library outside of normal hours (7%) and a better selection of books (7%) would encourage the use of the public library service. However, two-fifths of adults (42%) stated that they already use the public library service as much as they want to.

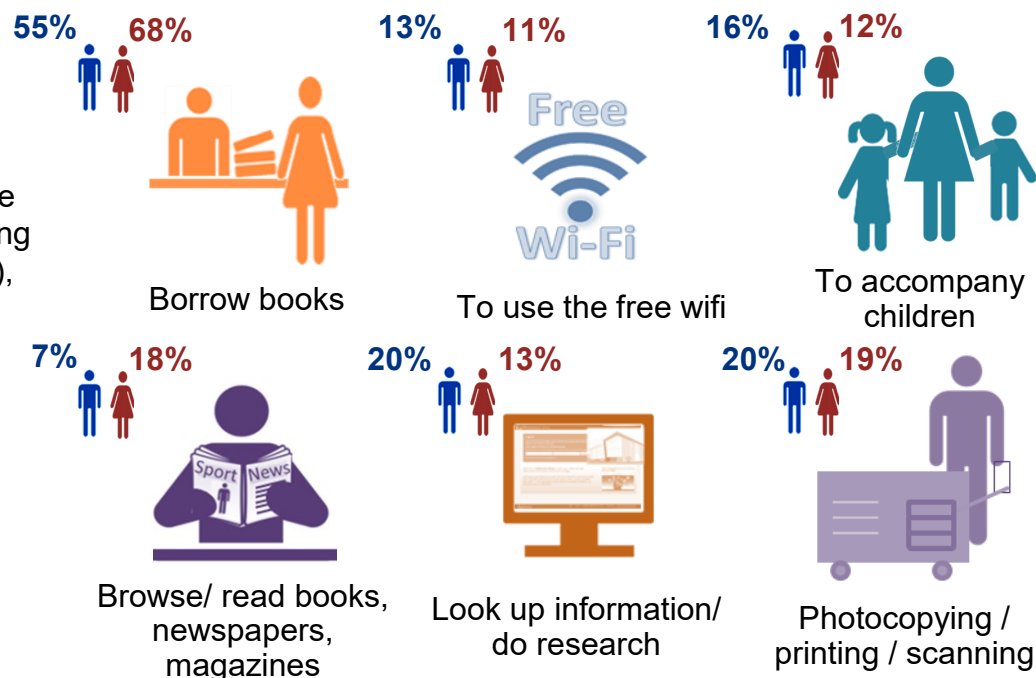
Most frequently cited encouraging factors



Reasons for using the public library service

The majority of adult public library users (63%) had used the public library service for the traditional purposes of borrowing/returning/renewing books, making this the most popular reason by far. Following this, almost a fifth (19%) of public library users cited “to use photocopier/printer/scanner” as the next most popular reason for using the public library service. “To look up information/do research” (16%), “to browse/read books, newspapers, magazines”, “to accompany children” (both 13%) and “to use the free wifi” (12%) were the next most frequently cited reasons for using the public library service among public library users.

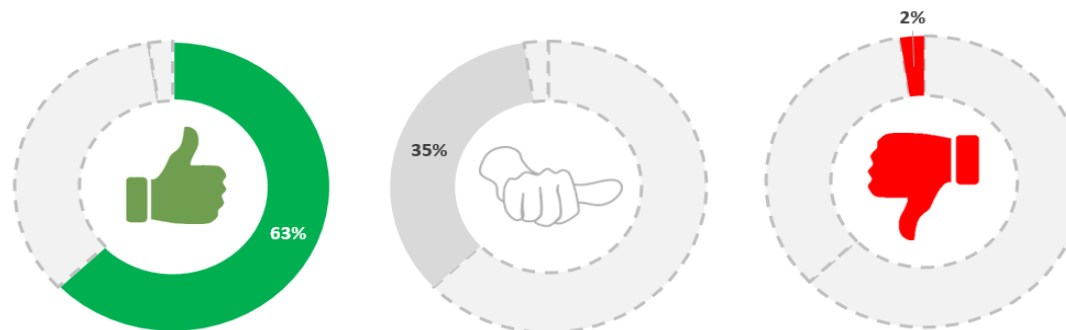
Considering reasons for using the public library service among men and women who have used the public library service over the last year, women, were more likely than men to borrow/return/renew books (68% v 55%) and to browse/read books, newspapers and magazines (18% v 7%).



Libraries

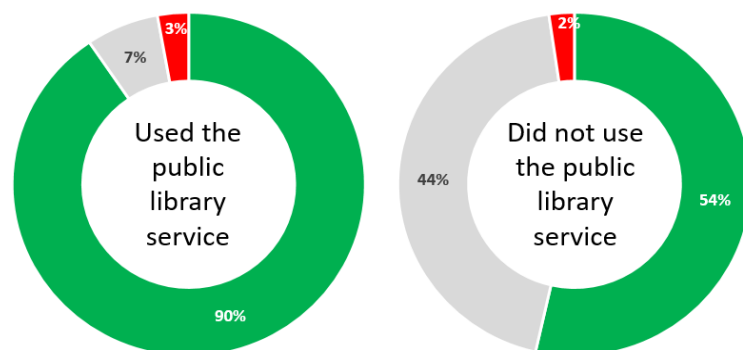
Satisfaction with public library provision

Almost two-thirds of adults (63%) were satisfied with public library provision in Northern Ireland in 2018/19. This is a decrease on the proportion who were satisfied with public library provision in 2017/18 (71%). Only 2% stated that they were dissatisfied, similar to the 2% in 2017/18. The remainder of the adult population (35%) stated that they were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' with public library provision in Northern Ireland, an increase on 2017/18 (27%).

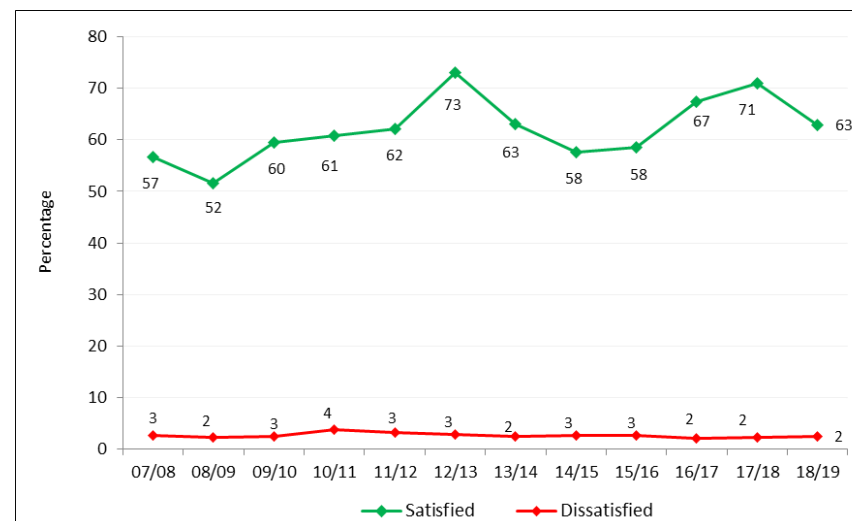


Satisfaction with public library provision was greater among adults who had used the public library service within the previous year (90%) than it was among adults who had not used the public library service within the previous year (54%).

Dissatisfaction levels remained low across both groups, with similar proportions of adults who had used the public library service and those who did not use the service reporting dissatisfaction.



Satisfaction with public library provision among adults in Northern Ireland has been fairly consistent throughout the trend period; however, satisfaction levels have declined in 2018/19 after increasing year on year from 2015/16.

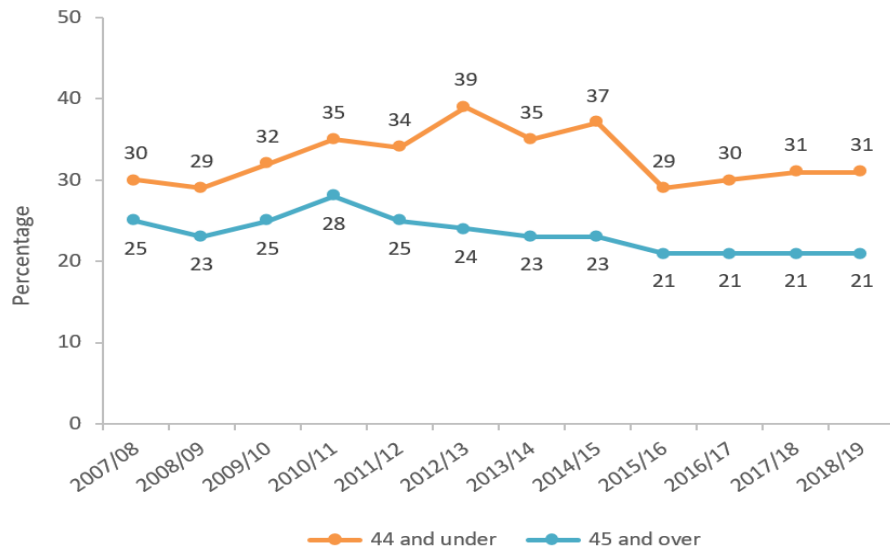
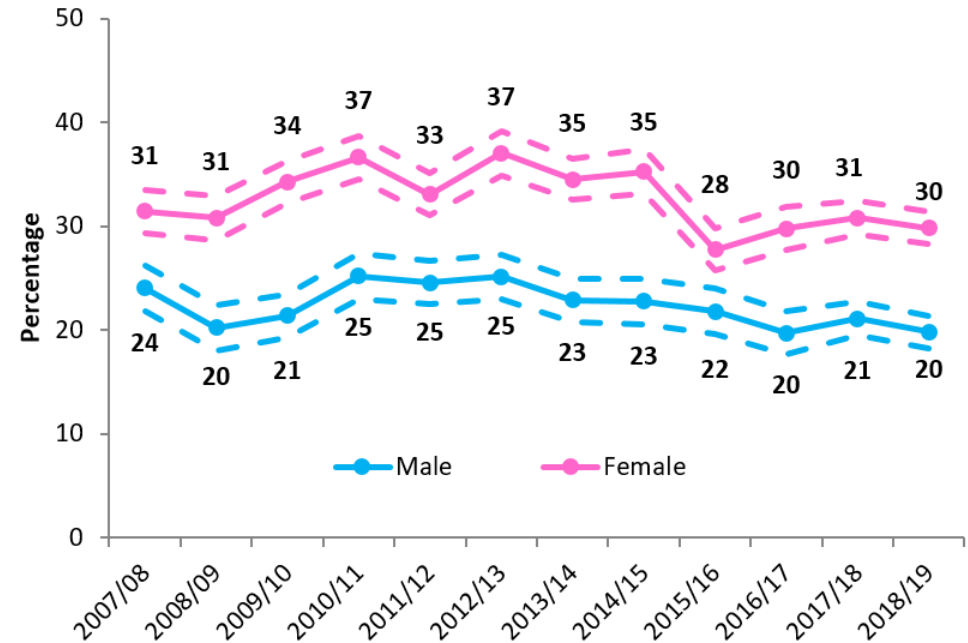


Trends

Gender and use of the public library service

Women were more likely to have used the public library service within the previous year (30%) than men (20%). Women have been more likely to have used the public library service over the entire trend period.

The 2018/19 figure for women using the public library service remains consistent with the previous two years (2016/17 and 2017/18) in being lower than the proportions recorded in 2014/15 and earlier.



Age and use of the public library service

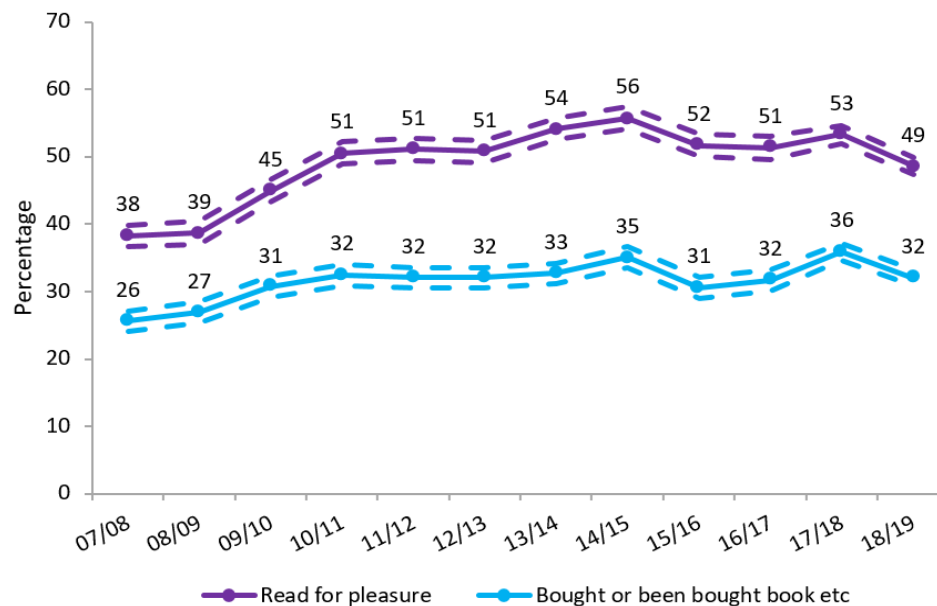
Considering the use of the public library service over the trend period in terms of two general age groups, a higher proportion of younger adults aged 44 and under have used the public library service each year than older adults aged 45 and over.

In 2018/19, 31% of younger adults aged 16-44 used the public library service within the previous year compared to 21% of those aged 45 years and over.

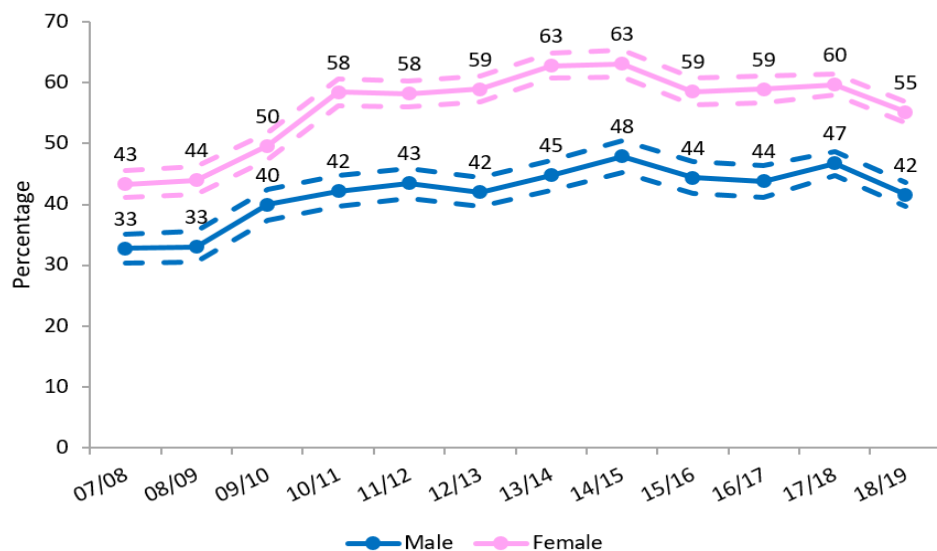
Read for pleasure and buying books

Other questions included in the survey provide context on the proportion of adults in Northern Ireland reading for pleasure and buying books. Figures show that around half of all adults (49%) had read for pleasure in the last year, a decrease on the 53% of adults who read for pleasure in 2017/18. This is also a decrease on the figures from 2013/14-2014/15, however is more consistent with the earlier trend from 2010/11-2012/13.

Under a third of all adults in Northern Ireland (32%) had bought or been bought a novel, or book of stories, poetry or plays in the last year. This is a decrease to that recorded in 2017/18 (36%).



Read for pleasure



Read for pleasure by gender

Women were more likely to have read for pleasure within the previous year (55%) than men (42%). These proportions have both decreased in comparison to 2017/18 figures (60% and 47% respectively). This difference between the sexes is seen across the whole trend period with women more likely to read for pleasure than men.

The proportions of both men and women reading for pleasure reached a peak in 2014/15, however they have generally declined in more recent years but are still above those of the start of the trend period.

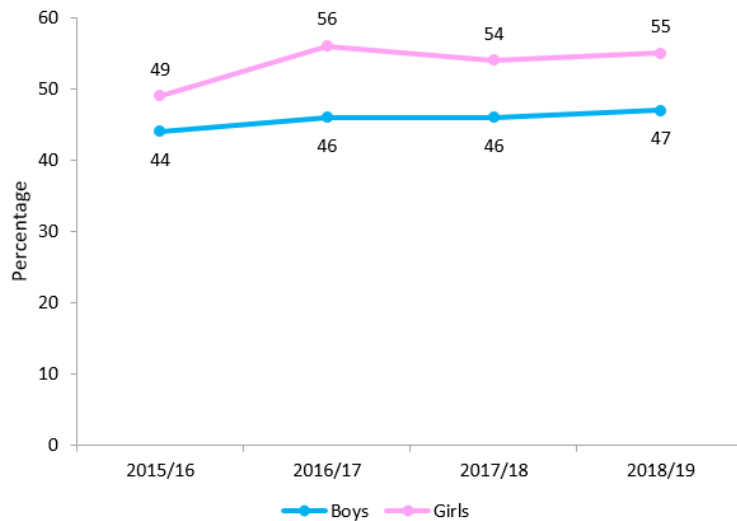
In 2018/19 a higher proportion of women had bought or been bought a novel, or book of stories, poetry or plays in the last year (37%) than men (26%). This has consistently been the case over the entire trend period.

Children's experience of the public library service

According to heads of households with a child(ren), half of children (51%) aged 4 - 15 years old had used the public library service outside of school within the previous year. There was a significant difference found between the proportions of girls (55%) and boys (47%) who had done so.

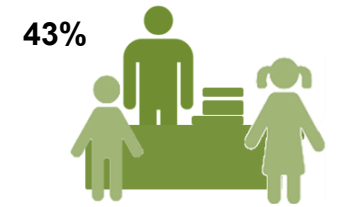
The main reason for using the public library service amongst children was 'To borrow / bring back or renew books' (43%), with girls more likely to have done so (47%) than boys (39%). Other popular reasons for using the public library service among children included 'To read books, newspapers or graphic novels' (10%), 'To do homework or study' (10%) and 'To go to an activity' (7%).

Gender and use of the public library service



Half of children (51%) had used the public library service in 2018/19, similar to the proportion who had done so in 2017/18 (50%) although an increase on the 46% who had used it in 2015/16.

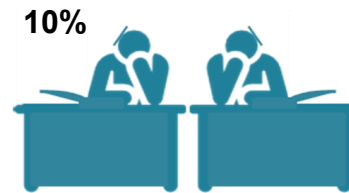
Analysis by gender shows that the proportion of boys and girls who have used the public library service has remained consistent over the period.



To borrow / bring back or renew books



To read books, newspapers or graphic novels



To do homework or study

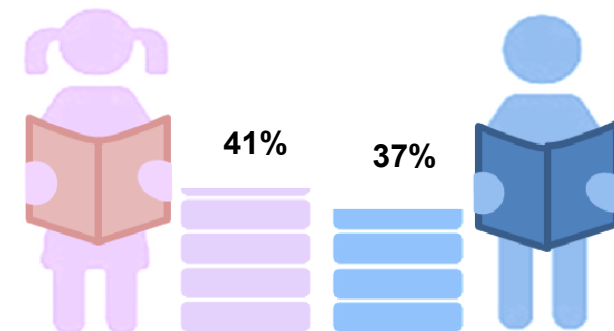


To go to an activity

Read for pleasure

According to heads of households with a child(ren), just under two-fifths of children (39%) aged 4 - 15 years old had read for pleasure outside of school within the previous year.

There was no difference between the proportion of girls (41%) who had read for pleasure outside of school and the proportion of boys who had done so (37%).

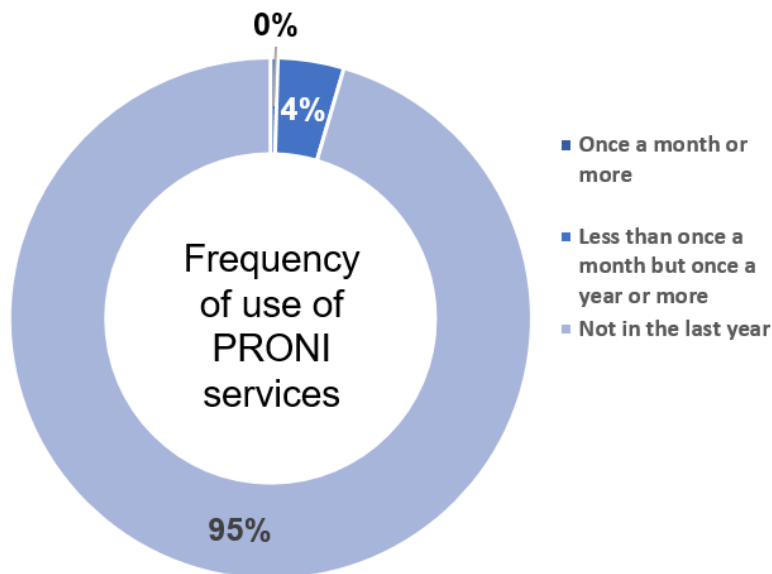
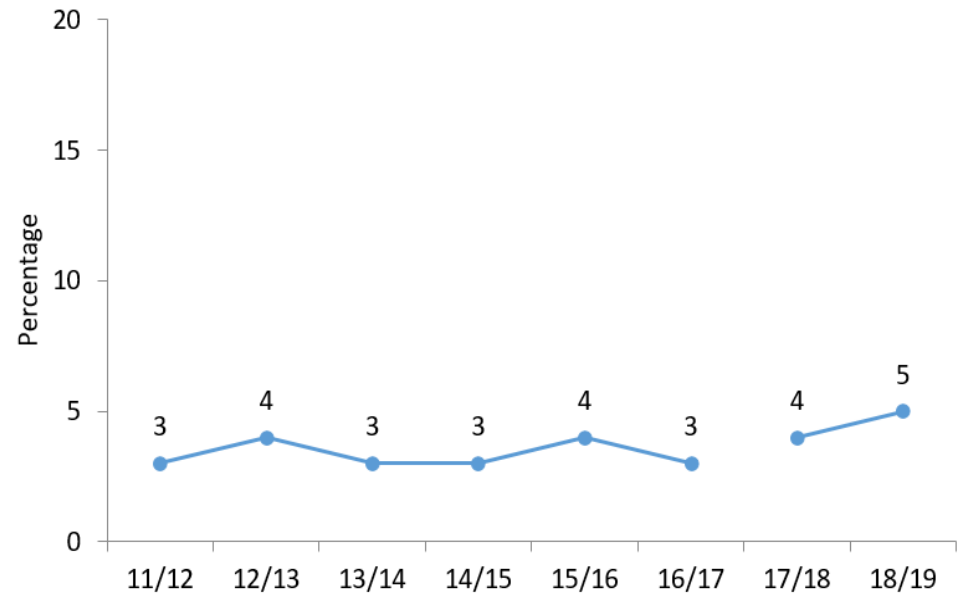


Visits to and use of Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) services

In 2017/18, the PRONI question was extended to include contact with PRONI both online and by telephone as well as visiting PRONI. Five per cent of adults had visited PRONI or used PRONI services within the last 12 months.

Analysis by age show no differences in the proportions of adults who had visited PRONI, older adults aged 45 years and over (5%) were more likely to have visited PRONI or used their services than younger adults aged 16-44 (5%). However, adults who lived in the least deprived areas were more likely to have visited PRONI or used PRONI services than those who live in the most deprived areas (3% and 1% respectively).

Given the change to the question from 2017/18 to capture full utilisation of PRONI services, figures from 2011/12 to 2016/17 cannot be directly compared with the 2017/18 and 2018/19 figures. The proportion of adults who visited PRONI had remained relatively consistent over the available trend period, 2011/12 to 2016/17.



Frequency of use of PRONI services

In 2018/19, respondents were also asked how often they have used PRONI service over the previous year. Four per cent of adults visited PRONI or used PRONI services at least once in the previous year but not more than once a month.

PRONI gathers information directly from their visitors. Statistics from this system are published each year on the DfC website in the [Digest of statistics for the Public Record Office](#).

Definitions and technical notes

Continuous Household Survey

The Continuous Household Survey (CHS) is a Northern Ireland wide household survey administered by Central Survey Unit, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. The sample for this survey consists of a systematic random sample of 9,000 addresses selected from the Land and Property Service's list of private addresses. The findings reported for 2018/19 are based on 5,736 respondents, aged 16 and over, who answered the key questions required to measure progress against the Programme for Government indicator (arts, libraries, museums and PRONI questions) as well as the sport participation question on the survey. For the remaining questions (volunteering and place of historic interest), the findings are based on 2,779 respondents.

Weighting the Continuous Household Survey

Analysis of the culture, arts and sport modules of the CHS have been weighted for non-response. A chi square goodness-of-fit test showed that neither the larger CHS sample (5,736) nor the smaller sample (2,779) were representative of the population by age and sex when compared with the Population and Migration Estimates Northern Ireland 2016 (NISRA). As a result, six separate weights were produced for age, sex and age and sex combined, three for each sample size.

Non-response weighting sometimes increases standard errors, although the impact tends to be fairly small, i.e. the adjustment may be less or greater than 1, but will generally be reasonably close to 1. In the case of the culture, arts and leisure modules of CHS, the values of the adjustment for all three weighting systems are so close to one, it is not necessary to take account of this in the calculation of standard error and confidence intervals.

While weighting for non-response (also called post-stratification) should reduce bias, it must be acknowledged that it will not eliminate bias. The reasons individuals choose to take part in surveys are complex and depend on lots of factors specific to the individual. As a result, the non-response biases in surveys are likely to be complex. Post-stratification works on the assumption that, by aligning the survey to the population along a small number of dimensions such as age and gender, many of these complex biases will reduce. However, it would be misleading to suggest that they will be eliminated.

Engaged in culture and arts - Have done at least one of the following in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Engaged in the arts
- Used the public library service
- Visited a museum or science centre
- Visited PRONI

Arts engagement – Either participated in arts activities or attended arts events in the 12 months prior to the CHS.

Arts participation – Participated in at least one of the following arts activities in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Ballet
- Other dance (not for fitness)
- Sang to an audience or rehearsed for a performance (not karaoke)
- Played a musical instrument to an audience or rehearse for a performance
- Played a musical instrument for own pleasure
- Written music
- Rehearsed or performed in play/drama
- Rehearsed or performed in opera/opera
- Painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture
- Photography as an artistic activity (not family or holiday snaps)
- Made films or videos as an artistic activity (not family or holiday)
- Used a computer to create original artworks or animation
- Textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting
- Wood crafts such as wood turning, carving or furniture making
- Other crafts such as calligraphy, pottery or jewellery making
- Written any stories or plays
- Written any poetry

Arts attendance – Attended at least one of the following arts events in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Film at a cinema or other venue
- Exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture
- Craft exhibition (not a crafts market)
- Event connected with books or writing (such as poetry reading or storytelling)
- Circus
- Carnival
- An arts festival
- A community festival
- Play or drama
- Other theatre performance (such as a musical or pantomime)
- Opera/opera
- Classical music performance
- Rock or pop music performance
- Jazz performance
- Folk, or traditional or world music performance
- Other live music event
- Ballet
- An Irish dance performance
- Other dance event
- A museum

Used the public library service – Used the public library service at least once in the 12 months prior to the CHS, e.g. visited a public library or mobile library; used the Libraries NI website; attended a library event outside a library. Public library does NOT include school, college, or university libraries. A library event outside a library is an event run by Libraries NI which has taken place in a venue other than a library.

Visited a museum or science centre – Visited one of the following museums or science centres in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Andrew Jackson & US Rangers Centre
- Address House
- Argory
- Armagh County Museum
- Armagh Planetarium
- Armagh Public Library
- Ballycastle Museum
- Ballymoney Museum
- Barn Museum
- Carrickfergus Museum
- Castle Ward
- Coleraine Museum
- Craigavon Museum
- Down County Museum
- Downpatrick & County Down Railway Museum
- FE McWilliam Gallery and Studio
- Fermanagh County Museum
- Flame - the Gasworks Museum of Ireland
- Florencecourt
- Garvagh Museum & Heritage Centre
- Green Lane Museum
- Hezlett House
- Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum
- Inniskillings Museum
- Limavady Museum, RVACC
- Linen Hall Library
- Mid Antrim Museum
- Milford House Museum
- Mount Stewart
- Museum at the Mill
- North Down Museum
- Newry & Mourne Museum
- Northern Ireland War Memorial
- Police Museum
- Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
- Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum
- Royal Ulster Rifles Museum
- Sentry Hill House
- Somme Museum
- Springhill
- Strabane Museum Service
- Tower Museum
- Ulster American Folk Park
- Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
- Ulster Museum
- W5, Odyssey Centre
- Some other museum not mentioned

Visited a National Museum – Visited one of the following museums in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Ulster Museum
- Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
- Ulster American Folk Park

Used PRONI services – Have done one of the following in the 12 months prior to the CHS:

- Visited the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) to carry out personal research
- Visited PRONI to carry out business research
- Visited PRONI for a talk/event or as part of a group
- Used the PRONI website to search the online catalogue
- Used the PRONI website to use another application (e.g. Will Calendars, Valuation Revision Books, etc.)

Deprivation – The data have been analysed by whether respondents are living in the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) or in the 20% least deprived SOAs. This is estimated using the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 which is a weighted combination of seven domains of deprivation. Rank 1 indicates the most deprived SOA, while rank 890 denotes the least deprived SOA.

¹ [Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Report 2017](#)

Statistical significance in this report

Any statements in this report regarding differences between groups such as males and females, different age groups, religion, etc., are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that we can be 95% confident that the differences between groups are actual differences and have not just arisen by chance. Both the base numbers and the sizes of the percentages have an effect on statistical significance. Therefore on occasion, a difference between two groups may be statistically significant while the same difference in percentage points between two other groups may not be statistically significant. The reason for this is because the larger the base numbers or the closer the percentages are to 0 or 100, the smaller the standard errors. This leads to increased precision of the estimates which increases the likelihood that the difference between the proportions is actually significant and did not just arise by chance.

Other notes

The following should be noted when interpreting figures and tables:

- Percentages less than 0.5% are denoted by '0' and where there are no responses, they are denoted by '-'.
- Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.
- Percentages may not add to 100% for questions where multiple responses are allowed.
- Detailed tabulations are not provided where the number of respondents is too small to allow meaningful analysis.
- The base number of responses to each question, which is shown in each table, is the unweighted count. The base may vary due to some respondents not answering certain questions.