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2026

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READER INFORMATION

Purpose

This publication aims to provide a comprehensive and accessible overview of key statistics and information relating to energy in Northern Ireland. The report endeavours to present a disparate range of existing and emerging information and statistics into a single coherent source. The majority of statistics and data included are Accredited Official Statistics or Official Statistics sourced from producers such as the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) among others.

Reporting Period

The data presented in this report was the most up-to-date available at the time of writing (end of April 2026). While some data presented relates to 2025 or 2026, other figures relate to earlier periods. Further details on data sources and quality are provided in the accompanying Quality Report on the main Energy in Northern Ireland 2026 page.

Target audience

This publication is intended to be helpful and informative to a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in the energy sector including: Department for the Economy (DfE), elected representatives, academics, energy interest groups, the media and general public.

Next Updates

It is intended that this report will be updated in full every two years. Therefore, the next edition is provisionally expected around the summer of 2028.

An Official Statistics Publication

Official Statistics are produced to a high professional standard. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

Feedback

We are keen to engage with users of our statistics and welcome your comments on this publication. You can provide feedback using our online form here, or alternatively email us at energystatistics@economy-ni.gov.uk.

ENERGY IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2026

This is the sixth edition of a biennial publication that aims to provide a comprehensive and accessible overview of key statistics and information relating to energy in Northern Ireland. The report endeavours to present a disparate range of existing and emerging information and statistics into a single coherent source. The majority of statistics and data included are Accredited Official Statistics or Official Statistics sourced from producers such as the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) among others.

The publication is structured around 6 chapters including:

- Northern Ireland in context
- Energy and the economy
- Electricity
- Renewable generation of electricity
- Total energy consumption
- Energy and the consumer

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Energy IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2026

1 Northern Ireland in Context

CHAPTER 1: NORTHERN IRELAND IN CONTEXT

The nature and scale of energy within any country or region is shaped by a complex inter-play of factors and, inevitably, comparisons between different regions or countries in respect of energy production, generation, distribution and consumption will reflect these factors. The following overview relating to Northern Ireland, its geography, climate, population, transport, housing and economy is intended to provide a broad scene setting context for the picture of energy in Northern Ireland as rehearsed in this report.

Energy Policy

Significant developments in energy policy at local, national and international levels have taken place since the previous full publication of the Energy in Northern Ireland report in 2022 and the shorter condensed update in 2024.

United Nations

The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio[1], amongst other outcomes, produced the Rio Declaration and adopted the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which set the foundation for future progress through the Conference of the Parties (COP)[2] annual meetings. The COP is the supreme governing body of the UNFCCC meeting annually to guide global climate policy. With the initial COP meeting in Berlin in 1995, subsequent COP meetings progressed from concept to concrete actions on emission reduction, climate finance, adaptation and fossil fuel transition. Notable COP meetings included COP3 in Kyoto (1997) which legally committed developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and COP21 in Paris (2015) which introduced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and set long-term temperature goals.

More recently, meetings were held in Dubai COP28 (2023), Baku COP29 (2024) and Belem COP30 (2025). COP28 focused on the first global stocktake under the Paris Agreement, COP29 shifted attention towards finance and COP30 marked ten years since the Paris Agreement and focused on translating negotiated targets into delivery. Taken together, COPs 28–30 moved from diagnosis, to financing, and then to implementation. Issues around the fossil fuel transition, however, remain unresolved.

1 See: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3-14 June 1992 | United Nations

2 See: Conference of the Parties (COP) | UNFCCC

European Union

The EU Renewable Energy Directives[3] provides the EU-wide legislative structure to progress renewable energy across member states. These Directives focus on decarbonisation, fostering investment and innovation in renewables, enhancing energy autonomy, and upholding environmental sustainability across key sectors. The EU Renewable Energy Directive III (RED III) is the third iteration of the Renewable Energy Directives.

Adopted in 2023, it forms a key part of the Fit for 55 package (the legislative initiative to deliver at least a 55% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels) and pave the way toward climate-neutrality by 2050 under the EU Green Deal strategy.

A core EU-wide, legally binding target requires renewable energy to comprise at least 42.5% of the EU's gross final energy consumption by 2030 with an ambition to reach 45%. While Member States retain discretion over their response and contributions, the EU-level target is binding. RED III introduced additional sector-specific requirements particularly for transport, industry and renewable hydrogen and committed Member States to a range of enabling reforms. These reforms include accelerated and simplified permitting procedures, the designation of Renewable Acceleration Areas, and stronger provisions on grid integration, storage and system flexibility.

UK Energy Act 2023[4]

Consistent with the objectives of the Paris Agreement and sharing commonality with the EU RED III, the UK Energy Act 2023 received Royal Assent in October 2023 and represented the largest package of UK energy legislation in a generation. Overall, the Act established broad enabling powers rather than detailed operational rules, providing a flexible framework for reform.

The Act established a legal framework to transform the UK energy system.

The legislation was structured around three core pillars:

1. Unlocking private investment in clean energy
2. Reforming the energy system and protecting consumers
3. Ensuring system safety, security and resilience

A major reform was the creation of an Independent System Operator and Planner (ISOP), tasked with taking on strategic planning responsibilities from the National Grid and delivering whole-system planning across electricity, gas and future low-carbon networks.

3 See: Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 98/70/EC as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources, and repealing Council Directive (EU) 2015/652

4 See: New laws passed to bolster energy security and deliver net zero - GOV.UK

UK National Energy System Operator (NESO)[5]

The UK National Energy System Operator (NESO) was created under the Energy Act 2023 as the body constituted under the new ISOP framework as outlined in the Act.

To fulfil the ISOP commitment, the UK Government acquired the National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) from National Grid plc. NGESO was subsequently renamed the National Energy System Operator (NESO) Limited and designated as the ISOP.

NESO began operating in October 2024 as a publicly owned but operationally independent body, wholly owned by the Secretary of State and responding to several core issues including:

- The need to deliver net zero by 2050 and clean power by 2030, requiring rapid deployment of renewables, expanded networks and increased system flexibility
- The heightened energy security risks exposed by global gas market volatility
- The growing system complexity driven by intermittent generation, electrification and emerging technologies such as hydrogen and carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS)
- The recognition by government, Ofgem and industry that whole-system planning was required in place of siloed network decisions

NESO's statutory objectives include supporting delivery of net zero; ensuring security of supply; and promoting an efficient and economical energy system. Secondary duties include facilitating competition and considering consumer impacts. Key operational responsibilities span electricity system operation, gas system planning, strategic energy planning, and market and connections reform. NESO operates independently of government and industry but is regulated by Ofgem, with governance arrangements defined in a formal framework document agreed with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), HM Treasury and UK Government Investments.

UK Clean Power 2030[6&7]

Clean Power 2030 is the UK Government's commitment to operate Great Britain's electricity system on clean power by 2030 to form the backbone of the wider transition to net zero. The strategy is set out in the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, published by DESNZ in December 2024 following independent advice from NESO.

Clean power includes renewables, nuclear, gas with carbon capture and storage, and hydrogen-to-power and is defined as a system where:

- Clean sources produce at least 95% of Great Britain's generation
- Clean power sources produce at least as much power as Great Britain consumes in total
- Carbon emissions intensity of Great Britain's electricity generation is well below 50gCO2e/kWh

5 See: National Energy System Operator (NESO) | National Energy System Operator
6 See: Clean Power 2030 Action Plan - GOV.UK
7 See: Clean Power 2023 Metrics methodology

The strategy aims to cut energy bills by reducing exposure to volatile gas prices, strengthen energy security, enable economy-wide electrification, and unlock investment, jobs and industrial growth. NESO provides the analytical foundation for Clean Power 2030 and leads strategic network planning, connections reform and ongoing monitoring of delivery. Northern Ireland generation is excluded from these metrics in line with the Clean Power Action Plan.

Ireland's National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030 (NECP)[8]

Updated in July 2024, Ireland's NECP collates the policies, measures and actions related to energy and climate in a range of government plans including, the Climate Action Plan, the National Development Plan, and Project Ireland 2040, into one cohesive document.

National Energy and Climate Plans are the framework within which EU Member States must notify their climate and energy objectives, targets, policies, and measures to the European Commission. The NECP covers five dimensions of the EU Energy Union: Decarbonisation; Energy efficiency; Energy security; Internal energy markets; and Research, innovation and competitiveness.

A range of emissions and energy targets were outlined including a renewable energy target set at a 43% share of renewables in gross final consumption by 2030. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) publish an annual Energy in Ireland report[9] and provide evidence on progress made in relation to various energy targets set.

Northern Ireland Energy Strategy

The Energy Strategy: The Path to Net Zero Energy was published by the Northern Ireland Executive in December 2021. The three targets outlined in the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy are:

- Energy Savings: Deliver energy savings of 25% from buildings and industry by 2030
- Renewables: Meet at least 80% of electricity consumption from a diverse mix of renewable sources by 2030 (consistent with the 2022 Northern Ireland Climate Change Act) and
- Green Economy: Double the size of the low carbon and renewable energy economy to a turnover of more than £2 billion by 2030.

A mid-term review of the Energy Strategy was published in December 2025[10] and aimed to: highlight achievements and constraints; report on progress; and address the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) October 2025 report into the Energy Strategy which evaluated the efficiency and effectiveness of the approach taken to implement it.

8 See: Ireland's National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030
9 See: Energy in Ireland 2025 v1.0 complete.pdf
10 See: Mid-Term Review of the Energy Strategy – The Path to Net Zero Energy | Department for the Economy

The mid-term review set out the plans for implementation of the NIAO recommendations in its report on the delivery of the Energy Strategy. Future developments include the publication by the Department for the Economy (DfE) of an Action Plan in 2026, slightly later than in previous years, to enable thorough consideration of the Audit recommendations and integration into Energy Strategy delivery. The mid-term review outlined that it is the Department's intention to set out, in 2026, an energy policy position statement with milestones to 2030.

Geography

Northern Ireland is situated on the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland, sharing a land border with the Republic of Ireland to the south and west. Northern Ireland is dependent on air and sea routes for travel and connectivity with the UK and farther afield, with road, rail and air links to the Republic of Ireland. Given its location, Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK having a land border with the European Union.

At 14,130 km^2, the area of Northern Ireland[11] comprises around 20% of the area of the island of Ireland[12] and around 6% of the area of the United Kingdom.

Climate[13]

The Met Office provides descriptions and information relating to the regional climates of the UK. The climate of Northern Ireland is described as being characterised by being relatively stable, a consequence of the moderating effects of the Atlantic Ocean bringing relatively mild winters and cool summers.

The mean annual temperature at low altitudes in Northern Ireland varies from about 8.5 °C to 10.0 °C, with the higher values occurring around or near to the coasts. The January mean daily minimum temperatures vary from about 0.5 °C in the upland areas to about 2.5 °C on the coast. July is normally the warmest month in Northern Ireland, with mean daily maximum temperatures varying from about 17.5 °C in the upland areas and along the north coast to almost 20 °C in low lying areas south of Lough Neagh and in Fermanagh.

Northern Ireland is one of the windier parts of the UK, with the windiest areas being over the highest ground and along the coasts of Counties Antrim and Down. The strongest winds are associated with the passage of deep areas of low pressure close to or across the UK. The frequency and strength of these depressions is greatest in winter, especially from November to January, and this is when mean speeds and gusts (short duration peak values) are strongest.

On the whole, Northern Ireland is cloudier than England because of the hilly nature of the terrain and the proximity to the Atlantic. The dullest parts of Northern Ireland are the upland areas of the north and west, with annual average sunshine totals of less than 1,100 hours.

11 https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160108051201/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/beginner-s-guide/administrative/the-countries-of-the-uk/index.html
12 https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/ireland/ielandst.htm
13 northern-ireland_-climate-met-office.pdf

Mean monthly sunshine figures reach a maximum in May and are at their lowest in December. Whilst the key factor is variation in the length of the day through the year, cloud cover plays a part as well. A feature is the reduction in mean monthly sunshine that typically occurs in July and August, accompanied by increased cloudiness, which is associated with an increase in the prevalence of westerly winds.

Population

The population of Northern Ireland on census day, 21 March 2021, was 1,903,175 while the number of households in Northern Ireland was 768,810.

The population of Northern Ireland is projected to peak at 1.95 million in 2033 and then to fall to 1.93 million by 2047 driven, in the main, by a change to more deaths than births by 2031[14]. Over the period to 2047, the population will increasingly age with the median age projected to increase from 40.0 to 46.7 years between 2022 and 2047, with the largest projected population growth for those aged 65 and over (49.6% growth) and 85 and over (122.2% growth). Within the UK, Northern Ireland is projected to have the smallest population growth between 2022 and 2047 at 1.1% compared to 14.5% in England, 10.3% in Wales and 6.2% in Scotland.

The latest 2024 based mid-year population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics[15] put the population density in Northern Ireland, expressed as the number of occupants per square kilometre, at 142 people per km^2, compared to 71 in Scotland, 154 in Wales and 450 in England. By comparison, population density in Ireland in 2022[16] was 73 people per km^2.

Transport

In 2022/23 and compared to the UK as a whole (78%), households in Northern Ireland (84%) reported a higher level of access to a car which has been a consistent picture over recent years[17&18].

In Northern Ireland in Q2 2025, of the 1,287,400 licensed vehicles, over half (57%) were diesel fuelled with 35% petrol fuelled compared to 38% and 50% respectively for the 41,435,900 vehicles licensed in the whole of the UK[19]. In the UK, 5,030,400 hybrid or fully electric licensed vehicles were registered in 2025 quarter 2, comprising 12% of all licensed vehicles. In Northern Ireland, 104,600 hybrid or fully electric vehicles were licensed in 2025 Q2 comprising 8% of all licensed vehicles in Northern Ireland. By comparison, in 2020 Q2, 13,000 hybrid or fully electric vehicles were licensed in Northern Ireland representing just over 1% of all licensed vehicles.

14 Statistical Bulletin - 2022-based Population Projections for Northern Ireland_1.pdf
15 Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics
16 Population and Age Ireland and Northern Ireland - A Joint Census Publication 2021-2022 - Central Statistics Office
17 https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/datasets/familyspendingworkbook4expenditurebyhouseholdcharacteristic
18 https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/chs-results
19 Vehicle licensing statistics data tables - GOV.UK

The Travel Survey for Northern Ireland[20] reports residents travelled, on average, 5,640 miles per person per year in 2023, approximately 15.5 miles per day. On average, 828 journeys were made per person in 2023 with an average journey length of 6.8 miles. The average time spent travelling per person was 289 hours (around 48 minutes per day), with an average journey time of 21 minutes.

In 2023, 70% of all journeys were made by car, 22% on foot, 4% by public transport, 1% by bicycle and 3% by other means. By broad comparison, and for England in 2024, 60% of journeys were made by car, 29% on foot, 8% by public transport, 2% by bicycle and 2% through other means[21].

Housing

The Northern Ireland House Conditions Survey for 2023 indicated that dwellings in Northern Ireland comprised 22% Bungalows, 28% terraced housing, 22% semi-detached houses, 21% detached houses and 7% flat/apartments[22]. Of these dwellings, including those that are vacant, 68% are owner occupied, 17% private rented, 10% Housing Executive public housing and 5% Housing Association owned. Almost one-third of dwellings were built after 1990 (31%) with just over two-fifths (43%) of dwellings built after 1980, with around 17% built prior to 1945.

As might be expected, the two major urban areas of Northern Ireland, Belfast and Derry City, account for almost half (48%) of all dwellings. More broadly, urban areas accounted for 65% of dwellings and rural areas for 35%.

In 2023, around 16,000 dwellings (2% of total) were considered unfit, with vacant dwellings accounting for 10,500 of the total number of unfit dwellings.

In relation to heating, Census 2021[23] indicates that 62% of households in Northern use home heating oil as their main source of heating or combined with other heating systems. By comparison, gas either solely or in combination with other heating systems provides heat for 34% of households.

Economy

The number of Value Added Tax (VAT) and/or Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) registered businesses operating in Northern Ireland in 2025 was 81,135[24]. For the UK as a whole, there were 2.73 million such businesses registered in 2025[25].

In 2025 almost one quarter (23%) of all registered businesses in Northern Ireland were within the Agriculture Forestry and Fishing industry group. Construction (14%), Retail (8%), Professional Scientific and Technical (8%), and Production (7%) comprised the other main industry groups.

20 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) report 2022 and 2023 data | Department for Infrastructure
21 NTS 2024: Introduction and main findings - GOV.UK
22 The Housing Executive - House Condition Survey
23 See Annex 6.1
24 Inter Departmental Business Register | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
25 UK business; activity, size and location - Office for National Statistics

By comparison, Agriculture Forestry and Fishing accounted for 5% of UK registered business, with Construction accounting for (14%), Retail (8%), Professional Scientific and Technical (15%), and Production (5%).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published balanced measure estimates (combining income and production approaches) of regional Gross Value Added (GVA) across the UK covering the period 1998 to 2023[26]. GVA is the measure of the value of goods and services produced, less the costs of production. In 2023, Northern Ireland's GVA amounted to £56bn compared to £2,465bn for the UK as a whole, with £2,113bn for England, £183bn for Scotland and £81bn for Wales.

ONS also produce estimates for Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is the total value of all the goods and services that a country (or region) produces or provides in a particular year. In 2023, Northern Ireland's GDP per head in current prices was £32,944 compared to £38,845 for the UK with £40,382 for England, £37,192 for Scotland and £29,316 for Wales.

Local indicators produced by ONS[27] reported the value of exports from Northern Ireland in 2023 to be £19bn compared to £32bn for Wales, £67bn for Scotland and £701bn for England.

The ONS local indicators also provide income and pay comparative figures. Gross disposable household income per head in Northern Ireland in 2023 was £20,403 compared to £20,140 for Wales, £22,908 for Scotland and £25,425 for England. Gross median weekly pay was £594 in Northern Ireland in 2025 compared to £602 in Wales, £643 in Scotland and £648 in England.

26 Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, UK - Office for National Statistics
27 Explore local indicators - ONS

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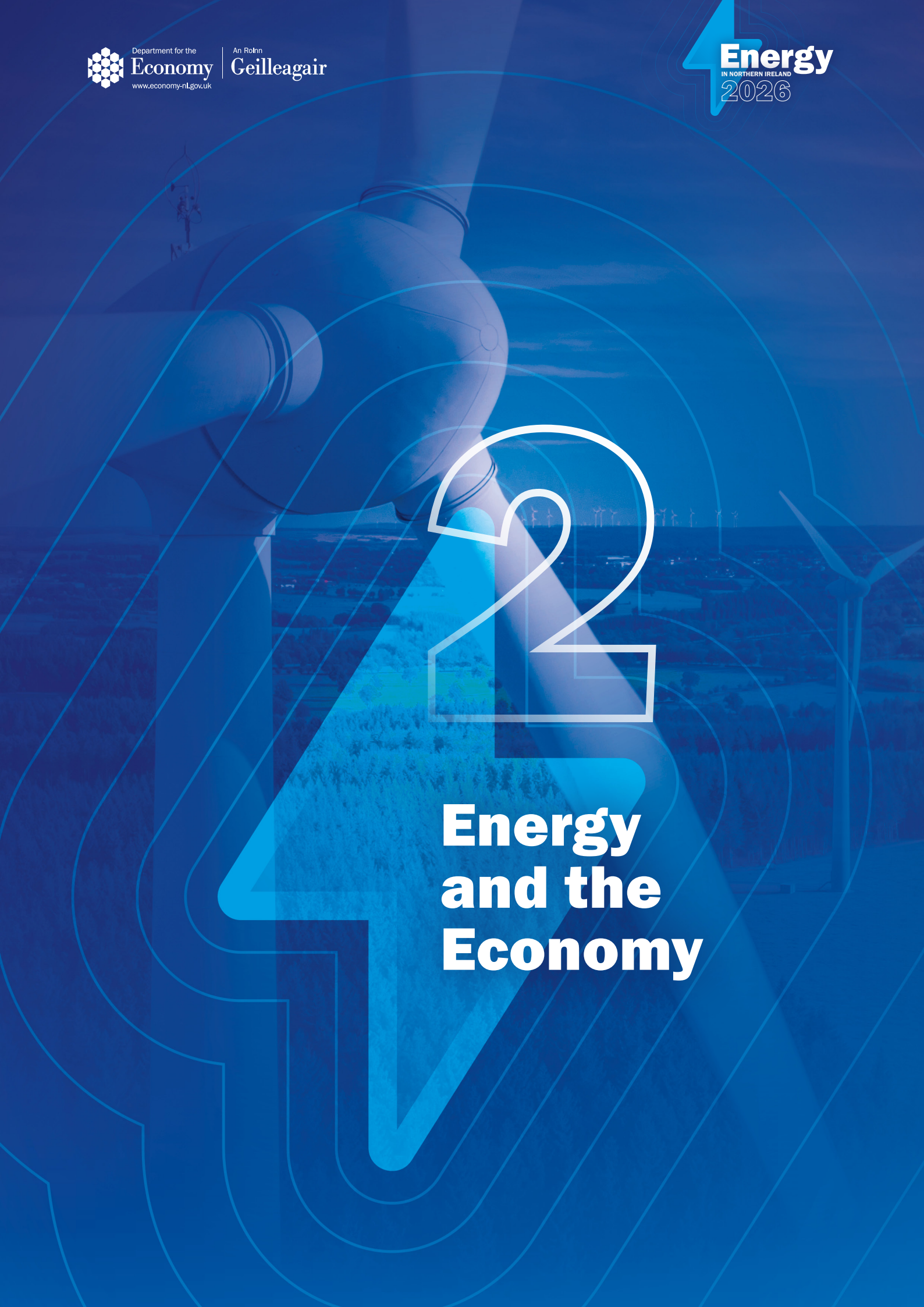


2 Energy and the Economy

CHAPTER 2: ENERGY AND THE ECONOMY

Summary of Key Points

The Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE)

- In 2024 in Northern Ireland, some £1.5 billion in turnover and 7,100 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs were generated directly by businesses active in the LCREE economy.
- Compared to 2019 estimates, turnover in 2024 in Northern Ireland was 42% higher and FTE jobs 29% higher.
- Over the period 2015 to 2024, businesses in Northern Ireland averaged around 2.1% of direct UK LCREE turnover (i.e. £1.5 billion out of £77.0 billion in 2024) and provided about 2.3% of direct UK LCREE full-time equivalent employment (i.e. 7,100 out of 304,000 direct FTE employees in 2024).
- Of the total LCREE activity in Northern Ireland in 2024, Low Carbon Electricity was the group that accounted for the largest proportion of direct turnover (45%) while the Energy Efficient Products group accounted for the highest proportion of direct FTE employees (45%).

Energy and the Wider Economy

- The total number of enterprises in the energy sector (constructed from a combination of Standard Industrial Classification codes) in Northern Ireland increased from 530 in 2015 to 980 in 2025, an 85% increase. This was the largest percentage increase of all UK countries over this period. The major contributing factor to the overall rise in the number of energy sector enterprises in Northern Ireland was the large increase in the 'Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply' sector (an increase of 290 enterprises over the period 2015 to 2025).
- In 2023, an estimated 5,027 employee jobs were in the energy sector in Northern Ireland. This was equivalent to 0.6% of all employee jobs in Northern Ireland in 2023.
- The proportion of employee jobs in the energy sector for Northern Ireland in 2023 (0.6%) was the lowest of all UK countries for this year: England (0.9%), Scotland (2.5%) and Wales (1.1%).
- The energy sector accounted for 4.9% of total Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2024, slightly lower than 2023 (5.3%) and 2014 (5.0%), and below its peak of 7.2% in 2020.

Introduction

This chapter presents information on turnover[28] and employment from a UK-wide business survey of Low Carbon and Renewable Energy economic activity. It also provides some information on energy and the wider economy in terms of employment, economic output and the number of registered enterprises in Northern Ireland's energy sector using other definitions and a wider range of sources.

The Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE)

The Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) survey[29] was undertaken for the first time in 2015, for the reporting year 2014. The survey has been carried out annually since then with the most recent results relating to 2024 published in February 2026. Around 3,000 businesses in Northern Ireland were sent a questionnaire for the 2024 survey. The LCREE survey was designed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to provide greater detail on low carbon and renewable energy activities in the UK and its regions, following demand from stakeholders for official statistics on this topic. The survey was developed in consultation with stakeholders from UK and devolved government departments, including the Department for the Economy.

The LCREE survey collects information on business activity across a number of Low Carbon and Renewable Energy activities such as: electricity production from wind, solar, hydropower or other sources; the design, manufacture or installation of energy efficient products; the design, production and installation of infrastructure for generating heat directly through solar, thermal, geothermal or other means (i.e. renewable heat); the design and manufacture of vehicles with specific technology to significantly reduce or remove emissions; and the design, manufacture and installation of fuel cells and energy storage systems. A full list of all 17 sectors can be found in Annex 2.1.

It is worth noting that the LCREE survey collected information from businesses where some or all of their activities could be defined as low carbon or renewable energy activities. Indeed, Low Carbon and Renewable Energy activities were the primary activity of less than one third (31%) of all businesses active in the LCREE economy across the UK in 2020[30]. The financial sector is excluded from the survey and the LCREE survey therefore reports on the non-financial business economy.

Variables collected by the LCREE survey include number of businesses[31], turnover and employment. The main results for Northern Ireland, along with comparisons to England, Scotland, Wales and the UK are presented below.

28 Turnover is the total revenue generated by businesses providing goods and services.
29 A copy of the main release and data tables is available at www.ons.gov.uk
30 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy activity is classed as the primary activity of a business if 50% or more of its full-time equivalent (FTE) employees are working in the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy sectors. In the UK in 2020, businesses whose primary activity was within the LCREE sector accounted for less than one third (31%) of all businesses active in the LCREE economy, over half (54%) of turnover and two-thirds (67%) of FTE employees. See here for further details.
31 Activity in the low carbon and renewable energy economy is spread across a wide range of industries. Many sectors are small but growing, and for many businesses, low carbon activity is a secondary rather than primary activity. For this reason, estimates of the number of businesses are subject to particular volatility and are not considered here.

LCREE Headline Results by Region

Estimates from the LCREE are survey-based estimates. Surveys gather information from a sample rather than from the whole population and results from sample surveys are always estimates and not precise figures. This means that they are subject to measurable sampling uncertainty, which has an effect on how changes in the estimates should be interpreted. Estimates of the level of uncertainty associated with all figures (coefficients of variation and confidence intervals) reported are presented in the published datasets to aid interpretation[32] and provided in the table below as examples for the latest year (2024).

Table 2.1 LCREE Turnover (£billion) at current prices[33] and employment (thousands FTEs) by UK Country – estimate for 2015, 2019 to 2023 and estimate, lower confidence interval and upper confidence interval[34] for 2024[35]

	Turnover (£billion)									
	2015	...	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		
	Estimate		Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	*Lower CI*	*Upper CI*
UK	40.2		45.8	42.2	54.5	66.5	68.9	77.0	68.9	85.0
England	32.0		36.6	33.7	41.5	50.7	51.7	58.7	52.1	65.3
Scotland	5.5		5.8	5.4	8.9	11.5	12.6	13.3	11.5	15.1
Wales	1.8		2.3	2.1	2.9	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.8
Northern Ireland	**0.9**		**1.1**	**1.0**	**1.2**	**1.3**	**1.2**	**1.5**	**1.3**	**1.7**
	Employment (thousands FTEs)									
	2015	...	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		
	Estimate		Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	*Lower CI*	*Upper CI*
UK	200.5		205.4	215.0	253.0	284.6	317.0	304.0	276.3	331.8
England	163.0		168.2	177.0	208.1	241.9	257.9	247.5	222.9	272.1
Scotland	22.8		21.9	21.8	29.8	26.5	36.3	35.2	29.3	41.1
Wales	10.2		9.8	11.6	10.8	11.1	15.9	14.3	12.6	15.9
Northern Ireland	**4.4**		**5.5**	**4.7**	**4.3**	**5.1**	**7.0**	**7.1**	**5.2**	**9.0**

Source: Office for National Statistics (www.ons.gov.uk)

Direct Activity – Turnover

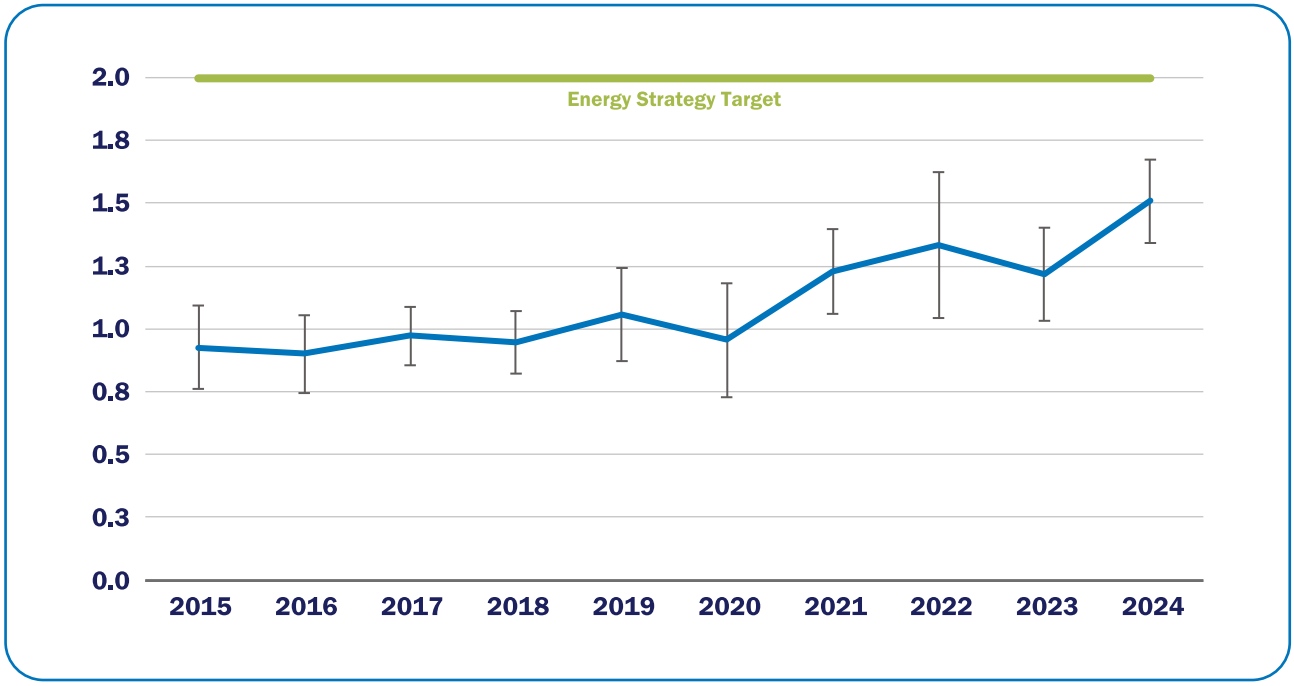
Table 2.1 shows that for Northern Ireland in 2024, around £1.5 billion in turnover and 7,100 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs were generated directly by businesses active in the LCREE economy. Compared to 2019 estimates, turnover in 2024 in Northern Ireland was 42% higher and FTE jobs 29% higher. Chart 2.1 below shows the estimates and confidence intervals for turnover at current prices for all years.

32 See www.ons.gov.uk.
33 Turnover estimates are reported at current prices: no adjustments have been made to account for the effects of inflation.
34 Confidence intervals (CI) are a standard way of expressing the statistical accuracy of survey-based estimates. A 95% confidence interval is the range within which the true population value would fall for 95% of the time, if the survey was repeated.
35 Data for 2023 and 2024 are provisional and subject to revision, data for all other years are final.

ONS advise users that if year-to-year changes are unclear, for example, because confidence intervals overlap, it may be more appropriate to assess trends over a longer timeframe, such as three to five years[36]. In general, changes in the estimates reported between each year are not usually greater than the level that is explainable by sampling variability[37].

ONS publish confidence intervals to help users interpret the results of this sample survey. As shown in Chart 2.1, the confidence intervals for 2019 and 2024 do not overlap implying a statistically significant difference between the two estimates[38]. However, ONS have not carried out hypothesis tests for statistical significance though this is an aspiration for future outputs.

Chart 2.1 LCREE Turnover (£billion), current prices, Northern Ireland - 2015 to 2024: estimate with lower and upper confidence intervals shown



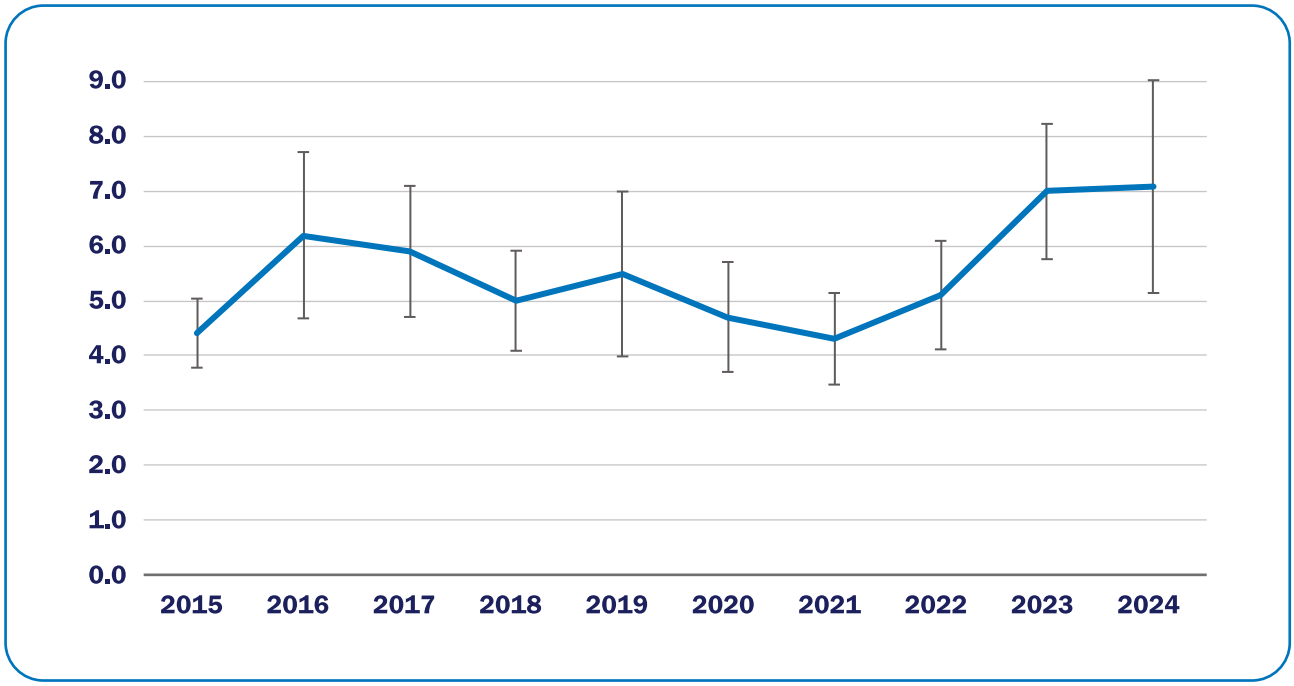
Source: Office for National Statistics (www.ons.gov.uk)

The NI Energy Strategy[39] includes a target to "Double the size of our low carbon and renewable energy economy to a turnover of more than £2 billion by 2030". Progress towards this target is monitored using LCREE survey data, with 2020 selected as the baseline year, when LCREE turnover was approximately £1 billion.

36 See section 6 at www.ons.gov.uk.
37 See https://www.ons.gov.uk
38 See https://web.archive.org/web/20190430205057id_/http:/www.cscu.cornell.edu/news/statnews/stnews73.pdf
39 See https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Energy-Strategy-for-Northern-Ireland-path-to-net-zero.pdf

Direct Activity – Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Employment

Chart 2.2 LCREE Employment (thousands FTE), Northern Ireland - 2015 to 2024: estimate with lower and upper confidence intervals shown



Source: Office for National Statistics (www.ons.gov.uk)

Chart 2.2 above shows, for Northern Ireland, FTE employment estimates from the LCREE survey for each year 2015 to 2024 with the upper and lower confidence intervals included. Over the five-year period between 2019 and 2024, the central estimate increased from 5,500 to 7,100 FTE employment. However, the overlapping confidence interval ranges for these two years suggest there has been no statistically significant change[40].

Regional Estimates

Table 2.1 shows that in each year 2015 to 2024, England accounted for 75-80% of direct UK LCREE turnover and 80-85% of UK LCREE direct full-time equivalent employment. Over the same period, businesses in Scotland engaged in LCREE activities provided a further 13-18% of direct UK LCREE turnover and around 9-12% of UK LCREE direct full-time equivalent employment.

In each year 2015 to 2024, businesses in Northern Ireland generated around 2% of direct UK LCREE turnover (i.e. £1.5 billion out of £77.0 billion in 2024) and provided about 2-3% of direct UK LCREE full-time equivalent employment (i.e. 7,100 out of 304,000 direct FTE employees in 2024). Direct LCREE annual average turnover and employment in Wales is generally around twice that of Northern Ireland.

40 As noted here, overlapping confidence intervals do not necessarily mean that they are not significantly different. Further bespoke hypothesis testing would be required to determine this.

LCREE Activity by Group

The headline results for Northern Ireland shown above can also be broken down into broad groups as shown in Table 2.2 below. These groups are aggregations of the 17 business sectors within scope of the LCREE survey. Further details on which sectors fit into each group is detailed in Annex 2.1.

Table 2.2 Northern Ireland Direct Activity - LCREE Turnover (£million) and FTE Employment by Group[41], 2015 to 2024[42]

Turnover (£million)										
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Low Carbon Electricity	***274***	247	237	302	217	***338***	505	764	595	678
Low Carbon Heat	*	*	35	*	***51***	***30***	***101***	***70***	***78***	***55***
Energy from Waste & Biomass	*	*	34	***48***	***49***	***52***	***34***	***63***	***63***	***104***
Energy Efficient Products	243	317	342	248	418	304	365	342	413	454
Low Carbon Services	***9***	***5***	16	*	***15***	***22***	***10***	***11***	***11***	18
Low Emission Vehicles	*	*	310	*	310	212	215	86	***59***	202
Total	**927**	**901**	**973**	**945**	**1,060**	**956**	**1,230**	**1,335**	**1,217**	**1,509**
Employment (FTEs)										
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Low Carbon Electricity	***600***	700	***800***	***900***	***500***	***500***	***500***	***1,300***	***1,300***	***2,500***
Low Carbon Heat	***<100***	*	***100***	***100***	***300***	***200***	***400***	***500***	***400***	***300***
Energy from Waste & Biomass	***<100***	***<100***	<100	***200***	***<100***	***300***	***100***	***200***	***300***	***300***
Energy Efficient Products	2,100	3,200	3,200	2,100	***3,100***	2,500	2,500	2,400	3,900	3,200
Low Carbon Services	*	*	***<100***	***<100***	<100	<100	***300***	***<100***	***200***	***200***
Low Emission Vehicles	*	*	1,600	1,600	1,500	1,100	500	700	***800***	***700***
Total	**4,400**	**6,200**	**5,900**	**5,000**	**5,500**	**4,700**	**4,300**	**5,100**	**7,000**	**7,100**

Source: Office for National Statistics (www.ons.gov.uk)[43]

Note that direct activity estimates that are italicised and in bold in Table 2.2 above have a coefficient of variation (which is a measure of the error around an estimate) that is greater than or equal to 20% and these estimates should therefore be used with caution. Further details on this are given in Annex 2.2.

The table shows that two groups – Energy Efficient Products and Low Carbon Electricity – accounted for 75-80% of LCREE turnover and employment in 2024. The Energy Efficient Products group has accounted for around one third of turnover and around half of FTE employees over the 10-year period shown. Up to 2021, the Low Carbon Electricity group accounted for about 30% of total Northern Ireland turnover and approximately 13% of FTE employees but since then both shares have almost doubled to 50% and 26% respectively.

41 Cells in the table marked * are figures that have been suppressed to avoid disclosure of individual company details.
42 Data for 2023 and 2024 are provisional and subject to revision, data for all other years are final.
43 See Annex 2.2 for notes to this table

The Low Emission Vehicles[44] group is an important sector in Northern Ireland with this group accounting for around 13% of total turnover and 10% of total FTE employees in Northern Ireland in 2024.

Energy and the Wider Economy

Whilst the data from the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy survey presented above gives details of such activity across all businesses in the non-financial sector in Northern Ireland, there are other sources of data which can provide a longer time series and some more detailed breakdowns in terms of the number of businesses, employment, Gross Value Added and turnover in the broader energy sector.

The following data is based on a definition of the energy sector using aggregations of individual Standard Industrial Classification[45] groups. The Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) is a system that is used to classify businesses by the type of economic activity in which they are engaged. Whilst the following data are useful, it should be borne in mind that the Standard Industrial Classification system does not lend itself to measuring non-traditional or new sectors that straddle a number of different industries. The SIC-based energy sector data presented below is based on a definition used by the Scottish Government[46]. It will include activities such as mining and extraction (though there are relatively few businesses in Northern Ireland engaged in such activities) but also electricity generation from traditional (fossil fuel based) plants that would not be covered in the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy survey data presented earlier.

Energy Sector Enterprises

Table 2.3 shows that the number of energy sector enterprises in Northern Ireland rose from 240 in 2010 to 980 in 2025, a more than fourfold increase, while total enterprises grew by 17% over the same period. More recently the changes have been less marked: in the five-year period 2020-2025, the number of energy sector enterprises in Northern Ireland increased by 12% compared to 7% for all enterprises.

Two thirds of the overall rise in the number of energy sector enterprises from 2010-2025 was due to the increase in the number of enterprises in the SIC 35 division 'Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply': up from 35 in 2010 to 530 in 2025. Indeed, the majority of enterprises in this sector in 2025 (around 505 of the 530 businesses, or 95%) were in the SIC group 35.1: Electric power generation, transmission and distribution. There were almost 17 times as many enterprises in this SIC group in 2025 (505) compared to fifteen years earlier (30 in 2010) although over 90% of this rise occurred in the period 2010-2018 with only a modest gain since then.

44 Low Emission Vehicles group includes Low Emission Vehicles & Infrastructure and Fuel Cells & Energy Storage sectors.
45 More information on the Standard Industrial Classification can be found at https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105230903/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/current-standard-classifications/standard-industrial-classification/index.html
46 See https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics/2019/07/industry-statistics/documents/energy/energy/govscot%3Adocument/Energy%2BSector%2BBriefing_Dec25.docx

Table 2.3 Number[47] of Energy Enterprises[48] in Northern Ireland (March of each year), 2010, 2015 and 2020 to 2025

	2010	..	2015	..	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
SIC 05: Mining of coal and lignite	0		0		0	0	0	0	0	0
SIC 06: Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas	0		0		0	0	0	0	0	0
SIC 09: Mining support service activities	0		15		10	10	10	10	10	10
SIC 19: Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products	5		5		5	5	5	5	5	5
SIC 20.14: Manufacture of other organic based chemicals	0		0		0	0	5	5	0	0
SIC 35: Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	35		240		500	505	500	515	495	530
(SIC 35.1: Electric power generation, transmission and distribution)	30		225		480	490	480	495	470	505
SIC 36: Water collection, treatment and supply	5		5		15	20	15	15	15	15
SIC 38.22: Treatment and disposal of hazardous waste	0		0		5	5	5	5	5	5
SIC 71.12/2: Engineering related scientific and technical consulting activities	175		220		290	305	310	310	345	345
SIC74.90/1: Environmental consulting activities	20		45		50	55	60	65	65	70
Total Energy Sector[49]	240		530		875	905	910	930	940	980
All Enterprises	68,530		67,050		75,180	76,695	77,950	78,175	78,930	80,085
Energy Sector as a Percentage of All Enterprises	0.4%		0.8%		1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS[50]

The energy sector accounted for 1.2% of all enterprises in 2025: this proportion is 50% higher than in 2015 and three times the 2010 level, though in recent years the proportion has been steady.

Between 2020 and 2025, energy sector enterprises grew by an average of 2.3% per year, compared with 1.3% for all Northern Ireland enterprises.

47 Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5. * Counts under 5 have been suppressed.
48 It is not yet possible to routinely and systematically estimate the number of enterprises operating in the renewable energy industry. The figures above will capture some of these enterprises but it is only an approximation, given the lack of any agreed or clearly defined 'renewables' classification using SIC.
49 Based on SIC definition using the following SIC codes: 05, 06, 09, 19, 20.14, 35, 36, 38.22, 71.12/2 and 74.90/1.
50 Data extracted from NOMIS (https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/) in November 2025.

It is also possible to look at changes in the number of energy enterprises for other regions as a comparison. This is shown in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4 Number of Energy Sector Enterprises and All Enterprises by Country, 2015 and 2025

	Enterprises in Energy Sector[51]				All enterprises			
Country	2015	2025	Change	% Change	2015	2025	Change	% Change
England	18,425	22,920	4,495	24%	2,116,290	2,376,620	260,330	12%
Scotland	3,830	3,460	-370	-10%	168,275	173,100	4,825	3%
Wales	910	1,030	120	13%	97,795	104,820	7,025	7%
Northern Ireland	**530**	**980**	**450**	**85%**	**67,050**	**80,085**	**13,035**	**19%**
United Kingdom	23,695	28,410	4,715	20%	2,449,420	2,734,605	285,185	12%

Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS[52]

The table above shows that Northern Ireland had the largest percentage increase in the number of energy sector enterprises over the 10-year period 2015 to 2025 (an increase of 85%). Indeed, this was more than three times the proportional increase of any other country.

Between 2015 and 2025, the number of energy sector enterprises in England and Wales grew at roughly twice the rate of all enterprises in each country, whereas Scotland saw a 10% decline in energy sector enterprises despite a 3% increase in all enterprises.

Table 2.5 Energy Sector Enterprises as a Percentage of All Enterprises: 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025

	Energy sector as % of All Enterprises			
Country	**2010**	**2015**	**2020**	**2025**
England	0.5%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
Scotland	1.2%	2.3%	2.3%	2.0%
Wales	0.6%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%
Northern Ireland	**0.4%**	**0.8%**	**1.2%**	**1.2%**
United Kingdom	0.6%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%

Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS[53]

Table 2.5 shows the number of energy sector enterprises as a percentage of all enterprises for each five-year period 2010 to 2025. Whilst Northern Ireland was below the UK average and other UK countries in 2010 (NI was lowest at 0.4%), by 2020 energy sector enterprises as a proportion of all enterprises in Northern Ireland (at 1.2%) was higher than the UK average and higher than Wales (1.0%) and England (0.9%). Despite a fall in energy sector enterprises as shown in Table 2.4, Scotland has by far the highest proportion with some 2.0% of all enterprises there located in the energy sector in 2025.

51 Based on SIC definition using the following SIC codes: 05, 06, 09, 19, 20.14, 35, 36, 38.22, 71.12/2 and 74.90/1.
52 Data extracted from NOMIS (https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/) in November 2025.
53 Data extracted from NOMIS (https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/) in November 2025.

Energy Sector Employment

The following table presents employee jobs data from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) for the energy sector in Northern Ireland compared to the number of energy sector jobs in Great Britain (GB). It should be noted that the BRES is a sample survey and subject to measurable sampling uncertainty, which influences how changes in estimates should be interpreted. Estimates of the level of uncertainty associated with BRES figures (confidence intervals) are presented in the published datasets.

Table 2.6 Employee Jobs in the Energy Sector[54] in Northern Ireland and GB, 2019, 2021 and 2023

	2019 NI	2021 NI	2023 NI		*2019 GB*	*2021 GB*	*2023 GB*
SIC 05: Mining of coal and lignite	0	0	0		1,500	700	400
SIC 06: Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas	0	0	0		13,000	12,000	13,000
SIC 09: Mining support service activities	*	78	68		18,000	16,000	15,000
SIC 19: Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products	*	19	35		9,000	9,000	9,000
SIC 20.14: Manufacture of other organic based chemicals	*	0	0		8,000	7,000	7,000
SIC 35: Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1,779	1,923	2,193		130,000	134,000	117,000
SIC 36: Water collection, treatment and supply	*	1,341	1,518		42,000	46,000	49,000
SIC 38.22: Treatment and disposal of hazardous waste	*	36	40		7,000	8,000	9,000
SIC 71.12/2: Engineering related scientific and technical consulting activities	995	917	808		85,000	75,000	76,000
SIC 74.90/1 Environmental consulting activities	202	291	365		13,000	15,000	19,000
Total Energy Sector	2,976[55]	4,605	5,027		326,500	322,700	314,400
All Employee Jobs	773,960	780,798	804,470		*28,739,000*	*29,543,000*	*31,332,000*
Energy Sector as Percentage of All Jobs	0.4%[56]	0.6%	0.6%		*1.1%*	*1.1%*	*1.0%*

Sources: Business Register and Employment Survey: NISRA[57]; DTER[58] and Office for National Statistics[59]

54 Based on SIC definition using the following SIC codes: 05, 06, 09, 19, 20.14, 35, 36, 38.22, 71.12/2 and 74.90/1.
55 This is the sum of jobs for those sectors for which data is available - data for some SICs in the Energy Sector in 2019 are not available due to disclosure rules.
56 This is only an approximation for NI as data for some SICs in the Energy Sector in 2019 are not available due to disclosure rules.
57 See https://www.nisra.gov.uk for SIC breakdown tables for 2019 and 2021.
58 BRES data for 2023 was extracted from the Database for Trade & Economic Research (DTER).
59 GB data extracted from NOMIS (https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/) in February 2026. Data are rounded and therefore may not add to totals. The level of rounding applied varies by estimate: please see article for further information on how rounding is applied https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/articles/1103.aspx.

The table above shows that in GB, around 1% of all employee jobs in 2019, 2021 and 2023 were in the energy sector. In comparison, in Northern Ireland 0.4% of all employee jobs in 2019 were in the energy sector and 0.6% for 2021 and 2023. However, it should be noted that employee jobs data was not available for all SICs for Northern Ireland in 2019 so we cannot directly compare this year to later years. Whilst the proportion of energy sector jobs stayed the same between 2021 and 2023 at 0.6%, the number of energy sector jobs in Northern Ireland increased by over 9%, compared to a fall of 3% in GB.

Table 2.6 also highlights that the majority of energy sector employee jobs in NI are concentrated in only a few industries, with SIC 35 (Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply) and SIC 36 (Water collection, treatment and supply) accounting for almost three quarters (74%) of energy sector jobs compared to just over half (53%) for GB.

Table 2.7 Employee Jobs in the Energy Sector[60]: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland & GB, 2023

Country	Number of Employee Jobs in the Energy Sector	Total Number of Employee Jobs	Energy Sector Jobs as a Percentage of Total Jobs
England	234,075	27,474,000	0.9%
Scotland	64,220	2,557,000	2.5%
Wales	14,360	1,300,000	1.1%
Northern Ireland	5,027	804,470	0.6%
Great Britain	314,400	31,332,000	1.0%

Sources: Business Register and Employment Survey: NISRA; DTER[61]; Office for National Statistics[62]

The table above shows comparative data for England, Scotland and Wales alongside the data presented earlier for NI and GB, with all data relating to 2023. It shows that Northern Ireland had the lowest proportion of employee jobs in the energy sector across all the regions shown. As already shown, the GB proportion was around one and a half times higher than the NI figure. The proportion in Wales was almost twice that of NI, whilst the proportion in Scotland was four times bigger.

Energy Sector Gross Value Added

Table 2.8 below shows the available data for economic output of the energy industry[63], as measured by the most recent Gross Value Added (GVA) statistics from the Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry (NIABI) as well as data from the Annual Business Survey (ABS) for the UK published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for comparison purposes. GVA and turnover data for each year are published at current prices and are not adjusted for inflation.

60 Based on SIC definition using the following SIC codes: 05, 06, 09, 19, 20.14, 35, 36, 38.22, 71.12/2 and 74.90/1.
61 See https://www.nisra.gov.uk. BRES data for 2023 was extracted from the Database for Trade & Economic Research (DTER).
62 Total jobs and SIC breakdowns for GB, England, Wales and Scotland were extracted from NOMIS (https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/) in February 2026). Data are rounded and therefore may not add to totals. The level of rounding applied varies by estimate: please see article for further information on how rounding is applied https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/articles/1103.aspx.
63 Based on SIC definition using the following SIC codes: 05, 06, 09, 19, 20.14, 35, 36, 38.22, 71.12/2 and 74.90/1.

In short, GVA measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector. GVA at basic prices, as published in the NIABI and ABS, represents the income generated by businesses, out of which is paid wages and salaries, the cost of capital investment and financial charges before arriving at a figure for profit. It includes taxes on production (e.g. business rates), net of subsidies but excludes subsidies and taxes on products (e.g. VAT and excise duty).

Table 2.8 Gross Value Added (£millions) in the Energy Sector at current prices, Northern Ireland 2014, 2019-2024, UK 2023

	2014 NI	...	2019 NI	2020 NI	2021 NI	2022 NI	2023 NI	2024 NI		*2023 UK*
SIC 05: Mining of coal and lignite	*		-	-	-	-	-	-		*
SIC 06: Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas			*	*	*	*	*	*		19,048
SIC 09: Mining support service activities	*		*	*	*	*	6	*		*
SIC 19: Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		2,993
SIC 20.14: Manufacture of other organic based chemicals	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		520
SIC 35: Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	313		656	1,125	*	*	1,149	1,176		17,904
SIC 36: Water collection, treatment and supply	*		682	645	*	719	*	*		10,622
SIC 38.22: Treatment and disposal of hazardous waste	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		642
SIC 71.12/2: Engineering related scientific & technical consulting activities	35		52	73	88	92	104	61		~
SIC 74.90/1 Environmental consulting activities	*		*	3	1	5	12	14		~
All Sectors GVA[64]	19,674		25,330	25,661	30,589	32,243	39,775	43,598		1,663,391
Energy Sector GVA as Percentage of All Sectors GVA	5.0%		5.5%	7.2%	6.6%	4.9%	5.3%	4.9%		*3.1% (3.7%)*

Source: Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry, NISRA[65]; Annual Business Survey, ONS[66]

64 The NIABI and ABS cover the non-financial business economy. See https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/annual-business-inquiry/abi-sample-coverage for more detailed information on the sectors covered by the NIABI.

65 NIABI data is available at https://data.nisra.gov.uk/product/bba with further breakdowns provided by NISRA on request. 2024 data is provisional.

66 From https://www.ons.gov.uk/ABS data sections A to S. UK data for 2023 is provisional. 5-digit SIC data for UK is not published.

Due to the small size (i.e. very few or no businesses) or structure (i.e. a small number of large dominant businesses) in some of the sectors in the energy industry definition used here, GVA information is limited[67]. As shown above for 2024, GVA data are available for only three of the ten individual SICs included in the energy industry definition used. However, as Table 2.6 earlier indicated, some of these sectors (e.g. SICs 05, 06 and 20.14) record no employment in Northern Ireland.

The figure for 'Energy sector GVA as a percentage of total GVA', shown in the bottom row of Table 2.8, has been provided by NISRA and reflects the contribution of all SICs within this energy sector definition, including those that cannot be published separately. This therefore provides a more comprehensive view of the energy sector's contribution to total GVA. It shows, for 2024, that energy sector GVA was 4.9% of total GVA for all sectors, slightly lower that the proportions for the previous year (5.3% in 2023) and ten years earlier (5.0% in 2014) and down from a peak of 7.2% in 2020. Table 2.8 also presents comparable UK data, with the latest available figures relating to 2023. At the UK level, fewer SICs are suppressed (only SIC 05 and SIC 09 in 2023). However, ONS no longer publish data for the two 5-digit SICs included in this energy sector definition (71.12/2 and 74.90/1). For the SICs that are published, the energy sector accounted for 3.1% of total UK GVA in 2023. Based on 2019 data, the missing SICs accounted for around 0.6% of UK GVA[68]; using this as an approximation suggests an estimated UK energy sector share of 3.7% in 2023, compared with 5.3% in Northern Ireland.

67 Information is suppressed and represented with an asterisk in the tables when there are either a small number of businesses operating in a particular sector or when a business is dominant in a sector and thus publication of results would risk identifying an individual enterprise. Note that 2024 data for NI and 2023 data for UK in all tables are provisional and subject to revision.

68 See page 30 of the Energy in NI 2022 report. UK Turnover and GVA data for SIC 05 are suppressed, but with only 400 employee jobs in SIC 05 in GB in 2023 (Table 2.6) its contribution is considered negligible for the 0.6% estimate.

Energy Sector Turnover

Information on turnover (business income derived from sales of goods and services) is also available and is presented below.

Table 2.9 Turnover (£millions) in the Energy Sector at current prices, Northern Ireland 2014, 2019-2024, UK 2023

	2014 NI	...	2019 NI	2020 NI	2021 NI	2022 NI	2023 NI	2024 NI		*2023 UK*
SIC 05: Mining of coal and lignite	*		-	-	-	-	-	-		*
SIC 06: Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		27,760
SIC 09: Mining support service activities	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*
SIC 19: Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		48,946
SIC 20.14: Manufacture of other organic based chemicals	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		3,333
SIC 35: Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	2,054		2,814	2,365	2,105	4,112	3,249	2,489		66,783
SIC 36: Water collection, treatment and supply	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		17,385
SIC 38.22: Treatment and disposal of hazardous waste	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		1,326
SIC 71.12/2: Engineering related scientific & technical consulting activities	58		108	94	110	116	130	132		~
SIC 74.90/1 Environmental consulting activities	*		*	4	2	*	*	*		~
All Sectors Turnover[69]	66,119		71,332	67,838	78,712	87,043	101,668	109,262		5,049,623
Energy Sector Turnover as Percentage of All Sectors Turnover	3.9%		4.8%	4.3%	3.5%	5.5%	4.0%	3.0%		*3.3% (3.7%)*[72]

Source: Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry, NISRA[70]; Annual Business Survey, ONS[71]

Like the GVA data presented previously, turnover information for Northern Ireland was available for only a small number of the ten SICs covered by the energy industry definition used but NISRA have provided data (shown in the last row of the table) to reflect the contribution of all SICs within this energy sector definition, including those that cannot be published separately. This shows that the energy sector accounted for 3.0% of total turnover in 2024 and 4.0% in 2023.

69 The NIABI and ABS cover the non-financial business economy See https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/annual-business-inquiry/abi-sample-coverage for information on the sectors covered by the NIABI.
70 NIABI data is available at https://data.nisra.gov.uk/product/bba with further breakdowns provided by NISRA on request. 2024 data is provisional.
71 From https://www.ons.gov.uk/ABS data sections A to S. UK data for 2023 is provisional. 5-digit SIC data for UK is not published.

For the UK in 2023, data for six of the ten SICs is available and these accounted for 3.3% of All Sectors Turnover in the UK. Based on 2019 data, the missing SICs accounted for around 0.4% of UK turnover[72]; using this as an approximation suggests an estimated UK energy sector share of 3.7% in 2023, compared with 4.0% in Northern Ireland.

Turnover in Northern Ireland's Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply sector was estimated at around £2.5 billion in 2024, which is lower than the £2.8 billion recorded in 2019, but still above the £2.1 billion reported in 2014. In recent years, turnover in this sector has fluctuated considerably: the 2022 figure of £4.1 billion was nearly double that of 2021 (£2.1 billion). Since then, turnover has fallen by roughly £800 million per year, bringing it back to approximately £2.5 billion in 2024.

Looking at All Sectors Turnover for Northern Ireland, this shows an increase of over 50% over the 5-year period 2019 to 2024, from about £71 billion in 2019 to over £109 billion in 2024 and an increase of around 65% over the 10-year period 2014 to 2024 (an increase of some £43 billion).

72 See page 32 of the Energy in NI 2022 report. UK Turnover and GVA data for SIC 05 are suppressed, but with only 400 employee jobs in SIC 05 in GB in 2023 (Table 2.6) its contribution is considered negligible for the 0.4% estimate.

Annex 2.1 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) Scope

The LCREE collected business activity in each of the following Low Carbon and Renewable Energy sectors.

Sector	Description
Offshore wind	The production of electricity from Offshore wind renewable sources and the design, production, and installation of infrastructure for this purpose. Including operations and maintenance.
Onshore wind	The production of electricity from Onshore wind renewable sources and the design, production, and installation of infrastructure for this purpose. Including operations and maintenance.
Solar photovoltaic	The production of electricity from Solar renewable sources and the design, production, and installation of infrastructure for this purpose. Including operations and maintenance.
Hydropower	The production of electricity from Hydropower renewable sources and the design, production, and installation of infrastructure for this purpose. Including operations and maintenance.
Other renewable electricity	The production of electricity from wave and/or tidal and/or geothermal renewable sources and the design, production, and installation of infrastructure for this purpose. Including operations and maintenance.
Bioenergy	The production of energy (electricity and heat) from renewable bioenergy sources and the design, production, and installation of infrastructure for this purpose. Including operations and maintenance. Bioenergy is liquid biofuels, solid biomass and biogas e.g. biomethane, vegetable oil, peanut oil and energy crops. This sector includes gasification and anaerobic digestion.
Alternative Fuels	The production of fuels for low carbon and renewable energy use which is not classified as bioenergy. Including hydrogen. Excluding compressed natural gas and LPG.
Renewable heat	The design, production, and installation of infrastructure for generating heat directly through solar, thermal, geothermal or other means. Including operations and maintenance. Including Ground source and Air source heat pumps. Excluding generating electricity which is then used to generate heat. Excluding heat from biomass which is classified under Bioenergy.
Renewable combined heat and power	The design, production, and installation of infrastructure for generating heat directly through solar, thermal, geothermal or other means where the renewable sources both generate direct heat and electricity. Including operations and maintenance. Excluding heat and power from biomass which is classified under Bioenergy.
Energy efficient lighting	The design, manufacture and installation of energy efficient bulbs, tubes, fittings etc. designed for the purpose of using less energy to produce the same or greater amount of light.
Other Energy efficient products	The design, manufacture and installation of energy efficient products. Examples include: • Energy efficient doors and windows • Heating and ventilation, such as condensing boilers, ventilation and heating recovery • Insulation such as loft, external wall, roof insulation • Reducing energy consumption for heat or air conditioning by minimising 'leakage' of heat • Energy efficient building materials or technologies • Sustainable buildings and architecture • Either materials with greater insulation properties or durability properties or those requiring significantly less carbon emission in their manufacture or recycling waste materials in their manufacture Exclude: 'Smart' goods such as TVs and freezers.
Energy monitoring, saving or control systems	The design, manufacture and installation of systems that reduce energy consumption through effective heat or energy management. Include equipment and related systems for doing this. Examples include: • Smart heating controls • Energy management systems • Condensation control • Energy management software • Control system components

Sector	Description
Low carbon financial and advisory services	Expert advice and education on: reducing carbon consumption, engaging in low carbon industrial activities, carbon credits and funding systems for low carbon activities and services. Include: environmental and/or energy consultants
Low emission vehicles and infrastructure	Design and manufacture of vehicles with specific technology to significantly reduce or remove emissions. Include: hybrid vehicles, electric vehicles, fuel cell vehicles or other technologies. Exclude: small efficiency improvements such as lighter bodywork or aerodynamics. Fuel efficient, conventional vehicles are also excluded.
Carbon capture and storage	Capturing waste CO2 at point of emission and depositing it where it will not enter the atmosphere. Activity of doing this and the design, manufacture and installation of infrastructure for this purpose.
Nuclear power	The production of electricity from nuclear power and the design, production and installation of infrastructure for this purpose. Including operations and maintenance. Decommissioning and waste processing activities are excluded.
Fuel cells and energy storage systems	The design, manufacture and installation of energy storage systems, flywheel energy storage, fuel cells, batteries and any other form of energy storage system.

These sectors can be aggregated into the following groups:

Group	Description
Low Carbon Electricity	Offshore wind, Onshore wind, Solar Photovoltaic, Hydropower, Other renewable generation of electricity, Nuclear power, Carbon capture and storage
Low Carbon Heat	Renewable heat, Renewable combined heat and power
Energy from Waste and Biomass	Bioenergy, Alternative fuels
Energy Efficient Products	Energy efficient products, Energy efficient lighting, Energy monitoring, saving or control systems
Low Carbon Services	Low carbon financial and advisory services
Low Emission Vehicles and Infrastructure*	Low emission vehicles and infrastructure
Fuel Cells and Energy Storage*	Fuel cells and energy storage systems

*Please note that due to statistical disclosure control, the Fuel Cells and Energy Storage and Low Emission Vehicles and Infrastructure sectors have been combined in published estimates. This combined group has been labelled the 'Low Emission Vehicles' group.

Annex 2.2 Notes to Table 2.2

Figures in Table 2.2 may not sum due to rounding.

The estimated Coefficient of Variation (CV) for the figures in Table 2.2 are shown in the table below.

The CV information is available for each year and published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) – see www.ons.gov.uk.

Turnover (£million)										
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Low Carbon Electricity	24%	17%	14%	18%	20%	24%	17%	19%	11%	12%
Low Carbon Heat	*	*	5%	*	43%	28%	35%	36%	31%	24%
Energy from Waste & Biomass	*	*	15%	28%	36%	55%	63%	30%	27%	28%
Energy Efficient Products	7%	13%	16%	12%	18%	20%	11%	9%	7%	10%
Low Carbon Services	67%	35%	14%	*	21%	58%	29%	21%	32%	18%
Low Emission Vehicles	*	*	1%	*	0%	1%	4%	19%	37%	17%
Total	**9%**	**9%**	**7%**	**7%**	**10%**	**11%**	**9%**	**12%**	**7%**	**7%**
Employment (FTEs)										
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Low Carbon Electricity	26%	20%	30%	38%	51%	34%	33%	35%	23%	36%
Low Carbon Heat	28%	*	34%	24%	46%	53%	28%	25%	27%	27%
Energy from Waste & Biomass	30%	45%	19%	45%	28%	49%	54%	31%	45%	37%
Energy Efficient Products	12%	17%	17%	14%	24%	18%	12%	9%	8%	9%
Low Carbon Services	*	*	39%	28%	14%	18%	58%	25%	45%	28%
Low Emission Vehicles	*	*	3%	2%	2%	1%	3%	11%	25%	22%
Total	**7%**	**13%**	**10%**	**9%**	**14%**	**11%**	**10%**	**10%**	**9%**	**14%**

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) is the ratio of the standard error of an estimate to the estimate itself. For example, an estimate with a CV of 5% will have a standard error that is 5% of the estimate. The smaller the coefficient of variation the greater the accuracy of the estimate. A rough guide to CVs is: less than 10% is very good, 10% is good and 20% is acceptable. Estimates with CVs that are greater or equal to 20% should be used with caution.

For example, in the LCREE employment context, the 2024 estimate for employment in the Low Carbon Electricity group in Northern Ireland is 2,500 FTEs, with a published CV (shown in the table above) of 36%. This implies a standard error of roughly 900 FTEs. A CV of this size indicates that while the estimate gives a useful indication of the scale of activity in the sector, users should interpret year-on-year changes cautiously, as much of the observed variation may be attributable to sampling variability rather than genuine underlying change.

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An Roinn Geilleagair

Energy IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2026

3 Electricity

CHAPTER 3: ELECTRICITY

Summary of Key Points

- At May 2026, Northern Ireland had three major gas-fuelled electricity-generating plants and multiple renewable generators, which make up indigenous electricity production. Interconnection with Ireland and Scotland help to maintain security of supply.

- As expected, electricity consumption peaks during the winter months and is at its lowest during the summer months. Monthly consumption in Northern Ireland peaked in January 2022 (at about 906 GWh) and the lowest level recorded over the period was in July 2025 (at 662 GWh, over 25% below peak monthly consumption).

- Electricity consumption in 2025 (8,756 GWh) was the lowest in the previous eight years (and almost 9% lower compared to the peak of 9,569 in 2018). There has been a slight downwards trend over the period 2018-2025, with the exception of 2021 and 2024 where consumption rose slightly from the previous year.

- Average annual domestic electricity consumption per meter ranged from 2,698 kWh in Belfast to 3,619 kWh in Mid Ulster District Council area in 2024-25, meaning consumption per meter in this council area is around 34% higher than Belfast and some 14% above the Northern Ireland average.

- Whilst some 92% of all electricity meters were in domestic properties at the end of 2025, the domestic sector accounted for less than two-fifths (38%) of total electricity consumption in 2025.

- Large consumption by a relatively small number of consumers is illustrated by the fact that just over 1% of the largest consuming non-domestic electricity consumers accounted for three fifths (60%) of total non-domestic electricity consumption in 2025.

- In 2025, Northern Ireland was a net exporter in terms of electricity trades with Ireland (via the North-South tie-lines). Northern Ireland exported more than was imported in each year 2017 to 2025 with net exports to Ireland in 2025 of 1,641 GWh.

- In 2025, Northern Ireland was a net importer of electricity from Scotland (via the Moyle interconnector), where electricity transfers were over 2,200 GWh. The pattern of flows illustrates Northern Ireland's role as a conduit within the Single Electricity Market, facilitating electricity movements between Great Britain and Ireland rather than being structurally dependent on imports for domestic demand.

Introduction

The electricity system in Northern Ireland consists of the following distinct businesses: generation, transmission, distribution and supply. A diagram highlighting the structure and main participants in the electricity market as at 30th April 2026 in Northern Ireland is shown below, and a full list of electricity licences granted is available at Electricity licences | Utility Regulator.

Figure 3.1 Structure and Main Participants of the Northern Ireland Electricity Market

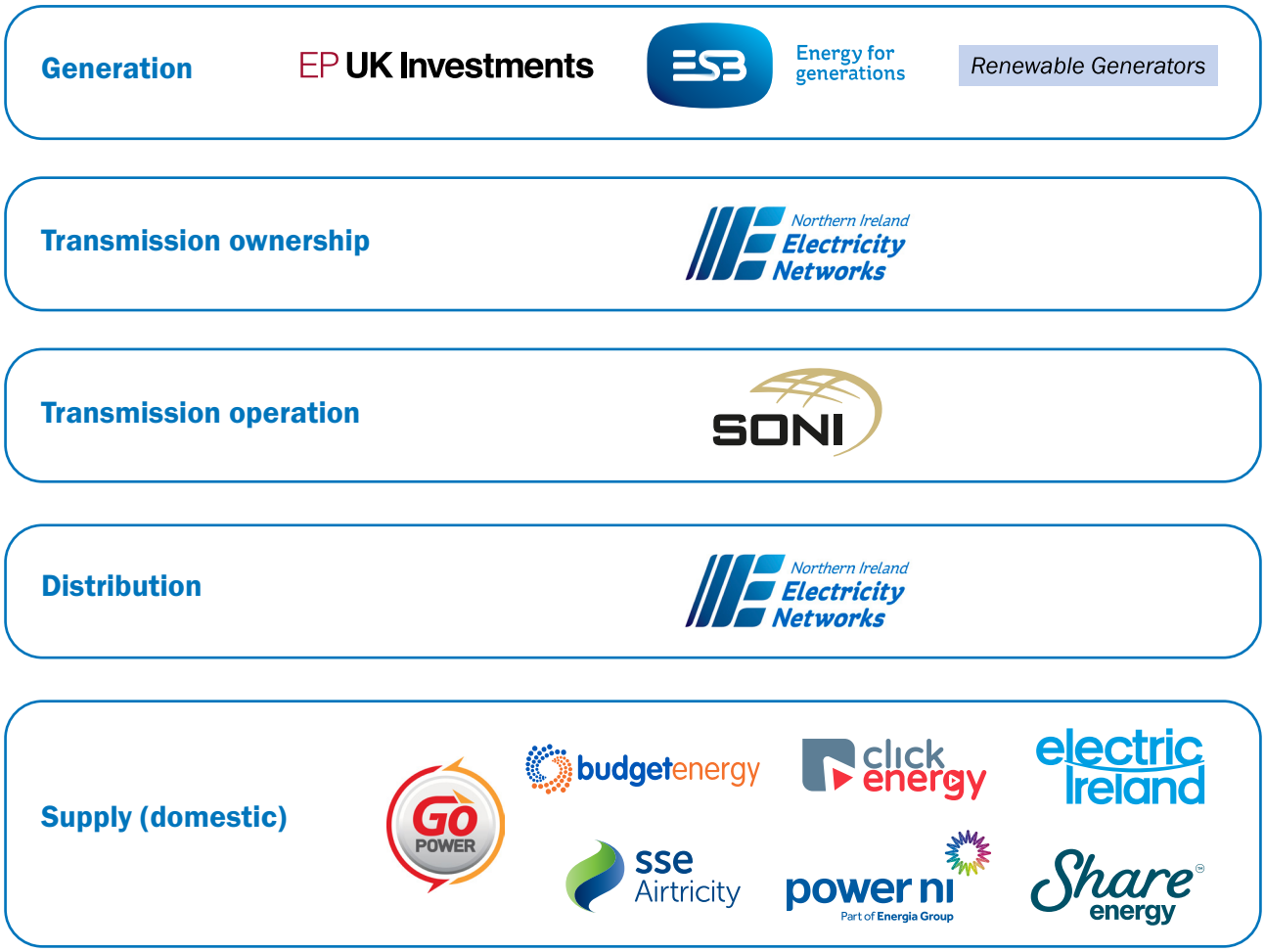
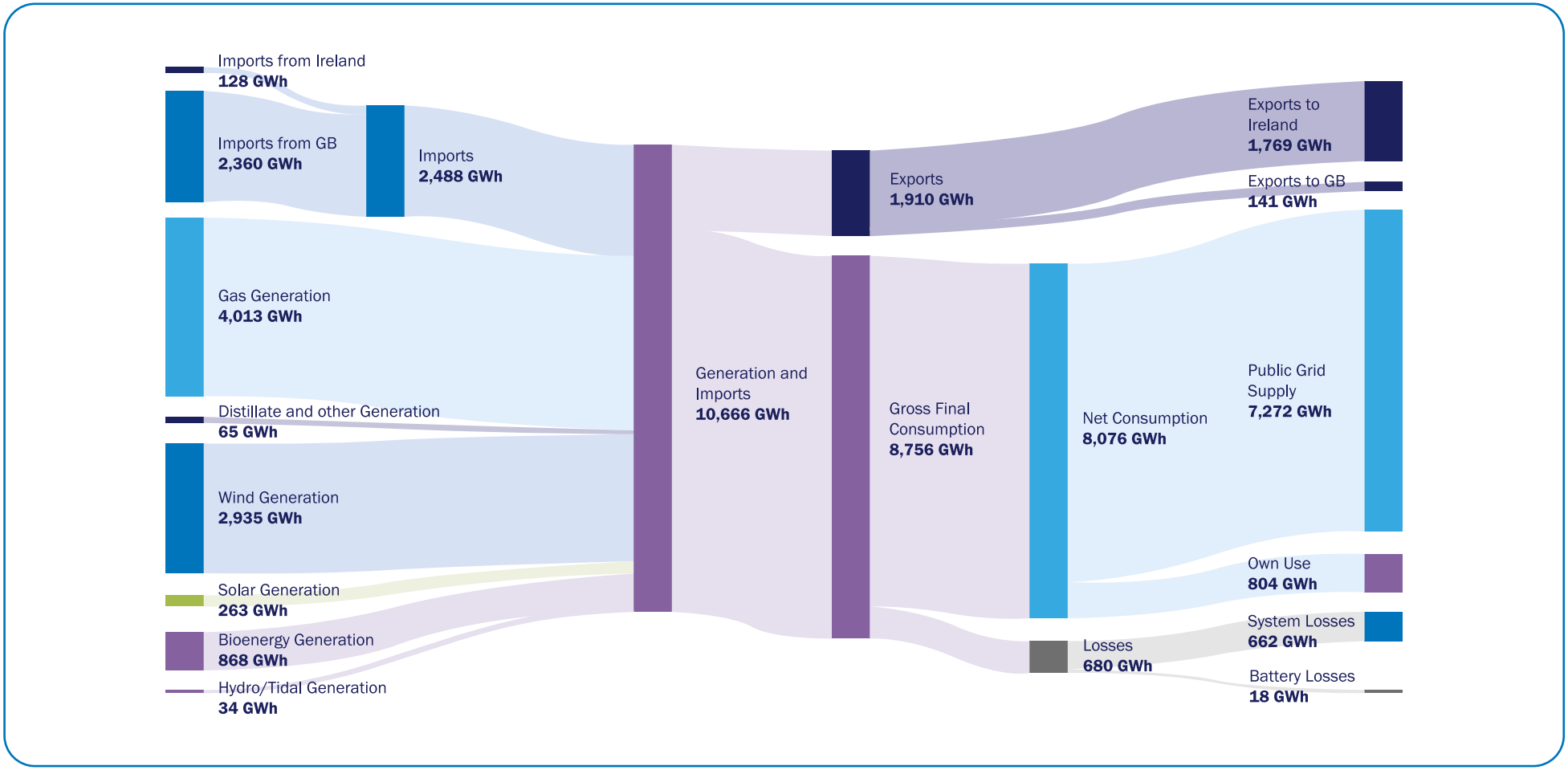


Chart 3.1 overleaf provides a more detailed view of the inputs and outputs of the electricity system for 2025 and the composition of the gross final consumption of electricity for Northern Ireland.

Chart 3.1 Generation, distribution and use of electricity between January 2025 and December 2025.



Source: DfE https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html

Generation

There are three major gas-powered generating sites in Northern Ireland as follows[73]:

- Ballylumford[74] is located at the tip of the Islandmagee peninsula, is owned by EP UK Investments and is Northern Ireland's largest power station with an installed capacity of over 730 MW.
- Coolkeeragh[75] is located in Londonderry, is owned by ESB and has an installed capacity of around 470 MW.
- Kilroot[76] is located in Carrickfergus and is owned by EP UK Investments. Kilroot was coal fuelled until September 2023, when after a period of conversion, it recommenced generation in March 2024 using gas. It has an installed capacity of some 700 MW.

In addition to the major gas fuelled power stations, Northern Ireland also has multiple renewable energy sources (capacity of over 1,380 MW[77] from wind alone). There is additionally interconnection with the Scottish grid, with two 250 MW lines on the Moyle Interconnector[78] and interconnection with the grid in Ireland via three tie-lines. Electricity can be imported and exported via the Moyle Interconnector and North-South tie-lines.

Chart 3.1 shows the contribution of each source to total electricity demand in 2025. In 2025 most generation came from gas (49% of all generation), followed by wind (36%) and Bioenergy (11%). Imports (2,488 GWh) were greater than exports (1,910 GWh) for the year. Most of the volume of imports coming from GB (2,360 GWh) is matched by exports to Ireland.

Transmission

Transmission refers to the bulk transfer of electrical energy from large electricity generators to electrical substations. Transmission lines carry electricity at a very high voltage. Ownership of the transmission system lies with Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Ltd (NIE Networks), which is a subsidiary of the ESB Group, and they are responsible for transmission construction and maintenance. The transmission network is operated by the System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI). A map of the transmission system including planned upgrades in Northern Ireland is shown in Annex 3.1.

73 The capacities for each power station are taken from Table 5.11 of the Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics 2025. Please note that installed capacities are subject to change from year to year.
74 Ballylumford provides 616 MW capacity from natural gas generation with a further 116 MW capacity from diesel/gas oil generation.
75 Coolkeeragh provides 413 MW capacity from natural gas generation with a further 53 MW capacity from diesel/gas oil generation.
76 See https://kilrootenergypark.co.uk/
77 To December 2024, figures from SONI's November 2025 report (see here).
78 While Moyle is technically able to transport 500MW between the two markets, due to constraints on the transmission networks at either end of the interconnector, the commercial capacity of the interconnector is lower than this. See here for further details on capacity: https://www.mutual-energy.com/electricity/#moyle-capacity

Distribution

The local wiring between high-voltage substations and customers is typically referred to as electric power distribution. The conversion of high voltage into a voltage that can be used by customers is done through transformers and distribution lines then carry electricity at lower voltage levels to houses and businesses. In Northern Ireland, NIE Networks operates the distribution network which transports electricity to over 930,000 customers[79] both domestic and non-domestic.

Transmission and distribution losses[80] are also depicted on the Sankey diagram at Chart 3.1 and for the 2025 year equated to approximately 6% of Generation and Imports.

Supply

From November 2007 and the opening of the Single Electricity Market (SEM), electricity retail supply was fully open to competition, though there were no competing suppliers in the domestic market until 2010. Electricity suppliers buy energy and sell it to customers. Business and domestic consumers in Northern Ireland can choose between a number of private sector electricity suppliers to meet their individual electricity requirements.

Chart 3.1 shows that of the net consumption of 8,076 GWh for 2025, (i.e. Gross Final Consumption minus losses) approximately 90% (7,272 GWh) of generation was provided through Public Grid Supply.

Own Use

Own use refers to electricity generated and consumed on site by both fossil-fuelled and renewable generators for their own operational needs, with only surplus electricity being supplied to the public grid. Own use generation is not metered. For the calendar year 2025, Chart 3.1 shows that of the net consumption of 8,076 GWh for 2025, (i.e. Gross Final Consumption minus losses) approximately 10% (804 GWh) was generated for own use.

Storage

Battery storage is a relatively recent development in the electricity system. In times of excess electricity generation, for example during low-demand periods or when renewable generation is unable to be used immediately, the electricity can be stored in the battery for short periods of time and discharged as required to support demand, which in turn enhances efficiency, increases utilisation of renewables, aids security of supply and reduces cost.

79 At end December 2025 as per Utility Regulator's Quarterly Retail Energy Market Monitoring report for Q4 2025 (see page 8 of report here).

80 Losses occur as electricity is transmitted and distributed from generator to consumer. These are physical losses as electricity is converted to heat in the transmission and distribution networks. Theft represents unpaid for consumption and is considered to be fractional compared to the level of physical losses. As an example, if electricity demand (consumption) is 100 GWh then around 110 GWh needs to be generated as around 10 GWh will be lost in the transmission and distribution networks and in theft in providing electricity from generator to consumer. The new data framework developed provides an averaged estimate of 9% losses of electricity in the grid. See DfE User Engagement Report.

As of November 2025, SONI's Connections Register[81] showed 5 battery storage units connected to the grid with a total maximum import / export capacity of around 212 MW. There were a further 11 applications in progress with the potential to deliver 1,285 MW of maximum import / export capacity. This is in addition to some smaller scale storage systems installed in homes and businesses for own use. As the technology develops and improves to allow storage for longer duration, this has the potential to further increase efficiency across the system. Battery losses are included in Chart 3.1. Losses of this type account for less than 3% of total losses given the relatively small number of batteries in operation.

Wholesale Electricity Markets[82]

A wholesale electricity market is where generators and suppliers meet to trade electricity that is then sold onto household and business consumers. Importantly, the wholesale market involves the trading of electricity for resale – generation is not directly sold to the final consumer. This is distinct from the retail market where suppliers are responsible for the selling, metering, billing and collection of payments to customers. To make sure that wholesale electricity markets work well and fairly, arrangements are needed to cover market decision-making and day-to-day operations.

Interconnection

The operation of a wholesale market requires the physical connection of the Northern Ireland grid to that in the Republic of Ireland. The Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland transmission systems are connected via a double circuit 275 kV line between Tandragee and Louth. In addition, there are two 110kV connections between Strabane and Letterkenny and Enniskillen and Corraclassy. The existing connections are proposed to be enhanced by a new 400kV North-South transmission connection, starting at a substation in Turleenan, Co Tyrone. It will then run into Co Armagh and then into counties Monaghan, Cavan and Meath, connecting the electricity grids in Northern Ireland and Ireland. The aim of this interconnection is to improve efficiency, to allow for greater integration of renewable generation of electricity and to improve the reliability and security of electricity supply, which should deliver savings to consumers[83].

The Integrated Single Electricity Market (I-SEM)[84]

Since 2018, the I-SEM is the wholesale electricity market for Ireland and Northern Ireland. It brings together these two separate Transmission System Operators into an all-island arrangement. The wholesale electricity market is where electricity is bought and sold before being delivered to consumers. Its two main participants are generators and suppliers.

81 20251105 Connections Register 5 Nov 2025 (pdf)_0.pdf
82 Information taken mainly from the SEM Committee's 'Quick Guide to the I-SEM' – available at https://cms.eirgrid.ie/sites/default/files/publications/EirGrid-Group-I-SEM-Quick-Guide.pdf
83 See https://www.soni.ltd.uk/community/projects-in-your-area/north-south-interconnector
84 See https://www.soni.ltd.uk/grid/how-grid-and-market-interact

It aims to deliver:

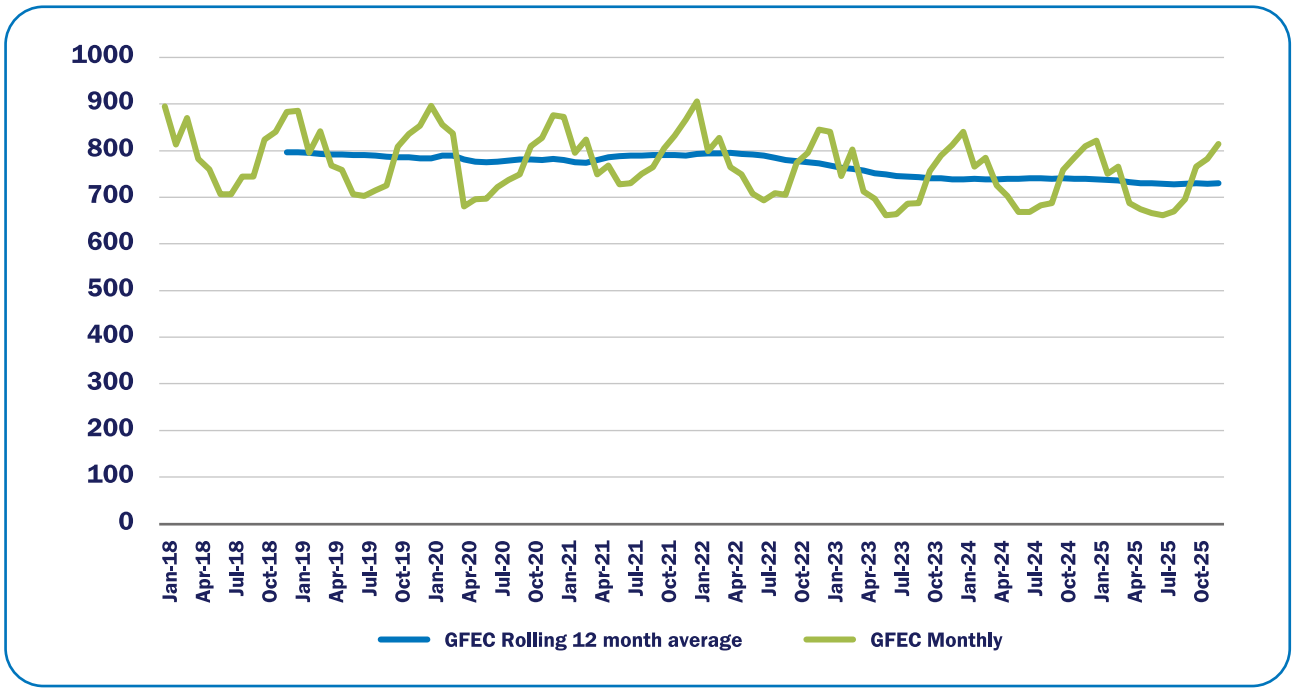
- Security of supply across the island
- A competitive process for setting prices
- More efficient use of interconnection between countries
- The maximum use of renewable sources of electricity

Single Electricity Market Operator Power Exchange (SEMOpx) and Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO) make up parts of the electricity market. They are overseen by the SEM Committee. This consists of the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities (CRU) in Dublin, the Utility Regulator in Belfast, plus an independent member and a deputy independent member.

Gross Final Electricity Consumption – Monthly

DfE Analytical Services Division publishes electricity consumption data for Northern Ireland quarterly (in March, June, September and December) as part of their Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland publication[85]. The overall gross final electricity consumption data contained in these reports is derived from aggregating all generation, both metered and 'own use', and net imports. This is therefore an accurate measure of total electricity consumption across the domestic and non-domestic sectors and equates to total demand. Chart 3.2 below shows gross final electricity consumption for Northern Ireland for each month over the period January 2018 to December 2025.

Chart 3.2 Monthly Gross Final Electricity Consumption (GFEC) and 12-Month Rolling Average Consumption in Northern Ireland (GWh), January 2018 to December 2025.



Source: DfE https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html

85 See https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-statistics for further details on this publication and the latest available data.

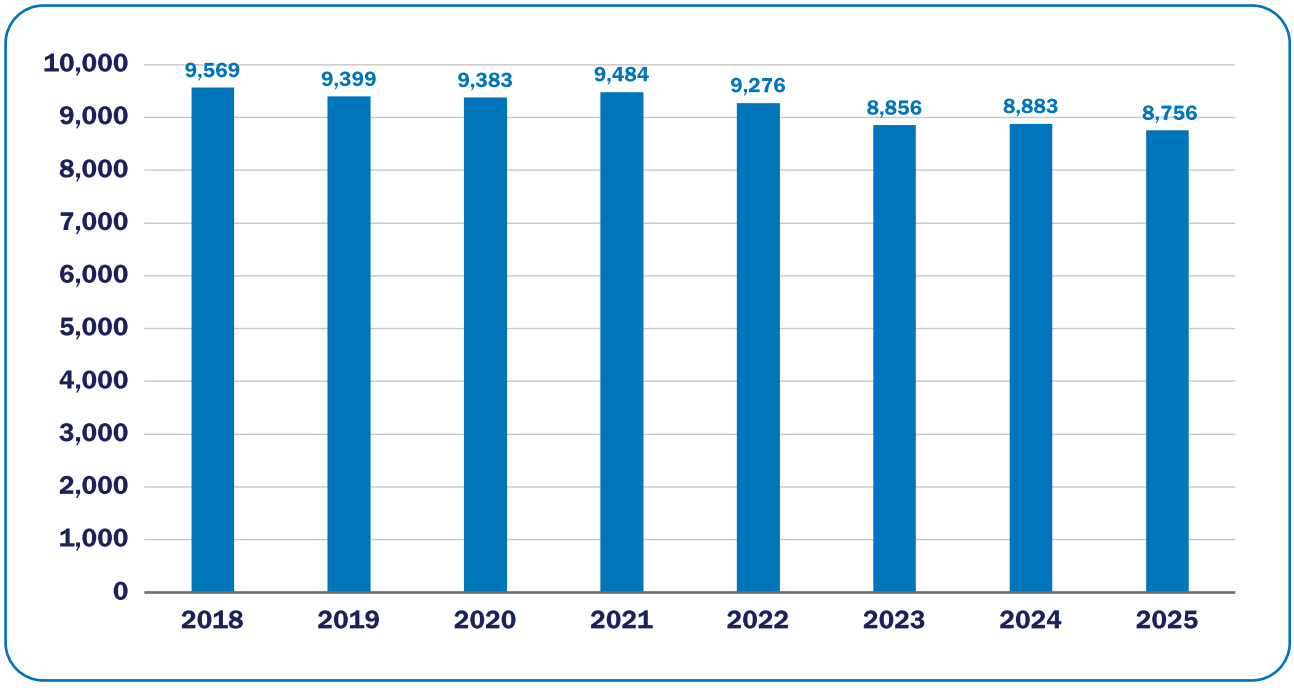
The chart shows that, predictably, electricity consumption peaks during the winter months and is at its lowest during the summer months. The 12-month rolling average line flattens out short-term fluctuations and highlights longer-term trends in electricity consumption over the period January 2018 to December 2025. This shows an overall downwards trend in electricity consumption over the period from December 2018 when the rolling average was almost 800 GWh and fell below 750 GWh in mid-2023. With very minor fluctuations since, it has fallen further to end 2025 with a rolling average of 730 GWh.

The chart also shows that monthly consumption peaked in January 2022 (at about 906 GWh) and the lowest level recorded over the period was in July 2025 (at 662 GWh, over 25% below peak monthly consumption).

Gross Final Electricity Consumption - Annual

The chart below shows total annual gross final electricity consumption for Northern Ireland for each year 2018 to 2025.

Chart 3.3 Total Annual Gross Final Electricity Consumption in Northern Ireland (GWh), 2018 to 2025



Source: DfE https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html

Electricity consumption in 2025 (8,756 GWh) was the lowest in the eight years shown (and almost 9% lower compared to the peak of 9,569 in 2018). There has been a slight downwards trend over the period 2018-2025, with the exception of 2021 and 2024 where consumption rose very slightly from the previous year. 2021 had extremes of weather[86] with a particularly cold spring including record breaking number of days of air frost, which may explain the higher monthly consumptions associated that feed into the annual figure. The lowest recorded monthly electricity consumption volume to date was in July 2025, where consumption was 662 GWh.

86 2021: A year of weather extremes in Northern Ireland - BBC News

There are a number of factors which may have contributed to the general reduction in consumption over the period 2018-2025, including: weather conditions, energy efficiency improvements (such as increased levels of insulation), the extension of the gas supply network, new boilers and more energy efficient appliances, changes in electricity prices and impact of consumer behaviour – particularly in the context of cost of living crises, changes in the building stock, changes in household composition and changes in business or industry composition.

Future annual consumption figures will also be shaped by these factors, as well as by any widespread increase in electrification of heat and transport.

Sub-National Electricity Consumption

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) produce data in relation to domestic and non-domestic metered electricity consumption at District Council[87] level for Northern Ireland. The latest year available is for 2024-25[88] and results are provided for the 11 council areas as shown in table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Electricity Consumption Statistics at District Council Level, 2024-25

	Domestic			Non-Domestic		
Council Name	Total Consumption (GWh)	Total number of meters ('000s)	Average consumption per meter (kWh)	Total Consumption (GWh)	Total number of meters ('000s)	Average consumption per meter (kWh)
Antrim & Newtownabbey	209	65	3,232	355	5	70,857
Ards & North Down	246	77	3,194	206	5	38,659
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	310	92	3,378	566	9	64,103
Belfast	445	165	2,698	895	15	61,327
Causeway Coast & Glens	218	68	3,182	259	7	39,672
Derry City & Strabane	203	66	3,050	446	6	73,621
Fermanagh & Omagh	164	50	3,257	355	6	55,569
Lisburn & Castlereagh	215	65	3,302	291	5	57,437
Mid & East Antrim	204	64	3,213	281	6	49,292
Mid Ulster	211	58	3,619	497	8	63,926
Newry, Mourne & Down	267	76	3,521	317	8	40,693
Unallocated[89]	5	2	2,590	19	0	84,499
NI Total	2,696	848	3,179	4,486	79	56,589

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-national-electricity-consumption-statistics-in-northern-ireland)

For domestic metered consumption, data are based on billed units from customers that have been connected for at least 12 months[90] with non-domestic consumption based on billed units (and relate to final consumption at the point when it was derived) and covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

87 Link here to DESNZ sub-national domestic electricity consumption data.
88 This covers the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
89 Unallocated consumption is consumption that could not be matched to a council area due to incomplete or a lack of postcode information. Such consumption represents less than 1% of total domestic or non-domestic consumption.
90 As the data that is provided is billed information as opposed to the sales information reported, unbilled units are excluded and both meters and consumption numbers have been uplifted to match annual sales data.

These metered consumption figures will not match exactly with those shown for 2024 in Chart 3.2 earlier (total consumption in Table 3.1 above is some 7,182 GWh for the financial year compared to total consumption of 7,272 GWh for the 2024 calendar year as shown in Chart 3.1, a difference of around 1.2%).

As the table shows, average domestic consumption per meter in 2024-25 ranged from 2,698 kWh in Belfast City Council to 3,619 kWh in Mid Ulster District Council area, although consumption for most district council areas was close to the NI average of around 3,179 kWh. Domestic consumption per meter in Mid Ulster is some 34% higher than Belfast and 14% above the Northern Ireland average, whilst domestic consumption in Belfast was some 15% below the Northern Ireland average. The lower domestic consumption per meter in Belfast council area may be due to factors such as the better availability of mains gas in that council area which may reduce the requirement for electricity for heating and cooking or the housing and demographic mix in council areas.

Predictably, given the concentration of domestic dwellings and businesses, Belfast City Council has the single largest share of both domestic consumption (16%) and non-domestic consumption (20%). Indeed, Belfast City Council and Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Council together accounted for one-third of all non-domestic electricity consumption in Northern Ireland in 2024-25.

Domestic Versus Non-Domestic Consumption – Northern Ireland

Table 3.1 above also highlighted that, while 91% of all meters in 2024-2025 were in domestic properties, the domestic sector accounted for just under two fifths (38%) of total metered electricity consumption. Information from different sources (presented in Table 3.2 below), shows a similar split between the domestic and non-domestic sectors in terms of connection (92% and 8% respectively) and consumption (37% and 63% respectively) in the same years. The data below also provides domestic and non-domestic data split into further consumer categories.

Table 3.2 Electricity Connection Numbers and Electricity Metered Consumption by Market Segment in Northern Ireland, 2022 to 2025

Market Segments	Connection Numbers				Annual Consumption (GWh)			
	At end 2022	At end 2023	At end 2024	At end 2025	2022	2023	2024	2025
Domestic:								
Domestic Credit	456,774	459,607	461,018	463,077	1,624	1,546	1,558	1,549
Domestic Prepayment	380,581	383,775	387,965	390,752	1,231	1,197	1,164	1,165
Total Domestic	837,355	843,382	848,983	853,829	2,855	2,743	2,722	2,713
Non-Domestic (Industrial & Commercial):								
I&C < 20 MWh	52,817	53,614	54,318	54,827	279	319	304	296
I&C 20 - 49 MWh	12,288	12,009	12,077	11,871	347	384	352	333
I&C 50 - 499 MWh	9,316	9,149	9,156	9,107	1,215	1,207	1,203	1,190
I&C 500 - 1,999 MWh	791	784	790	808	781	754	763	800
I&C 2,000 - 19,999 MWh	247	238	241	235	1,300	1,239	1,246	1,177
I&C ≥ 20,000 MWh	18	17	19	20	717	650	683	762
Total Industrial & Commercial (I&C)	75,477	75,811	76,601	76,868	4,640	4,553	4,550	4,559
Total (Domestic + I&C)	912,832	919,193	925,584	930,697	7,494	7,296	7,272	7,272
% Domestic	92%	92%	92%	92%	38%	38%	37%	37%
% Non-domestic	8%	8%	8%	8%	62%	62%	63%	63%

Source: Utility Regulator (see https://www.uregni.gov.uk/market-information)[91]

Connection numbers between 2022 and 2025 showed low annual growth in both sectors (never more than 1%). In the domestic sector there has been a slightly larger increase in the prepayment than credit segments (3% since 2022 compared to 1% for credit). In the non-domestic sector, only the I&C ≥ 20,000 MWh group saw any significant growth (12% in 2024 and 5% in 2025). However, since this group has such a small number of connections relative to the total, it didn't have much effect on the overall growth in the number of connections. The number of connections in industrial groups I&C 20 – 49 MWh, I&C 50 – 499 MWh and I&C 2,000 – 19,999 MWh have declined in the reported period.

Annual consumption has been in decline in both market segments since 2022 but appears to have shown very little change in the non-domestic sector since 2023. The proportion of total electricity consumption for each sector also remains relatively unchanged over the period.

Bigger industrial and commercial (I&C) users consume a disproportionate amount of electricity. For example, those I&C customers who consumed 2,000 MWh or more of electricity in 2025 accounted for just 0.33% of all I&C connections but were responsible for 43% of non-domestic consumption in 2025. Indeed, a very small number of the largest energy users (i.e. those 20 customers who consumed more than 20,000 MWh of electricity in 2025) were responsible for around 17% of I&C consumption and 10% of the total volume of electricity consumption (both domestic and non-domestic) in Northern Ireland in 2025.

91 Note that long term vacant sites are not included in connection numbers and combined premises are included in the <20MWh category.

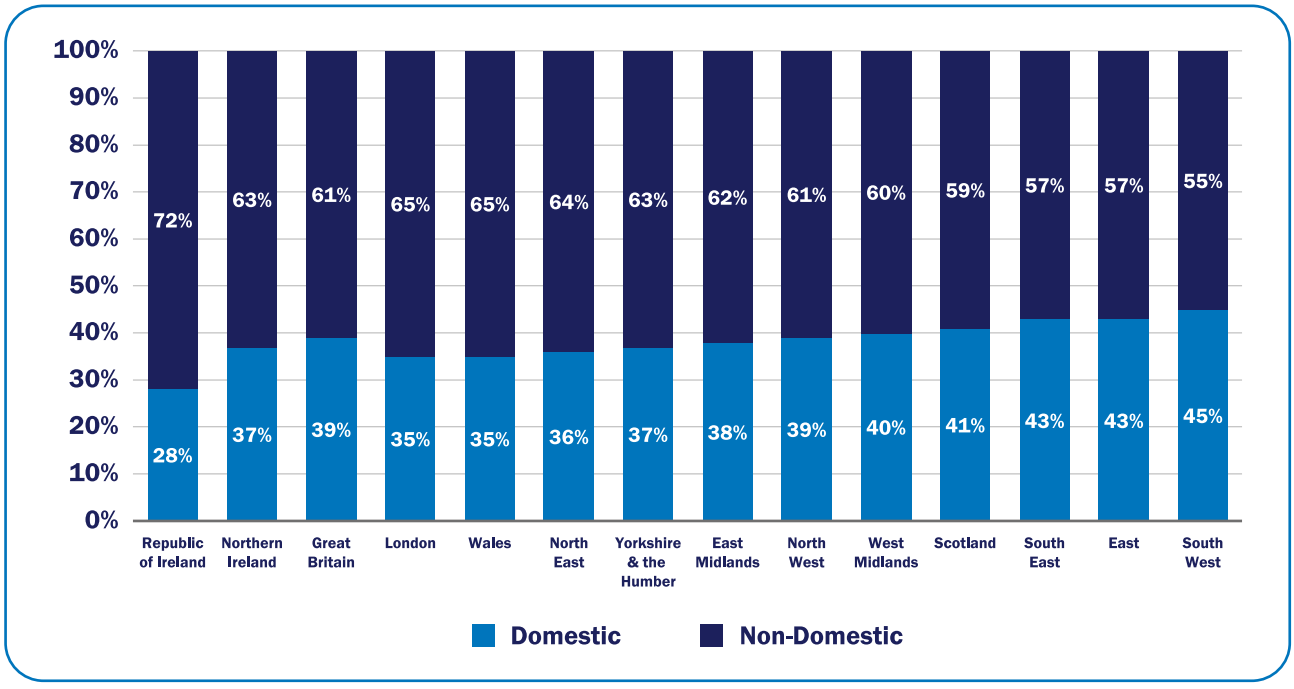
Domestic customers in Northern Ireland consumed an average of 3,178 kWh in 2025 (3,345 kWh for credit customers and 2,980 kWh for prepayment customers).

In the non-domestic sector in 2025, 87% of connections were in the consumption less than 50 MWh per annum groups and 99% of connections were in the consumption less than 500 MWh per annum groups.

Domestic Versus Non-Domestic Consumption – Regional Comparisons

Similar information for Great Britain and its regions is published by DESNZ[92] (the most recent data available to use for comparison is from 2024). As shown in Chart 3.4 below, the split between domestic and non-domestic electricity consumption for Great Britain as a whole, was quite similar to that of Northern Ireland, but with a slightly higher percentage of consumption in the domestic sector (39%) and therefore a lower percentage in the non-domestic sector (61%). The overall proportion of meters per sector was the same (92% domestic, 8% non-domestic[93]).

Chart 3.4 Distribution of Domestic/Non-Domestic Electricity Consumption by Country and Region, 2024



Sources: DESNZ[94]; NIE Networks; Central Statistics Office

As shown above, the split between domestic and non-domestic metered consumption varies across the regions of Great Britain. Domestic metered consumption accounted for 35% of total electricity consumption in Wales and London but 45% in the South West region.

92 Full publication can be accessed at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/subnational-electricity-and-gas-consumption-summary-report-2024/subnational-electricity-and-gas-consumption-summary-report-2024--2

93 Calculated from data published by DESNZ, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/stacked-electricity-consumption-statistics-data

94 See https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/subnational-electricity-and-gas-consumption-summary-report-2024/subnational-electricity-and-gas-consumption-summary-report-2024--2

Indeed, the variation is even more marked across the Great Britain local authorities (equivalent to Northern Ireland council areas). For example, in 2024, domestic consumption made up 20% or less of total electricity consumption in seven local authorities (City of London, Slough, Westminster, Neath Port Talbot, Tower Hamlets, North Warwickshire, and High Peak) and as much as 67% in one local authority (East Renfrewshire)[95]. The share between domestic and non-domestic consumption depends on local factors, such as the mix and scale of the local industry/service economy, the mix of domestic properties and the extent to which electricity is used for heating.

Data published by the Central Statistics Office[96] for Ireland for 2024 shows a much higher proportion of metered electricity consumed in Ireland (72%) for non-domestic purposes compared to Northern Ireland (63%). In 2024, domestic electricity consumption in Ireland was 8,706 GWh (accounting for 28% of all electricity consumption and equivalent to over three times the domestic consumption in Northern Ireland in 2024), and non-domestic consumption was 22,970 GWh (also equivalent to over three times the non-domestic electricity consumption in Northern Ireland for 2024). One reason for the relatively large proportion of non-domestic consumption in Ireland is the impact of data centres which accounted for over one-fifth (22%) of metered electricity consumption in 2024[97].

Electricity Flowchart

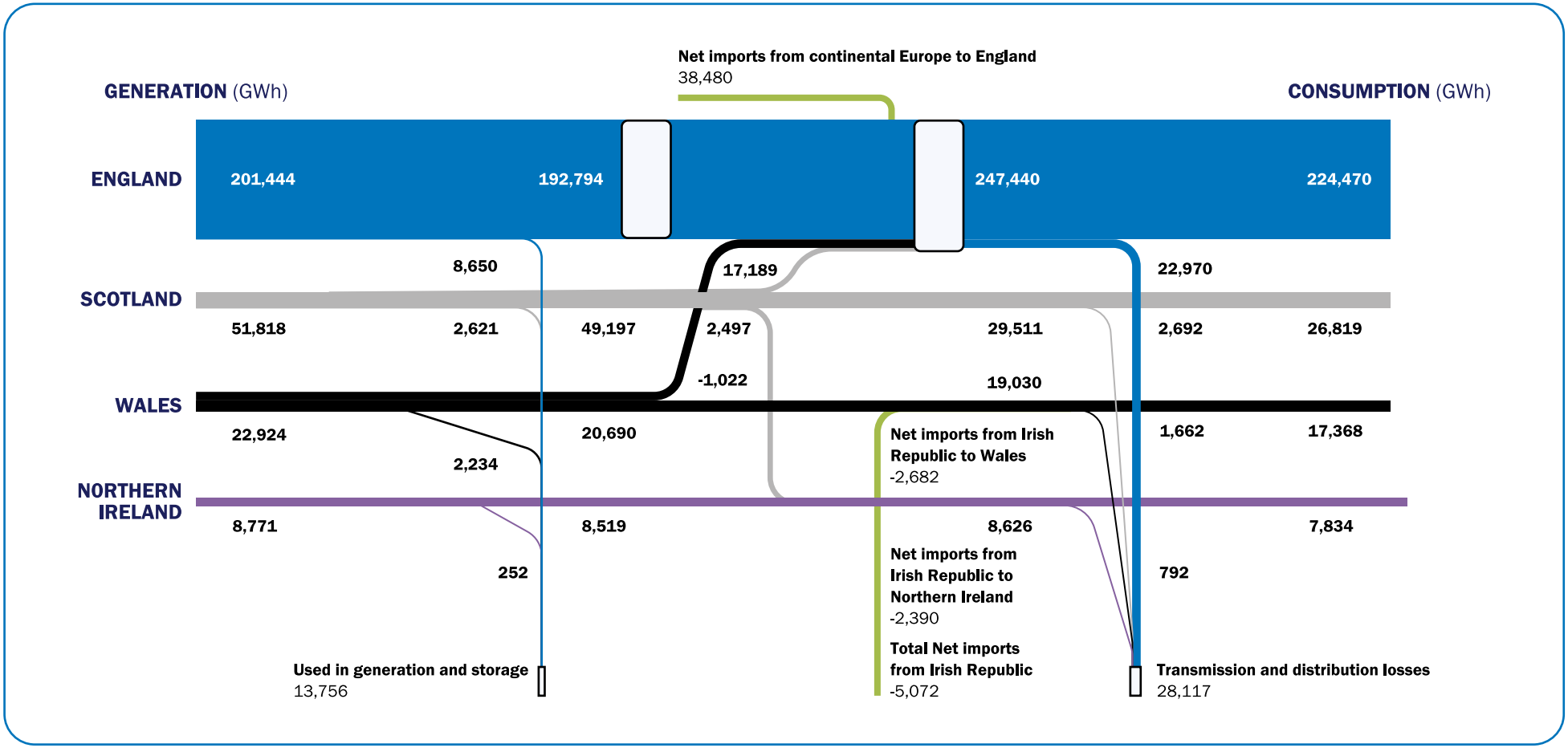
Chart 3.5 produced by DESNZ shows the relationship between generation and consumption of electricity in each of the UK countries by means of a Sankey flow diagram. Further details on generation and supply totals for the UK and its regions can be found in Annex 3.2.

The flowchart shows that, for Northern Ireland, indigenous generators produced 8,771 GWh of electricity in 2024. Of this, 252 GWh was for their own use resulting in 8,519 GWh net electricity supplied by indigenous generators to the public supply system. Net imports from Scotland were 2,497 GWh, but there were also net exports of 2,390 GWh to Ireland, so taking these into account means a total of 8,626 GWh of electricity supplied in Northern Ireland. However, 792 GWh of this was taken up through transmission and distribution losses which leaves a total of 7,834 GWh of total consumption.

The Sankey flowchart highlights the fact that England was reliant on imports of electricity from Continental Europe (38,480 GWh) and Scotland (17,189 GWh) to meet demand in 2024. These imports were equivalent to almost one quarter of electricity consumption in England in 2024. Scotland was a significant net exporter of electricity in 2024 with net exports from Scotland to England (17,189 GWh) and Scotland to Northern Ireland (2,497 GWh) equivalent to two-fifths of net electricity supplied by indigenous generators in Scotland in 2024. Wales was a net importer from England (1,022 GWh) but a net exporter to Ireland (2,682 GWh) in 2024.

95 Calculated from data published by DESNZ, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/stacked-electricity-consumption-statistics-data
96 See https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-mec/meteredelectricityconsumption2024/keyfindings/
97 See https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-dcmec/datacentresmeteredelectricityconsumption2024/

Chart 3.5 Electricity Generation and Consumption Flow Chart, 2024



Source: DESNZ (Electricity generation and supply by country)

Imports, Exports and Transfers of Electricity in Northern Ireland

As noted earlier, Northern Ireland has connection to the Irish and Scottish electricity networks (via the North-South tie-lines and Moyle Interconnector respectively). Table 3.3 below highlights the volume of electricity that has passed between these countries in recent years.

Table 3.3 Annual Imports, Exports and Transfers of Electricity (GWh), 2002 to 2025

Year	Imports Ireland to NI	Exports NI to Ireland	Net imports (Ireland to NI)	Transfers Scotland to NI	Transfers NI to Scotland	Net Transfers (Scotland to NI)	Total net imports/ transfers
2002	140	148	-8	816	0	816	808
2003	119	86	33	1,012	0	1,012	1,045
2004	0	1,574	-1,574	2,793	0	2,793	1,219
2005	1	2,074	-2,073	1,687	0	1,687	-386
2006	10	1,788	-1,778	941	36	905	-873
2007	53	1,382	-1,329	1,730	2	1,728	399
2008	190	469	-279	700	155	545	265
2009	85	452	-367	1,991	14	1,977	1,610
2010	145	379	-234	2,298	1	2,297	2,064
2011	121	366	-245	1,769	0	1,769	1,524
2012	173	333	-160	2,164	2	2,162	2,002
2013	157	202	-45	1,551	11	1,541	1,495
2014	243	122	121	1,109	65	1,044	1,165
2015	490	155	334	685	494	191	526
2016	639	240	399	438	690	-252	147
2017	271	381	-110	747	892	-145	-255
2018	377	848	-471	1,315	609	707	236
2019	302	1,127	-825	1,475	495	981	156
2020	321	1,074	-753	1,063	767	296	-456
2021	325	1,417	-1,092	1,637	772	865	-227
2022	336	1,169	-833	797	1,074	-277	-1,110
2023	203	1,807	-1,604	2,455	422	2,033	429
2024	71	2,461	-2,390	2,746	249	2,497	107
2025[98]	128	1,769	-1,641	2,374	142	2,232	591

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/electricity-section-5-energy-trends)

Table 3.3 shows that Northern Ireland has experienced sustained two-way electricity flows with both Ireland and Scotland since 2002, reflecting its role as an interconnected electricity hub rather than an isolated system.

Electricity trade with Ireland has fluctuated over time, where with Northern Ireland was a net exporter to Ireland during most years between 2002 and 2013 and again from 2017 onwards. Northern Ireland was a net importer from Ireland only during the short period 2014 to 2016, when net volumes were relatively small compared with total electricity consumption.

Exports to Ireland increased markedly from 2018, reaching a recent peak of 2,461 GWh in 2024, before falling slightly to 1,769 GWh in 2025, remaining at historically high levels.

98 Data for 2025 are provisional

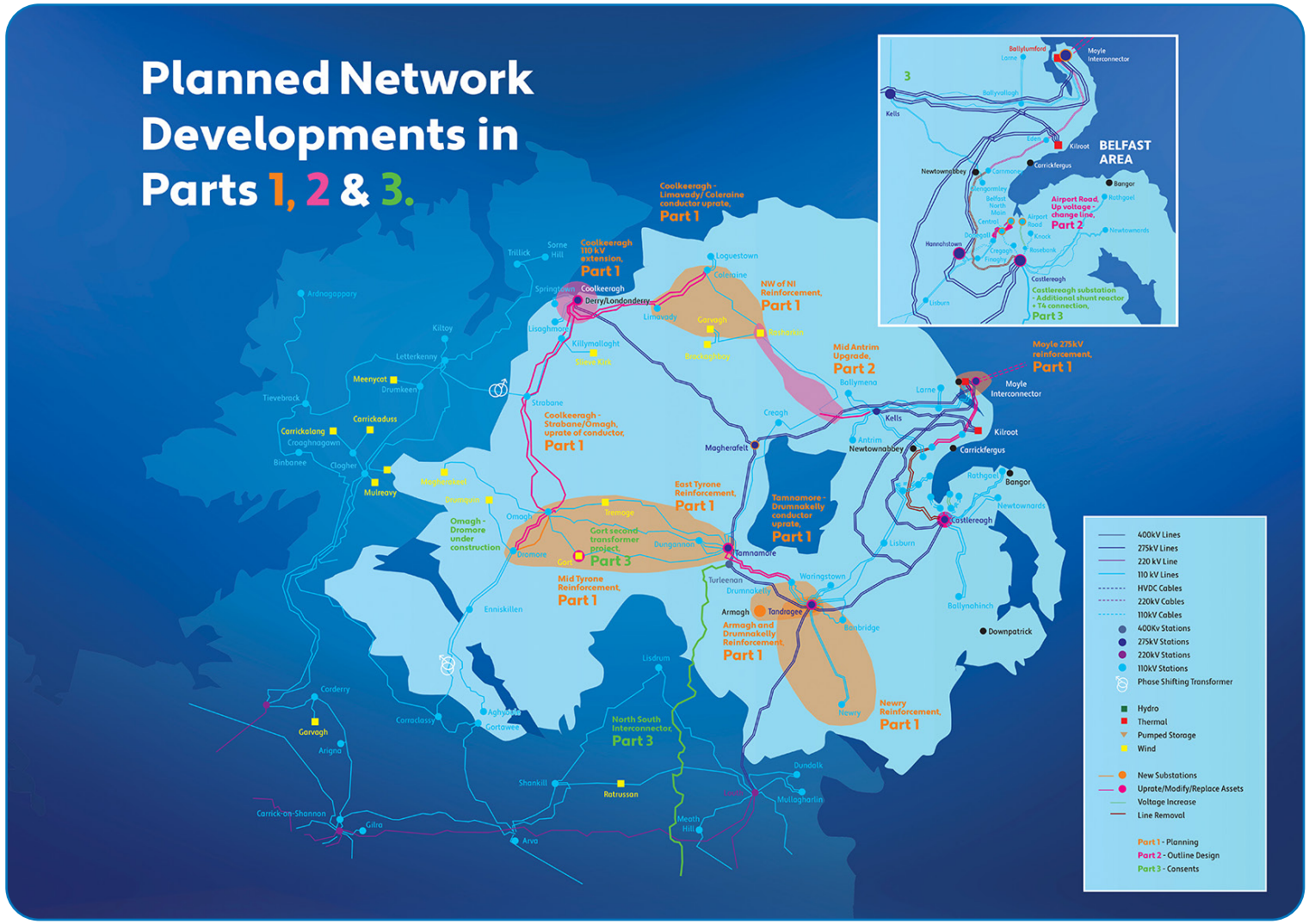
Electricity transfers via the Moyle Interconnector with Scotland dominate overall cross-border flows, with substantial net imports from Scotland in most years, particularly between 2009 and 2013, when transfers averaged around 2,000 GWh per year and again from 2018 onwards, with transfers exceeding 2,400 GWh in 2024, the highest level since 2012.

The large net transfers with Scotland have not translated into equivalent net reliance on imports, as electricity imported from Scotland is often exported onwards to Ireland via the North-South tie-lines. As a result, total net imports/transfers (final column) are typically modest relative to gross flows, and in several years Northern Ireland was close to balance or was a net exporter overall.

The pattern of flows illustrates Northern Ireland's role as a conduit within the Single Electricity Market, facilitating electricity movements between Great Britain and Ireland rather than being structurally dependent on imports for domestic demand. This is also depicted in the Sankey at Chart 3.1.

Over the longer term, the table shows a transition from genuine import reliance prior to 2015 towards a system where interconnection supports flexibility, market efficiency and balancing across jurisdictions.

Annex 3.1 Map of the Transmission System Network for Northern Ireland



Source: SONI (http://www.soni.ltd.uk/media/documents/SONI-Transmission-Map.pdf)

Annex 3.2 Generation and Supply

As noted earlier Northern Ireland has three main gas fuelled electricity-generating plants, multiple renewable generators and interconnection with grids in Ireland and Scotland. All of these combine to fulfil the total electricity requirement for Northern Ireland. The table below, produced annually by DESNZ, gives information on the generation and supply of electricity for each country of the UK. The latest available data relates to 2024.

Table 3.4 Generation and Supply of Electricity in the UK, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (GWh), 2024

		England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	UK
(A)	Electricity Generated by Major power producers (MPPs)	162,170	42,120	18,691	**6,027**	229,008
(B)	Minus Electricity Used in pumping at pumped storage and other own use by MPPs	6,127	2,169	2,014	**144**	10,455
(C)	Equals Electricity supplied (net) by MPPs	156,043	39,951	16,677	**5,882**	218,553
(D)	Electricity Generated by Other generators	39,273	9,698	4,233	**2,744**	55,948
(E)	Minus Own use by other generators	2,523	452	220	**107**	3,301
(F)	Minus Consumption by autogenerators	17,562	4,419	1,917	**1,259**	25,157
(G)	Equals Electricity supplied (net) by Other generators	19,189	4,827	2,096	**1,377**	27,490
(H)	Total electricity generated = (A) + (D)	201,444	51,818	22,924	**8,771**	284,956
(J)	Total electricity supplied (net) by indigenous generators = (C) + (G)	175,232	44,778	18,773	**7,260**	246,043
(K)	Electricity transferred to England (imports minus exports)	16,167	-17,189	1,022	**0**	0
(L)	Electricity transferred to Northern Ireland (imports minus exports)	0	-2,497	0	**2,497**	0
(M)	Electricity transferred to Europe (imports minus exports)	38,480	0	-2,682	**-2,390**	33,408
(N)	Total transfers = (K) + (L) + (M)	54,647	-19,686	-1,660	**107**	33,408
(P)	Total electricity supplied (indigenous generation plus imports minus exports) = (J) + (N)	229,878	25,092	17,113	**7,367**	279,450
(Q)	Minus Transmission losses	7,006	819	506	**241**	8,572
(R)	Minus Distribution losses and theft	15,964	1,873	1,156	**551**	19,545
(S)	Equals Consumption from public supply	206,908	22,400	15,451	**6,575**	251,334
(T)	*Electricity sales (public supply)*	208,358	19,760	15,599	**7,870**	251,587

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-trends-december-2025-special-feature-articles)

The previous table shows figures on total generation, consumption, transfers and losses for the four regions of the UK and the UK total for 2024. The data is derived from a survey of major power producers and other generators.

The table shows that England is reliant on substantial imports of electricity from Scotland & Wales and from continental Europe (via the France and Netherlands interconnectors) to meet its electricity demands. Of particular note, in 2024 Scotland exported nearly two fifths (38%) of its net electricity supplied by indigenous generators to England (i.e. transfers of 17,189 GWh to England out of 44,778 GWh net electricity supplied by indigenous generators in Scotland).

Wales started trading electricity with Ireland in 2012. Since 2023, Wales has exported quite sizeable volumes to Ireland including a record high net exports of almost 4,500 GWh in 2025.

Northern Ireland was a net exporter in terms of electricity trades with Ireland (via the North-South tie-lines) in 2024, the net amount being 107 GWh or equivalent to about 2% of Northern Ireland's net electricity supplied by indigenous generators. What is notable about the DESNZ data (as shown in Table 3.5 above and Table 3.4 earlier) is that in 2024 Northern Ireland generated more electricity than it required to meet indigenous consumption. Indeed, since 2016, Northern Ireland was able to meet all (or the overwhelming majority of) its own electricity demands without relying on imports or transfers of electricity from other countries.

Table 3.3 earlier showed that, for the first time, Northern Ireland was a net exporter of electricity to Scotland (via the Moyle interconnector) in 2016 and again in 2017, though the net amounts were small. However, Northern Ireland returned to being a net importer of electricity from Scotland in 2018 and continued as such up to 2025, with the exception of 2022. In previous years imports via the Moyle Interconnector were substantial (for example, over the period 2009-2014 an annual average of over 1,800 GWh of electricity were transferred from Scotland to Northern Ireland), with 2023 reverting to this trend, which has been maintained since.

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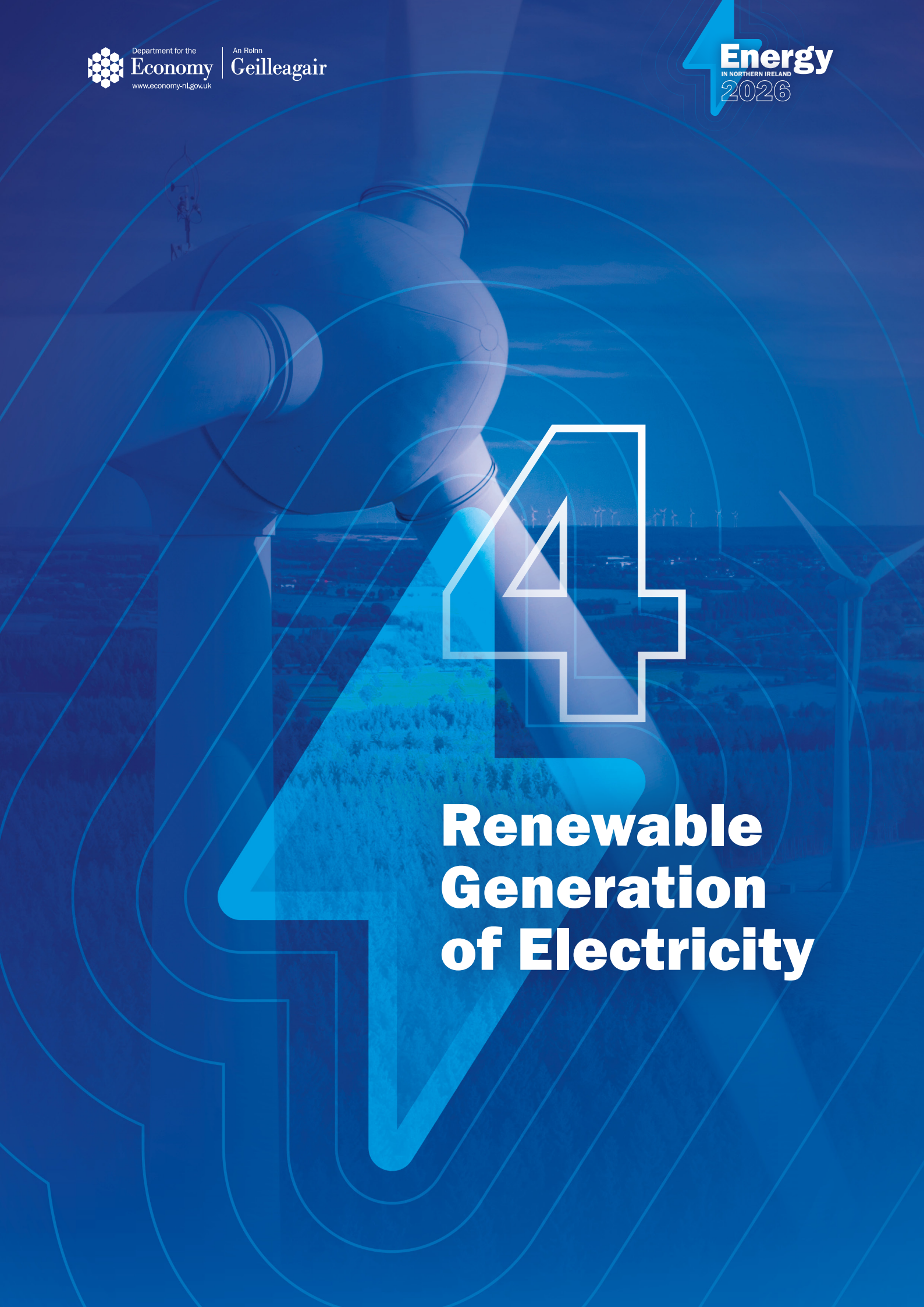
An Roinn Geilleagair

Energy IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2026



4 Renewable Generation of Electricity

CHAPTER 4: RENEWABLE GENERATION OF ELECTRICITY

Summary of Key Points

- Northern Ireland has had a number of renewable generation of electricity targets in recent years. The Climate Change Act in 2022 states that "The Department for the Economy must ensure that at least 80% of electricity consumption is from renewable sources by 2030".
- In 2026, the measurement of this target moved to calculating and reporting renewable generation of electricity (both metered and own-use) as a proportion of gross final electricity consumption (all metered and own-use renewable and non-renewable generation plus imports of electricity minus exports of electricity).
- The annual proportion of renewable generation of electricity as a percentage of gross final electricity consumption in Northern Ireland increased from 41% in 2018 to a peak in 2022 of 50% before falling to 47% in 2025. For 2024, the most recent year data is available to make comparison, the EU27 average was 48% compared to Northern Ireland at 44%.
- Wind remains the dominant source of renewable generation of electricity in Northern Ireland accounting for 72% of total renewable generation volumes in 2025. Such reliance on wind does mean that monthly renewable generation volumes in Northern Ireland can be prone to large fluctuations, due to changing weather conditions.
- Around two thirds of renewable generation capacity and generation volumes was accounted for by three of the eleven Northern Ireland district council areas namely: Causeway Coast & Glens; Derry City & Strabane; and Fermanagh & Omagh.
- In terms of the fuel type used for electricity generation, and comparing with the latest available data for the UK, in Northern Ireland in 2024 gas (54.5%) accounted for a higher share than renewables (44.1%). Northern Ireland's proportion of electricity generated from gas was similar to Wales (58.2%), higher than England (32.6%), but significantly higher than in Scotland (5.7%).
- In terms of the percentage of total indigenous generation accounted for by indigenous renewable generation, Northern Ireland had the second lowest proportion (44.1%) of all four UK regions in 2024 using this measure, higher than Wales (33.5%) but lower than England (46.8%) and Scotland (73.1%) with the UK average at 50.4%.

Introduction

There are a number of renewable generators in Northern Ireland and this chapter describes the available data on such electricity generation.

Definition

Renewable energy is energy derived from natural processes (e.g. sunlight and wind) that are replenished at a rate that is equal to or faster than the rate at which they are consumed[99]. Solar, wind, geothermal, hydro, and some forms of biomass and biogas are common sources of renewable energy. Renewable generation of electricity is therefore any electricity generated from any of these sources.

Measuring Renewable Generation of Electricity

Northern Ireland has had a number of renewable generation targets in recent years. One of the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government (PfG) targets for 2011-15 was to "Encourage achievement of 20% of electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2015"[100]. Separately, the Executive's Strategic Energy Framework (SEF) included a target to achieve 40% of electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2020[101]. Both targets were met in 2015 and 2018 respectively.

DfE's new Energy Strategy, published in December 2021, included a target to "Meet at least 70% of electricity consumption from a diverse mix of renewable sources by 2030". In 2022 this target was superseded by the Northern Ireland Climate Change Act, which states that "The Department for the Economy must ensure that at least 80% of electricity consumption is from renewable sources by 2030"[102].

Since 2014, DfE's quarterly 'Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland' publication has aided reporting on performance against such government targets[103]. The new Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland, "Path to Net Zero Energy", committed to reviewing both the level and the calculation methodologies for the renewable generation target in 2025 and after a User Engagement exercise, a revised methodology now underpins publications from March 2026 onwards. Data shown in this section will be based on the new methodology, but a legacy publication using the previous method with a back series of data to 2008 is available[104].

99 Taken from https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy/energy-sources-distribution/renewables/about-renewable-energy/7295#what
100 See https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/programme-government-2011-2015 for more information on the 2011-2015 Programme for Government.
101 See https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/deti/sef%202010.pdf
102 See https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2022/31/section/15/enacted
103 More information on this publication is available at https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-statistics.
104 See https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk

In the Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland publication, electricity system data is derived by aggregating output from a number of sources. Renewable generation is calculated by aggregating data for all renewable generators who are connected to the transmission and distribution network or who self-consume their generation, using a combination of data held by Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Ltd (NIE Networks), the System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) and the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ). Statistical transfers and joint projects may also allow renewable generation from outside NI to be counted if an agreement is in place that avoids double counting of the generation.

Gross final electricity consumption data is calculated by aggregating all metered and own use renewable and non-renewable generation plus imports minus exports (net imports) using a combination of data held by NIE Networks, SONI and DESNZ. Gross final electricity consumption is equivalent to total electricity demand or need. The headline measure - renewable generation as a percentage of gross final electricity consumption - is therefore derived by expressing total renewable generation as a share of gross final consumption on a rolling 12-month basis. The rolling average smooths monthly fluctuations and better reflects underlying trends. This approach is comparable with the EU RES-E measure, enabling international comparison.

Factors affecting renewable generation

Renewable generation in Northern Ireland is influenced by a range of operational, environmental, market-related and system-wide factors.

Weather

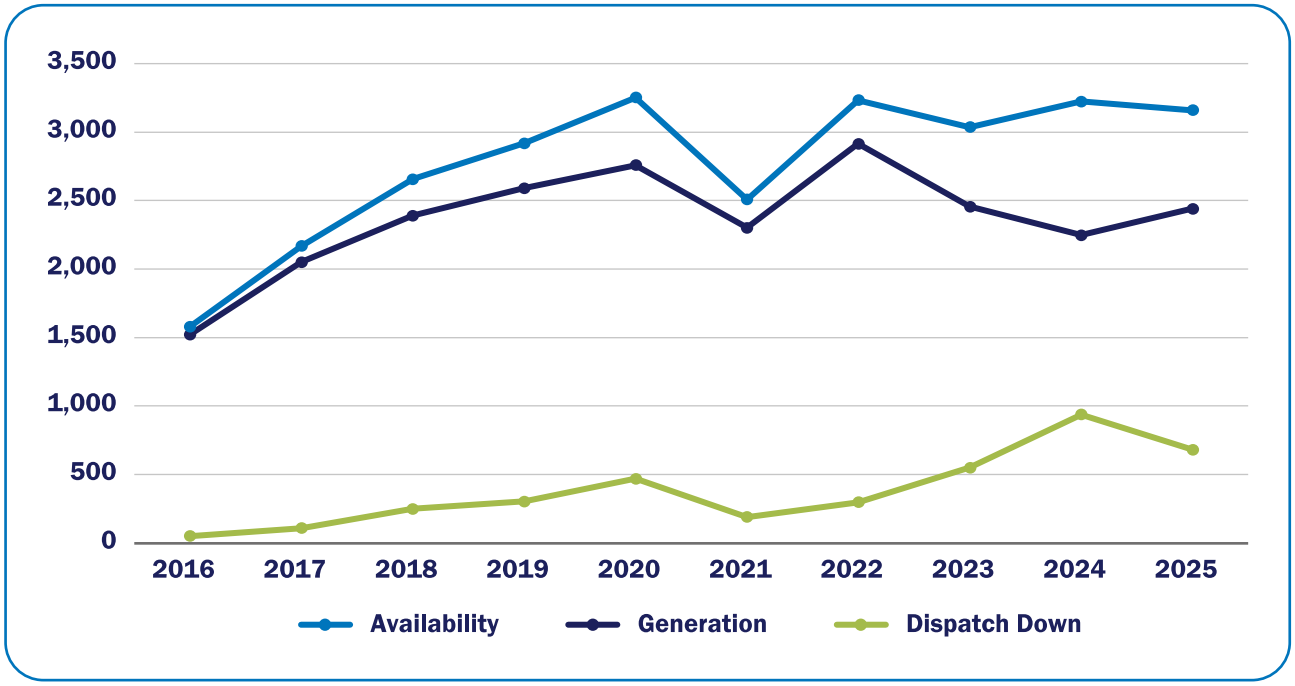
The majority of renewable generation in Northern Ireland comes from wind (around 70%). Alongside solar PV which represents around 7% of generation, these technologies are impacted by Northern Ireland's weather which can be both seasonal and volatile and cause large variations in monthly volumes generated. Although weather data are available from the Met Office and other sources at daily or monthly intervals, establishing direct relationships between aggregated weather data and actual generation is not practical, given location-specific variability across generation sites and the influence of other contributing factors.

Dispatch Down

EirGrid provides monthly statistics[105], which detail the volume of available generation and the volume of electricity generated. The difference between generation availability and generation volume is called 'Dispatch Down'. Chart 4.1 shows that, apart from 2021 which was a poor wind year, the availability had been over 3,000 GWh but actual generation volume has been falling since 2022 due to the increased levels of dispatch down. In percentage terms, this means that dispatch down levels rose from 3% in 2016 to 29% in 2024 before falling back to 22% in 2025.

105 See www.eirgrid.ie/grid/system-and-renewable-data-reports

Chart 4.1 Annual proportions of dispatch down for combined solar and wind generation, 2018 to 2025



Source: Eirgrid (www.eirgrid.ie/grid/system-and-renewable-data-reports)

Dispatch down can be further categorised as constraint or curtailment, where:

- Constraint is a reduction in allowed output due to local or network-specific grid limitations (e.g. when part of the system cannot safely carry the wind power available, due to line, transformer, or node limits)
- Curtailment is a reduction in allowed output due to system wide limitations (e.g. when too much non-synchronous generation would be online relative to demand or stability limits, i.e. the safe system non-synchronous penetration (SNSP) level)[106].

Eirgrid publishes an Annual Renewable Constraint and Curtailment Report [107] which outlines the reasons for levels of Dispatch Down. Further analysis of dispatch down volumes is shown in Annex 4.1.

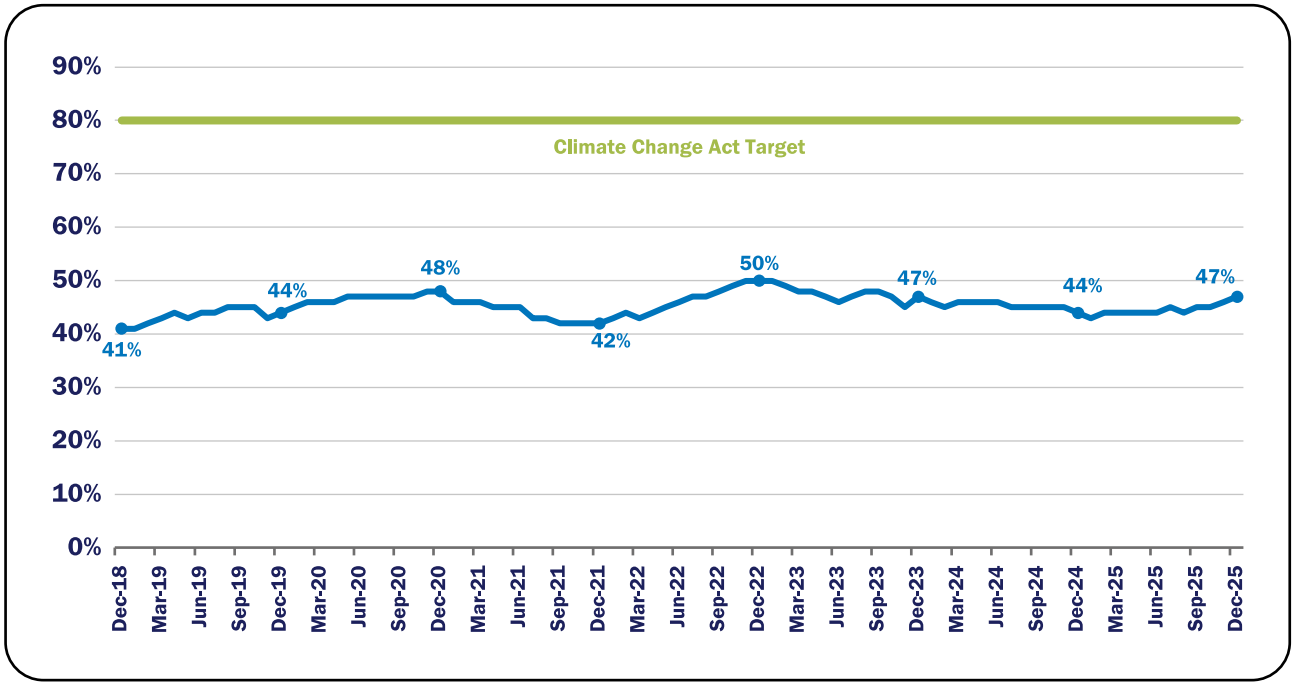
Headline Measure – Rolling 12-Month Average

For the 12-month period January 2025 to December 2025, renewable generation was equivalent to 47% of gross final electricity consumption. This compares to 44% for the previous 12-month period (January 2024 to December 2024).

106 At the moment, up to 75% of Ireland's electricity generation can come from variable renewables, such as wind and solar, at any one time. This is known as the system non-synchronous penetration (SNSP) limit. See Eirgrid website

107 See Eirgrid Renewable Constraint and Curtailment Report 2024

Chart 4.2 Rolling 12-Month Average Renewable Generation of Electricity as a proportion of Gross Final Electricity Consumption, December 2018 to December 2025



Source: DfE (https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html)

Annual Proportion

Chart 4.2 above shows the trend in renewable generation as a percentage of gross final electricity consumption in Northern Ireland. In the 12-month period ending December 2018, some 41% of gross final electricity consumption in Northern Ireland was generated from renewable sources. This proportion has fluctuated since, rising to 48% in 2020 before falling back to 42% in 2021 which may be partially explained by the lower wind speeds experienced during 2021[108]. Whilst renewable generation was equivalent to 47% of gross final electricity consumption in 2025, this was below the peak of 50% seen in 2022.

The main period of strong growth in renewable generation was between 2008 and 2018. The previous methodology tracked metered renewable generated electricity as a percentage of metered consumption and in 2008 this figure was around 7%, with generation for own use at this time considered to be minimal.

International Comparisons based on Annual Proportions

A major benefit of the new methodology is that data for Northern Ireland can now be compared to data published for other countries on a more comparable basis. Eurostat publishes the share of renewable generation in gross final electricity consumption[109] and selected countries are shown in Table 4.1 below. The most recent full year for Eurostat data is for 2024, and this shows the EU27 average was 48% compared to 44% for Northern Ireland.

108 See https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-trends-section-7-weather. Average wind speeds in 2021 were 14% lower than in 2020 and 12% lower than the 10-year mean.
109 [sdg_07_40] Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector

The highest performing country was Norway at 115%, who has consistently generated above 100% of their consumption since 2011. Albania and Iceland were the only other countries above 100%, at 105% and 102% respectively, while Denmark, Sweden and Austria achieved between 80% and 90%. Northern Ireland's proportion in 2024 was below the EU27 average but higher than in Ireland (41%).

Table 4.1 International Comparisons of Annual Share of Renewable Generation in Gross Final Electricity Consumption, selected EU countries, 2018 to 2024

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Norway	107%	110%	114%	114%	120%	117%	115%
Albania	92%	93%	100%	94%	103%	105%	105%
Iceland	98%	101%	103%	100%	99%	100%	102%
Austria	74%	75%	78%	74%	74%	88%	90%
Sweden	66%	71%	74%	76%	83%	88%	88%
Denmark	62%	65%	65%	73%	77%	79%	80%
Portugal	52%	54%	58%	58%	61%	63%	66%
Spain	35%	37%	43%	46%	51%	57%	60%
Germany	38%	41%	44%	44%	48%	52%	54%
Netherlands	15%	18%	26%	33%	40%	46%	51%
European Union - 27 countries (from 2020)	32%	34%	37%	38%	41%	45%	48%
Northern Ireland	**41%**	**44%**	**48%**	**42%**	**50%**	**47%**	**44%**
Ireland	33%	36%	39%	38%	37%	40%	41%
Italy	34%	35%	38%	36%	37%	39%	41%
France	21%	22%	25%	25%	27%	30%	31%
Luxembourg	9%	11%	14%	14%	16%	18%	21%
Malta	8%	7%	9%	10%	10%	11%	11%

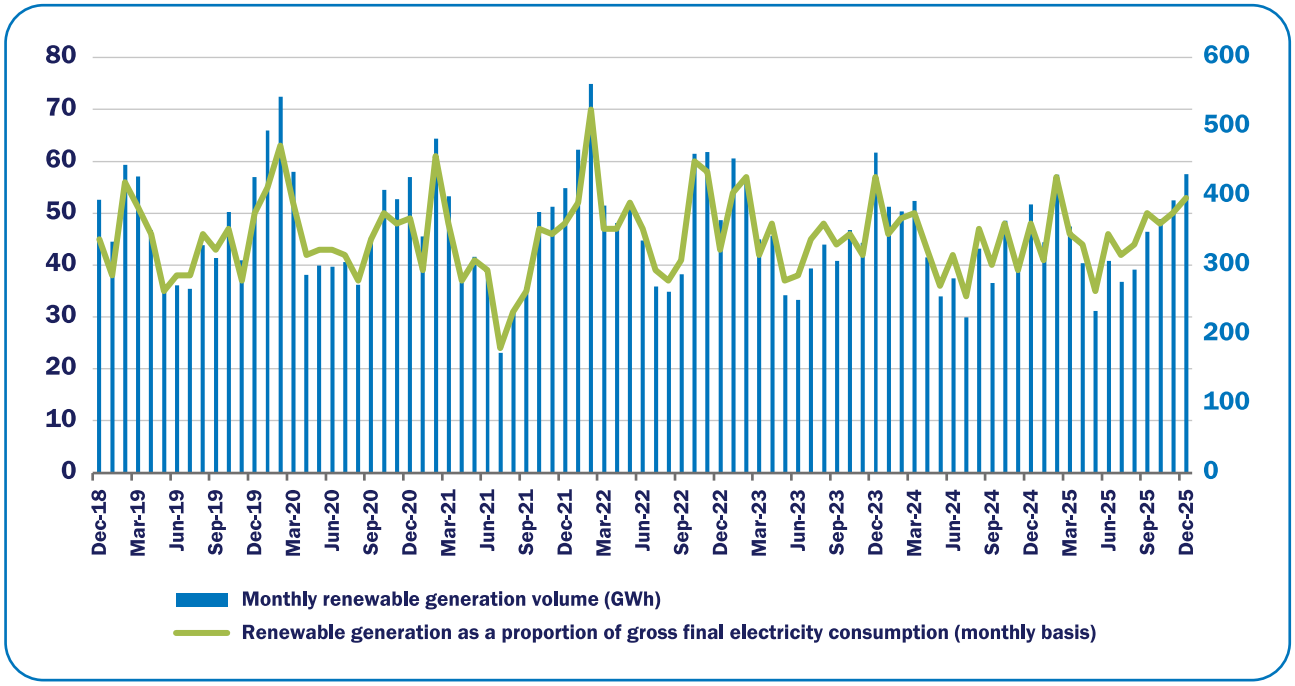
Source: Eurostat (Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector)

Renewable Generation - Monthly Proportion

Renewable generation as a proportion of Gross Final Electricity Consumption varies markedly from month to month, as shown in Chart 4.3. For example, in February 2022, generation from renewable sources located in Northern Ireland accounted for more than two thirds (70%) of gross final electricity consumption in Northern Ireland: this compares to 24% in July 2021. Such variation can be due to large fluctuations in renewable generation each month, caused mainly by changing weather conditions, changes in the stock of renewable generation installation and market and system issues which affect the amount of renewable generation which can be used by the grid (dispatch down – see Chart 4.1).

In 2025, wind generation accounted for 72% of all renewable generation. Given the reliance on wind generation in Northern Ireland, weather plays an important role in the volume of renewable generation. In general, renewable generation volumes are lower in the summer months (when it is less windy) and higher in winter when wind levels are increased. Such changes in renewable generation correlate directly with the large monthly variation in the proportion of gross final electricity consumption from renewable sources, as shown in Chart 4.3. The rolling 12-month average helps to take account of such monthly variations to provide a better measure of the underlying trend (as shown earlier in Chart 4.2).

Chart 4.3 Percentage of Gross Final Electricity Consumption from Renewable Sources and Renewable Generation Volume by month (GWh), December 2018 to December 2025



Source: DfE (https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html)

Chart 4.3 also highlights the close relationship between renewable generation volumes and the overall renewable proportion. The renewable proportion for measuring against the targets (i.e. renewable generation divided by gross final electricity consumption) is heavily influenced by changes in renewable generation (i.e. the numerator) and less so by changes in consumption (the denominator)[110]. As the chart above shows, the volume of renewable generation can change significantly from month to month whereas changes in gross final electricity consumption from month to month tend to be less marked.

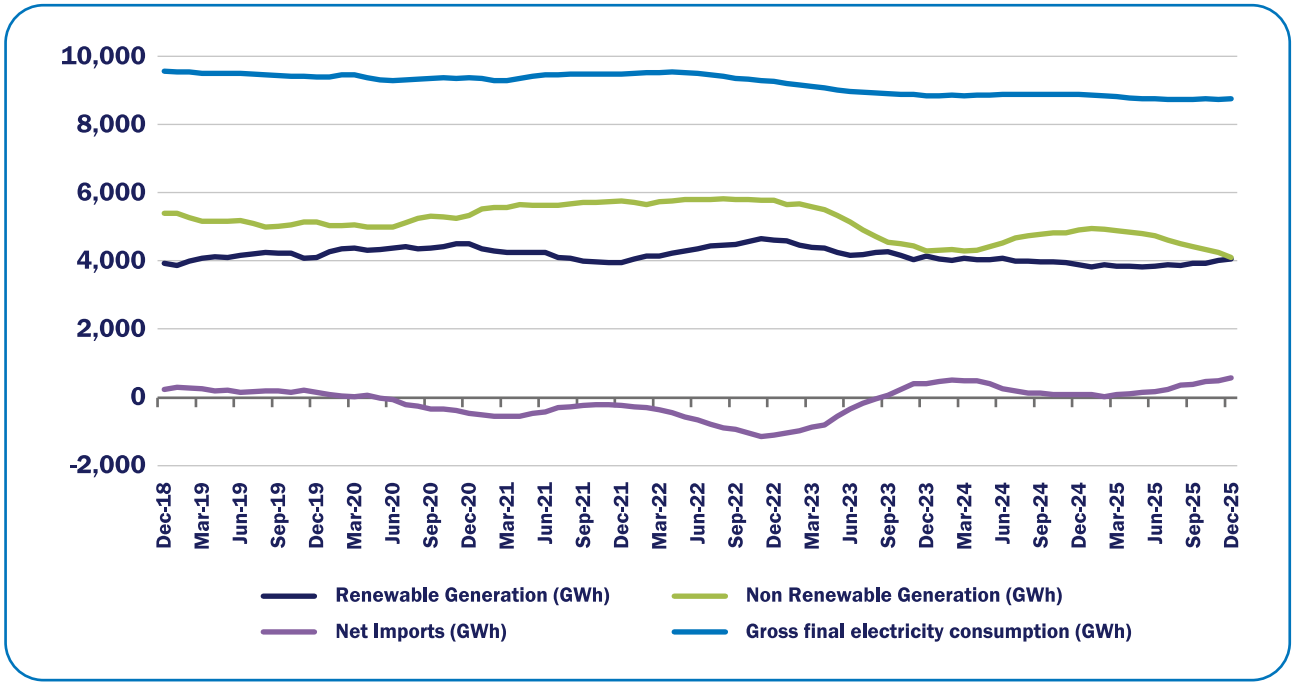
Renewable Generation Volume – Rolling 12-Month Period

Renewable generation volumes were almost 4,000 GWh for the 12-month period ending December 2018, reached a high of over 4,600 GWh in November 2022 and a low of around 3,800 GWh in May 2025. There have been fluctuations during the period, but the most recent 12-month volume is December 2025 at just over 4,000 GWh.

Total gross final electricity consumption was fairly constant up to February 2020 with the impact of Covid lockdowns then resulting in lower rolling 12-month consumption volumes for around one year from March 2020. Consumption volumes then climbed from March 2021 to April 2022 where it then almost reached 2018 levels. Since April 2022, the trend was then towards lower volumes of gross final electricity consumption, with the 10 months March to December 2025 making up the 10 lowest rolling 12-month volumes in the series.

110 Annex 4.2 shows the monthly renewable proportion mapped against monthly gross final electricity consumption.

Chart 4.4 Rolling 12-Month Volume of Gross Final Electricity Consumption by Source (GWh), December 2018 to December 2025



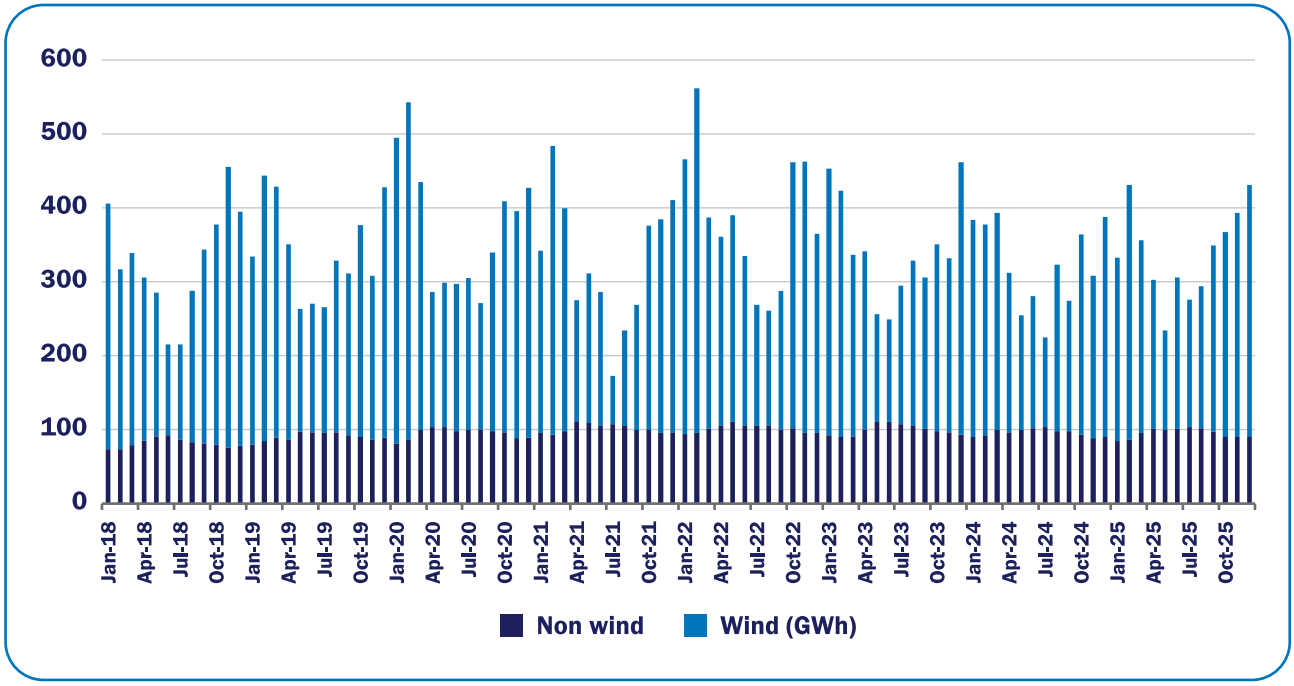
Source: DfE (https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html)

As Chart 4.4 shows, for the 12-month period January 2025 to December 2025, approximately 8,756 Gigawatt hours (GWh) of gross final electricity was consumed in Northern Ireland representing the total level of electricity demand. Of this, some 4,073 GWh was generated from renewable sources within Northern Ireland. The highest renewable generation volume was for the 12-month period ending November 2022 at 4,657 GWh, so the total for the 12-month period ending December 2025 was nearly 13% below this peak.

Renewable Generation Volume – Monthly

As noted earlier, given Northern Ireland's reliance on wind for renewable generation of electricity, such generation can vary markedly from month to month. As Chart 4.5 shows, there can be noticeable changes in monthly generation - the majority of renewable generation is still from wind sources which are more volatile, though the volume of renewable generation coming from other sources remain steadier.

Chart 4.5 Monthly Volume of Renewable Generation (GWh), January 2018 to December 2025

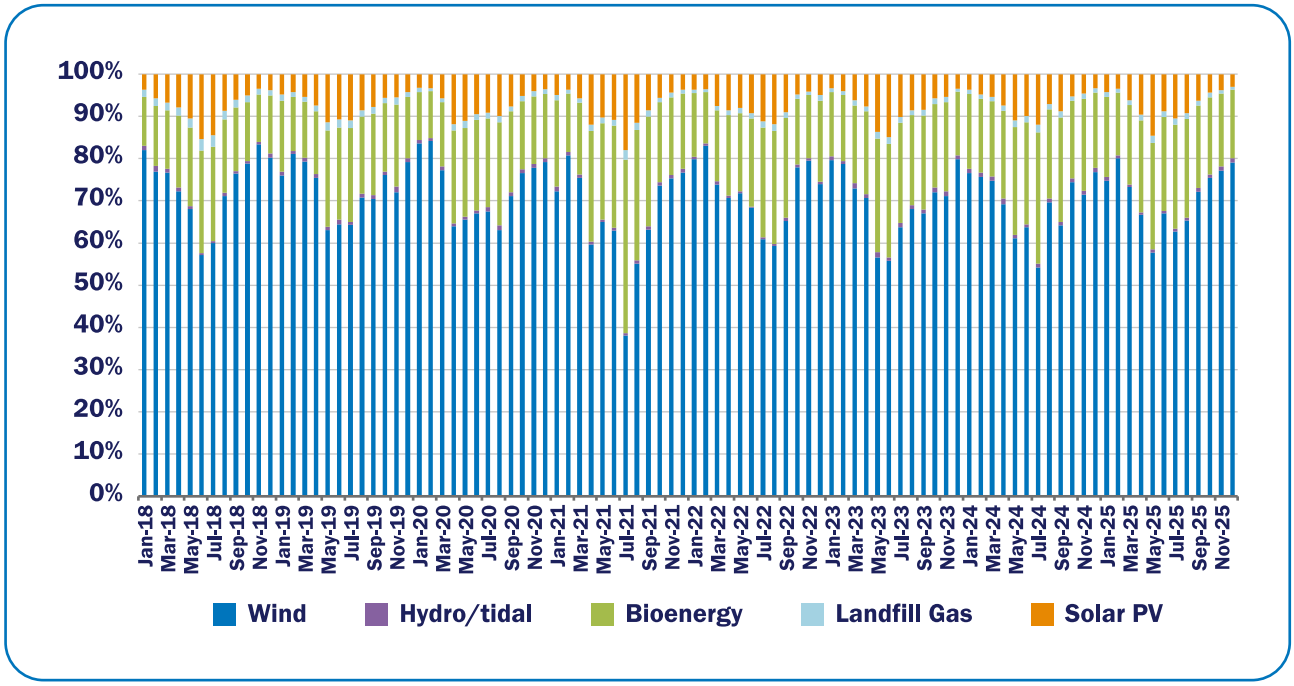


Source: DfE (https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html)

Renewable generation volumes are lower in the summer months (when it is less windy) and higher in winter when wind levels are increased. Changes to the stock of renewable generation facilities coming online at various points and grid capacity can also contribute to shifts in renewable generation volumes.

Renewable generation from sources other than wind are much more stable with fewer large monthly fluctuations. Volumes from these other sources had grown slightly over the period shown with monthly volumes averaging 81.4 GWh in 2018 to 101.25 GWh in 2022, before falling to 94.8 GWh for 2025.

Chart 4.6 Monthly Contribution of Renewable Generation by technology type, January 2018 to December 2025



Source: DfE (https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html)

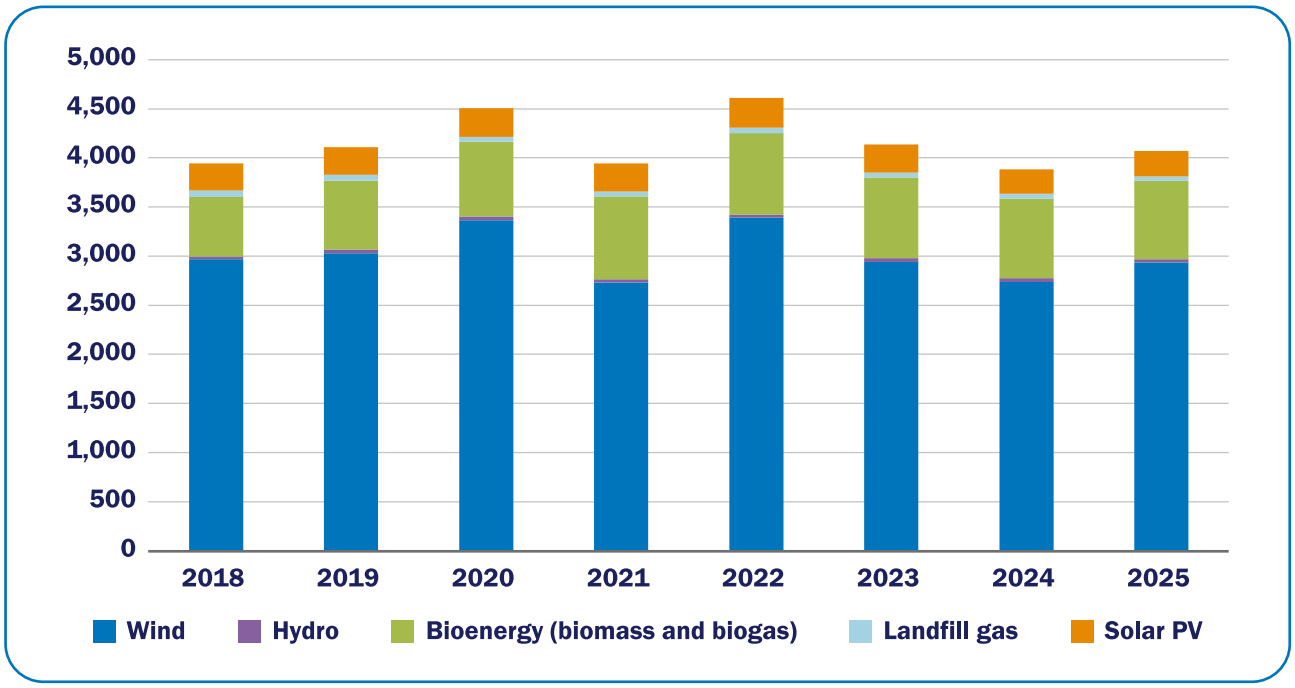
Putting these monthly values into context, Chart 4.6 above shows the monthly percentage contribution of each technology type to total renewable generation, which further highlights the seasonal variations in solar and wind generation.

In some months (particularly summer months when wind generation tends to be lower), other renewable sources have accounted for a substantial portion of renewable generation. For example, 62% of renewable generation for July 2021 was non-wind, with seven other months since January 2018 where 40% or more of renewable monthly electricity generated was from non-wind sources. These months were associated with lower total volumes of generation.

Renewable Generation Volume – Calendar Year

Chart 4.7 below shows the total volume of renewable generation in Northern Ireland for each calendar year 2018 to 2025, split by type of renewable generation. Total renewable generation volumes increased from 2018 to 2020, achieving their highest value in 2022 after a dip in generation between 2020 and 2021 (due to the fall in wind generation from lower wind speeds in 2021). Falls in renewable generation in 2023 and 2024 coincided with periods where dispatch down was high and where availability had a slight drop. Again, wind is the largest contributor (accounting for 72% of total renewable generation in 2025), and while there have been fluctuations in total renewable generation volumes, the percentage each type contributed has remained similar.

Chart 4.7 Annual Volume of Renewable Generation by Type of Generation (GWh), 2018 to 2025



Source: DfE (https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html)

Generation from Bioenergy (biogas and biomass) increased between 2018 and 2021, rising from 603 GWh to a peak of 845 GWh. Although levels have fallen slightly each year since, Bioenergy generation was 797 GWh in 2025 (around 20% of Northern Ireland's total renewable generation) a notable increase compared to 2011, when Bioenergy contributed less than 1 GWh[111].

Solar PV generation followed a similar growth pattern early in the period, increasing from 272 GWh in 2018 to 304 GWh in 2022, before falling below 2018 levels in both 2024 and 2025. In 2025, Solar PV produced 263 GWh, representing about 6% of Northern Ireland's total renewable generation.

111 See page 65 of Energy in NI 2022 report

Other Renewable Generation Data – UK and UK Regions

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) produce a range of data on renewable generation, including some at a UK regional level[112]. Some key tables are presented here.

Table 4.2 Number of Renewable Generation Sites, 2024

Region	Wind	Hydro	Wave and tidal	Landfill gas	Sewage gas	Other Bioenergy	Total excluding PV	Solar PV	Total
England	4,266	371	1	365	171	883	6,057	1,358,456	1,364,513
East Midlands	448	31	0	39	15	121	654	143,161	143,815
East of England	939	7	0	71	15	106	1,138	195,768	196,906
North East	285	17	0	21	7	40	370	71,095	71,465
North West	546	83	0	48	24	101	802	149,850	150,652
London	40	0	0	5	11	20	76	69,045	69,121
South East	118	26	0	71	35	75	325	248,237	248,562
South West	854	129	0	39	18	147	1,187	224,753	225,940
West Midlands	191	23	0	29	21	154	418	126,320	126,738
Yorkshire and the Humber	845	55	1	42	25	119	1,087	130,227	131,314
Northern Ireland	**743**	**86**	**0**	**15**	**2**	**177**	**1,023**	**32,342**	**33,365**
Scotland	3,721	779	19	49	9	157	4,734	187,580	192,314
Wales	1,078	326	1	26	16	89	1,536	109,877	111,413
Other Sites	23	16	0	0	0	17	56	8,617	8,673
UK Total	9,831	1,578	21	455	198	1,323	13,406	1,696,872	1,710,278

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics)

Table 4.2 shows there were 1,023 non-PV[113] sites in Northern Ireland generating electricity from renewable sources, with 6,057 non-PV sites in England, 4,734 in Scotland and 1,536 in Wales[114]. There are large numbers of solar PV sites and these constitute the vast majority of sites in each country (99% for England and Wales, 98% for Scotland, and 96% for Northern Ireland) although the majority will be on domestic properties generating electricity for their own consumption. There were almost 1.7 million solar PV sites generating electricity in the UK in 2024.

The number of renewable generation sites in Northern Ireland increased markedly between 2008 and 2024, rising from 117 sites to over 33,000 as shown in Table 4.3 below. This growth was dominated by a substantial rise in solar PV installations, which became the largest contributor to total site numbers from 2012 onwards and continued to increase across the period. In contrast, the number of non-PV renewable sites increased steadily up to 2018 before declining in subsequent years.

112 Data for tables 4.2 to 4.6 are available here.
113 Figures for Solar PV (Photo Voltaic) sites includes all small solar PV installations, the majority of which will be on single domestic properties for own consumption. PV uptake for Northern Ireland (32,342) is based on data from the Microgeneration Certification Scheme and the Renewables Obligation.
114 There are a further 8,617 PV schemes and 56 non-PV schemes in other sites that, due to lack of appropriate geographical information, could not be assigned to one of the four countries.

Table 4.3 Number of Renewable Generation Sites in Northern Ireland, selected years 2008 to 2024

Year	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022	2024
Non-PV	110	463	577	817	1,098	1,521	1,181	1,338	1,023
Solar PV	7	309	1,449	11,878	18,435	24,100	23,665	28,435	32,342
Total	117	772	2,026	12,695	19,533	25,621	24,846	29,773	33,365

Source: DESNZ (www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics)

Renewable Generation Installed Capacity – UK and UK Regions

Table 4.4 shows there was over 2,018 megawatts[115] (MW) of installed capacity at sites generating electricity from renewable sources in 2024 in Northern Ireland, which was 3.3% of total UK renewable capacity. England accounted for 61.4% of total UK installed capacity, Scotland 28.6%, and Wales 6.6%[116].

Table 4.4 Installed Capacity of Sites Generating Electricity from Renewable Sources (MW), 2024

Region	Wind	Hydro	Wave & Tidal	Landfill Gas	Sewage Gas	Other Bioenergy	Solar PV	Total
England	14,224.1	43.4	0.0	878.1	247.0	6,169.5	15,633.2	37,195.3
East Midlands	1,771.0	5.4	0.0	68.0	20.5	312.1	2,125.7	4,302.7
East of England	3,585.7	0.2	0.0	181.3	19.2	444.9	2,962.9	7,194.3
North East	580.4	8.2	0.0	46.0	11.5	714.8	336.4	1,697.2
North West	2,499.7	10.6	0.0	133.8	31.6	266.6	870.3	3,812.7
London	11.4	0.0	0.0	25.8	53.2	229.1	333.7	653.1
South East	1,596.3	1.8	0.0	166.7	36.1	442.2	2,801.0	5,044.1
South West	349.9	10.6	0.0	105.7	15.3	292.8	3,906.2	4,680.5
West Midlands	16.5	1.2	0.0	61.0	43.1	242.4	1,380.2	1,744.4
Yorkshire and Humber	3,813.2	5.5	0.0	89.8	16.5	3,224.7	916.7	8,066.4
Northern Ireland	**1,471.1**	**11.2**	**0.0**	**19.5**	**0.2**	**145.6**	**370.8**	**2,018.3**
Scotland	14,357.8	1,676.3	7.7	115.9	8.0	445.5	721.7	17,333.0
Wales	2,027.6	167.9	0.0	46.8	12.5	238.9	1,533.4	4,027.1
Other Sites	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.8	22.1
UK Total	32,081.9	1,898.8	7.7	1,060.2	267.8	6,999.5	18,279.9	60,595.8

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics)

Wind accounted for more than half (53%) of total installed renewable capacity in the UK in 2024, however this varies considerably between UK regions. For example, in the West Midlands region of England (which had a similar total installed capacity to Northern Ireland in 2024), wind accounted for only 1% of installed capacity, whereas in Northern Ireland wind accounted for 73%. Wind is also the predominant source of installed capacity in Scotland (83%) and Wales (50%), but in England the proportion is much lower (38%). In London, wind only accounted for 2% of the total installed capacity, with the South West also low at 7%.

115 Megawatts are used to measure the output of a power plant. One megawatt (MW) = 1,000 kilowatts = 1,000,000 watts.
116 About 0.1% of installed capacity is in other sites that could not be assigned to one of the four countries.

Geographical features can be an important factor in terms of wind generation in a region. Wind generation can be very effective in coastal areas, at the tops of rounded hills, open plains and gaps in mountains – places where the wind is strong and reliable[117]. Most offshore wind activity is in England (70%), and 64% of onshore wind is in Scotland. The world's largest offshore windfarm, Hornsea 2, is based off the coast of Yorkshire[118].

In England, Solar PV (42%) and Other Bioenergy (17%) together contributed almost three-fifths of installed capacity, but in Scotland they only accounted for 7%. These same sources made up 26% of Northern Ireland's installed capacity, with 44% for Wales. Scotland is currently the only region to produce electricity from wave and tidal sources, and it also accounted for 88% of installed capacity for hydro in the UK.

The volume of renewable generation installed capacity has increased significantly since 2008 in all UK countries. Table 4.5 overleaf shows renewable generation capacities for each country from 2008 to 2024 for Wind, Solar PV, and total installed capacities.

117 https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/wind/where-wind-power-is-harnessed.php
118 https://orsted.co.uk/energy-solutions/offshore-wind/our-wind-farms/hornsea2

Table 4.5 Installed Capacity of Sites Generating Electricity from Renewable Sources (MW), Wind, Solar PV, and All sites, 2008 to 2024

	England			Wales			Scotland			Northern Ireland			UK		
	Wind	Solar PV	All	Wind	Solar PV	All	Wind	Solar PV	All	Wind	Solar PV	All	Wind	Solar PV	All
2008	1,091	1	2,616	375	0	602	1,745	0	3,350	214	0	228	3,446	23	6,837
2009	1,449	1	3,057	533	0	781	2,121	0	3,798	299	0	322	4,422	27	8,004
2010	1,867	65	3,702	538	3	794	2,676	2	4,369	341	1	368	5,421	95	9,256
2011	2,520	844	6,135	579	60	895	3,087	47	4,867	409	2	436	6,596	1,000	12,381
2012	3,970	1,469	8,250	644	109	1,007	3,954	91	5,811	460	6	500	9,030	1,753	15,649
2013	5,149	2,522	11,322	769	149	1,175	4,776	127	6,687	581	27	645	11,282	2,937	19,961
2014	5,895	4,770	14,766	1,182	374	1,824	5,264	167	7,309	696	62	807	13,074	5,528	24,920
2015	6,612	8,427	19,774	1,370	696	2,379	5,590	240	7,767	731	105	911	14,306	9,601	30,966
2016	7,184	10,352	22,696	1,567	962	2,866	6,487	292	8,798	886	134	1,115	16,126	11,914	35,651
2017	9,075	10,927	25,353	1,753	1,055	3,194	7,569	323	9,982	1,187	252	1,557	19,585	12,760	40,293
2018	9,931	11,085	27,787	1,858	1,073	3,349	8,472	347	10,952	1,340	322	1,801	21,606	13,059	44,129
2019	11,328	11,494	29,749	1,997	1,093	3,537	9,183	394	11,767	1,349	334	1,850	23,887	13,345	46,971
2020	11,845	11,622	30,508	2,003	1,123	3,590	9,253	420	11,873	1,355	336	1,862	24,458	13,552	47,894
2021	12,671	11,858	31,658	2,010	1,213	3,691	9,635	452	12,300	1,430	340	1,945	25,748	13,915	49,656
2022	14,121	12,531	33,879	2,022	1,258	3,745	11,115	505	13,829	1,430	351	1,957	28,688	14,800	53,570
2023	14,130	13,793	35,201	2,025	1,378	3,868	12,553	613	15,353	1,447	364	1,988	30,156	16,198	56,464
2024	14,224	15,633	37,195	2,028	1,533	4,027	14,358	722	17,333	1,471	371	2,018	32,082	18,280	60,596

Source: DESNZ (www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics)

Northern Ireland's installed renewable generation capacity increased almost nine-fold between 2008 (228 MW) and 2024 (2,018 MW), a rise similar in scale to that seen across the UK as a whole over the same period. Growth patterns varied by country: England's installed capacity in 2024 was over 14 times higher than in 2008, Wales's was nearly seven times higher, and Scotland's was just over five times higher. The growth in Solar PV installed capacity has been particularly striking, with each country showing large increases (though starting from a very low base in all countries).

The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) scheme made an impact, for both microgenerators[119] installing Solar PV technology and larger 'solar farms'. Northern Ireland has seen a large rise in installed Solar PV capacity, from zero in 2008 and 2009, only 6 MW in 2012 (equivalent to around 1% of all installed renewable generation capacity in Northern Ireland in 2012) to 371 MW in 2024 (equivalent to 18% of all installed renewable generation capacity in Northern Ireland in 2024). In 2024, Solar PV accounted for only 4% of Scotland's installed renewable generation capacity, but 42% for England and 38% for Wales, respectively.

Whilst increases in Solar PV generation capacity are significant, it is worth noting that Wind retains its role as the dominant source of installed renewable generation capacity for Northern Ireland. Wind still accounted for some 73% of installed renewable generation capacity in 2024, though this is down from about 94% between 2008 and 2011, due to the growth of other technologies, such as Solar PV and Bioenergy. Wind accounted for 83% of installed renewable generation capacity in Scotland in 2024, but much lower amounts in both England (38%) and Wales (50%).

It is also worth noting that renewable installed capacities in the UK and each country increased markedly each year from 2008 to 2018, but growth rates slowed down considerably in the years following. In general, there were year-on-year double-digit percentage increases for the UK and each country between 2008 and 2018 (Northern Ireland had over 23% annual average growth between 2008 and 2018). From 2018 to 2024 annual percentage increases were lower for all countries with Northern Ireland having the lowest rate with only 2% annual average growth in each year (this compares to 5% for England, 3% for Wales and 8% for Scotland).

Renewable Generation Volumes – UK and UK Regions

Table 4.6 shows the actual volume of electricity generated from renewable sources for the latest year available, 2024. This again highlights that the majority of renewable generation in Northern Ireland is wind generated – some 2,718 GWh out of a total 3,865 GWh, or 70%. This proportion has been steady since 2016 but is lower compared to earlier years as other technologies have taken a larger share. For example, in 2013, almost 89% of renewable generation in Northern Ireland was Wind generated with Bioenergy accounting for 5% and Solar PV only 0.8%. In 2024 however, this had changed to Wind accounting for 70%, Bioenergy 21% and Solar PV over 6% of all renewable generation, meaning the generation mix has changed considerably in only a few years.

119 Under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) scheme, generating stations with a capacity of 50kW or less were termed as 'Micro-NIRO' stations.

Table 4.6 Generation of Electricity from Renewable Sources (GWh), 2024

Region	Wind	Hydro	Wave and tidal	Landfill gas	Sewage gas	Other Bioenergy	Solar PV	Total
England	46,261	149	0	2,420	917	31,970	12,385	94,109
East Midlands	5,635	22	0	191	93	1,423	1,651	9,015
East of England	11,971	1	0	546	86	2,277	2,301	17,182
North East	1,506	32	0	97	12	4,144	254	6,045
North West	8,120	33	0	326	131	1,292	654	10,555
London	17	0	0	141	189	877	239	1,463
South East	5,254	6	0	463	146	1,720	2,443	10,032
South West	693	33	0	246	43	1,181	3,145	5,342
West Midlands	30	4	0	190	143	963	1,045	2,374
Yorkshire & the Humber	13,035	19	0	220	73	18,099	654	32,100
Northern Ireland	**2,718**	**36**	**0**	**58**	**1**	**804**	**249**	**3,865**
Scotland	29,493	5,229	13	329	37	2,264	521	37,887
Wales	4,811	372	0	92	34	1,176	1,201	7,685
Other Sites	0	10	0	0	0	0	7	18
UK Total	83,283	5,796	13	2,899	988	36,221	14,364	143,564

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics)

Wind is also the prevalent renewable generation source in Scotland (78%) and Wales (63%) but accounted for just under half (49%) of all renewable generation in England. England accounted for 66% of total UK renewable generation volumes in 2024 but 86% of UK Solar PV generation and 88% of UK bioenergy generation (with the majority of this bioenergy generated in one English region - Yorkshire and the Humber). England now also generates considerable volumes from Solar PV with this source accounting for 13% of renewable generation there in 2024.

The vast majority (90%) of UK Hydro renewable generation is in Scotland. England accounted for a similar proportion (93%) of UK renewable generation from Sewage Gas and 90% of total UK Landfill Gas renewable generation in 2024.

Northern Ireland accounted for 3% of total renewable generation in the UK in 2024 and 8% of all renewable generation from Onshore Wind sources in the UK as a whole.

Northern Ireland Sub-Regional Renewable Generation Data

DESNZ also produce renewable generation data at a District Council level for Northern Ireland. The latest year available is for 2024 and these are shown in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7 Renewable Generation, Capacity and Site Numbers by District Council Area, 2024

District Council	Number of sites	Capacity (MW)	Generation (GWh)
Antrim and Newtownabbey	2,482	92.3	129.7
Ards and North Down	2,965	30.2	51.2
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	3,814	74.2	188.8
Belfast	2,371	48.2	24.8
Causeway Coast and Glens	3,202	463.2	785.5
Derry and Strabane	3,297	346.4	799.8
Fermanagh and Omagh	2,909	489.8	866.0
Lisburn and Castlereagh	2,694	112.9	125.3
Mid and East Antrim	2,747	152.8	234.8
Mid Ulster	2,991	167.3	323.2
Newry, Mourne and Down	4,132	37.5	36.1
Unallocated	93	5.7	-
Total	33,697	2,021	3,565[120]
Unallocated as % of Total	0.28%	0.28%	

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics)

'Unallocated' means those sites (and associated capacity and generation) that could not be matched to a council area due to incomplete or a lack of postcode information. As the table shows, a very small proportion of sites are unallocated (0.28%).

The table shows that 64% of renewable generation capacity and 69% of generation was accounted for by three of the eleven council areas namely: Causeway Coast & Glens; Derry City & Strabane; and Fermanagh & Omagh. This is perhaps unsurprising given that most of the large onshore wind turbines are located in these council areas[121]. In general, most of the renewable capacity and generation is in rural areas with large urban areas like Belfast or Lisburn & Castlereagh together accounting for a very small proportion of renewable capacity (8%) and generation (4%).

Generation of Electricity by Fuel Type – UK Countries

Data is available, for each of the four UK countries, on shares of electricity generation by all fuel types. In 2020 electricity generated from renewable sources in Northern Ireland exceeded indigenous electricity generated from gas for the first time[122]. By 2023 the renewable proportion had risen to 48.9% and was still higher than indigenous electricity generated from gas (44.5%) though gas generation (54.5%) was higher than renewables (44.1%) in 2024.

120 Whilst unallocated information in Table 4.7 is taken from DESNZ published data, generation data from DESNZ for Northern Ireland (as shown in Table 4.6) was 3,865 GWh for 2024, compared to 3,565 GWh for 2024 in the district council breakdown published by DESNZ. This difference of 300 GWh (roughly 8%) could probably be considered to be unallocated data.

121 See DESNZ & Barbour ABI for an interactive map which includes details of wind farm locations in Northern Ireland.

122 See page 72 of Energy in NI 2022 report

Table 4.8 highlights the changes in the shares of electricity generation by source for each of the UK countries over time.

Table 4.8 Shares of Generation for UK countries by Fuel Type, 2014, 2019, 2023, and 2024

	UK	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
2014					
Coal	29.6%	32.9%	20.3%	20.9%	**27.9%**
Gas	29.8%	30.6%	5.4%	54.9%	**49.7%**
Nuclear	18.9%	18.4%	33.2%	5.5%	**0.0%**
Renewables	19.1%	16.5%	38.1%	9.6%	**21.6%**
Oil and Other	2.7%	1.6%	3.0%	9.1%	**0.8%**
2019					
Coal	2.1%	2.2%	0.0%	2.3%	**9.8%**
Gas	40.7%	43.7%	12.2%	62.9%	**45.3%**
Nuclear	17.2%	18.3%	24.7%	0.0%	**0.0%**
Renewables	36.6%	32.5%	60.9%	26.6%	**44.3%**
Oil and Other	3.4%	3.2%	2.2%	8.3%	**0.6%**
2023					
Coal	1.3%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	**6.0%**
Gas	34.6%	37.8%	6.6%	58.7%	**44.5%**
Nuclear	13.8%	14.8%	18.8%	0.0%	**0.0%**
Renewables	46.5%	42.4%	70.7%	34.1%	**48.9%**
Oil and Other	3.8%	3.5%	3.9%	7.3%	**0.6%**
2024					
Coal	0.7%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.3%**
Gas	30.4%	32.6%	5.7%	58.2%	**54.5%**
Nuclear	14.2%	15.8%	16.9%	0.0%	**0.0%**
Renewables	50.4%	46.8%	73.1%	33.5%	**44.1%**
Oil and Other	4.2%	3.8%	4.3%	8.3%	**1.1%**

Source: DESNZ (Energy-trends-december-2025-special-feature-article)

Table 4.8 shows that the fuel used for generation has changed significantly in recent years for all countries shown. In particular, the share of generation from renewables has increased substantially in all regions in recent years to 2023 (see also Table 4.9), with Northern Ireland and Wales falling slightly in 2024. In Northern Ireland, the proportion of generation from renewables had increased significantly, from 21.6% in 2014 to 48.9% in 2023, before dropping to 44.1% in 2024. In Scotland, 73.1% of all electricity generated there in 2024 was from renewable generation sources with a further 16.9% from Nuclear and only 10% of generation in Scotland in 2024 was from fossil fuel generation.

In 2014 coal was an important fuel used in generation in all countries, accounting for about one third of generation in England (32.9%), over one quarter of generation in Northern Ireland (27.9%) and over one fifth of generation in Wales (20.9%). By 2024, this had fallen significantly to 0.3% for Northern Ireland and 1.0% for England and averaging 0.7% for the UK as a whole. Coal's share of generation in Scotland was 20.3% in 2014 but there has been no coal generation in Scotland since 2017, and Wales joined them in this regard in 2020.

The majority of coal generation ceased in Northern Ireland in September 2023, when the last major coal producer converted to gas as source of fuel.

Nuclear generation accounted for just under one fifth of total generation for the UK (and England) and over one third of total generation for Scotland in 2014, but these proportions have dropped to 14.2% of total generation for the UK (and 15.8% for England) and 16.9% of total generation for Scotland in 2024. In 2014, just over 5% of generation in Wales was from nuclear but there was no generation from this source from 2016 onwards.

Shares of Renewable Generation by Country

DESNZ provides a long-term time series showing the proportion of all electricity generation that comes from renewable sources for the UK and each individual country, covering the period from 2004 to 2024. This is shown in Table 4.9 below. Note that the percentages in Chart 4.2 above are calculated as a proportion of all generation plus imports minus exports[123], and therefore should not be compared with the table below.

Table 4.9 Shares of Renewable Generation for the UK and UK Countries, 2004 to 2024

	UK	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
2004	3.6%	2.4%	11.7%	3.1%	**2.1%**
2005	4.3%	3.0%	13.1%	3.8%	**2.8%**
2006	4.6%	3.2%	13.4%	4.3%	**3.4%**
2007	5.0%	3.2%	17.3%	4.6%	**4.4%**
2008	5.7%	3.6%	18.2%	4.9%	**6.3%**
2009	6.7%	4.2%	20.8%	5.5%	**10.2%**
2010	6.7%	4.7%	19.0%	5.3%	**10.0%**
2011	9.6%	6.4%	27.3%	7.7%	**13.8%**
2012	11.3%	8.5%	29.1%	6.9%	**16.0%**
2013	14.9%	12.4%	32.0%	6.7%	**19.5%**
2014	19.1%	16.5%	38.1%	9.6%	**21.6%**
2015	24.6%	22.5%	42.4%	13.7%	**25.5%**
2016	24.5%	23.1%	42.6%	12.4%	**25.4%**
2017	29.2%	25.9%	51.8%	20.0%	**34.0%**
2018	33.0%	29.6%	54.6%	23.4%	**42.0%**
2019	36.6%	32.5%	60.9%	26.6%	**44.3%**
2020	43.1%	39.5%	61.1%	36.3%	**45.5%**
2021	39.8%	37.5%	56.4%	27.9%	**44.1%**
2022	41.6%	37.2%	70.8%	26.7%	**44.3%**
2023	46.5%	42.4%	70.7%	34.1%	**48.9%**
2024	50.4%	46.8%	73.1%	33.5%	**44.1%**

Source: DESNZ (www.gov.uk/energy-trends-december-2025-special-feature-article)

123 The renewable share of total generation from 2018 onwards are routinely published by DfE in Figure 2 of the Quarterly report at Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland.

Scotland has led the UK in renewable generation every year, and since 2022 more than 70% of its generation has come from renewables. Northern Ireland ranked second from 2008 to 2023, but in 2024 England moved ahead with 46.8%, compared with Northern Ireland's 44.1%. Northern Ireland's highest level was in 2023, when renewables accounted for 48.9% of its generation.

The large increase in the share of generation from renewable sources over time for the UK and all UK countries is evident from the table above. In 2004, only 3.6% of UK electricity generation was from renewable sources: twenty years later, the proportion was over half (50.4% in 2024). Northern Ireland's share of generation from renewables increased from only 2.1% to 44.1% over the same 20-year period.

Renewable Energy Planning Data

Table 4.10 shows how many planning applications for renewable energy installations were submitted to the Department for Infrastructure each year from 2007/08 to 2024/25. Applications rose sharply between 2009/10 and 2010/11 and reached their highest point in 2011/12. Numbers stayed relatively high until 2014/15 but had dropped below 2007/08 levels by 2016/17, remaining low up to 2024/25. Around two-thirds (65%) of all applications received during the 18-year period were submitted in just five years, between 2010/11 and 2014/15.

Between 2007/08 and 2024/25, almost 4 out of every 5 planning applications for renewable energy were for single wind turbines, although this percentage has fluctuated between a high of 89% in 2010/11 and a low of 43% in 2016/17. In each year, the highest number of planning applications was for single wind turbines: this is understandable, as planning permission is required for every wind turbine. In contrast, solar panels on domestic properties generally do not need planning permission if they meet certain conditions. The sharp drop in applications in 2016/17 is likely linked to the closure of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) scheme[124].

124 See https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-renewables-obligation for further details.

Table 4.10 Applications Received by Renewable Energy Type, 2007/08 to 2024/25

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Single Wind Turbine[125]	172	226	159	629	674	614	547	421	245	35	30	50	74	87	68	82	81	45
Wind Farm	19	15	16	17	12	6	21	13	14	1	6	4	6	2	2	6	11	4
Hydroelectricity	1	2	10	16	30	23	20	17	7	4	3	2	0	1	0	4	0	1
Solar Panels[126]	40	22	11	5	36	124	69	61	43	18	5	2	2	6	7	17	18	34
Biomass/ Anaerobic Digester	5	6	4	31	68	31	16	20	17	22	10	14	4	4	5	4	3	6
Other	5	3	3	6	0	3	5	4	3	1	4	6	2	0	0	8	13	7
Total	242	274	203	704	820	801	678	536	329	81	58	78	88	100	82	121	126	97

Source: Department for Infrastructure (https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/planning-activity-statistics)

Table Notes:

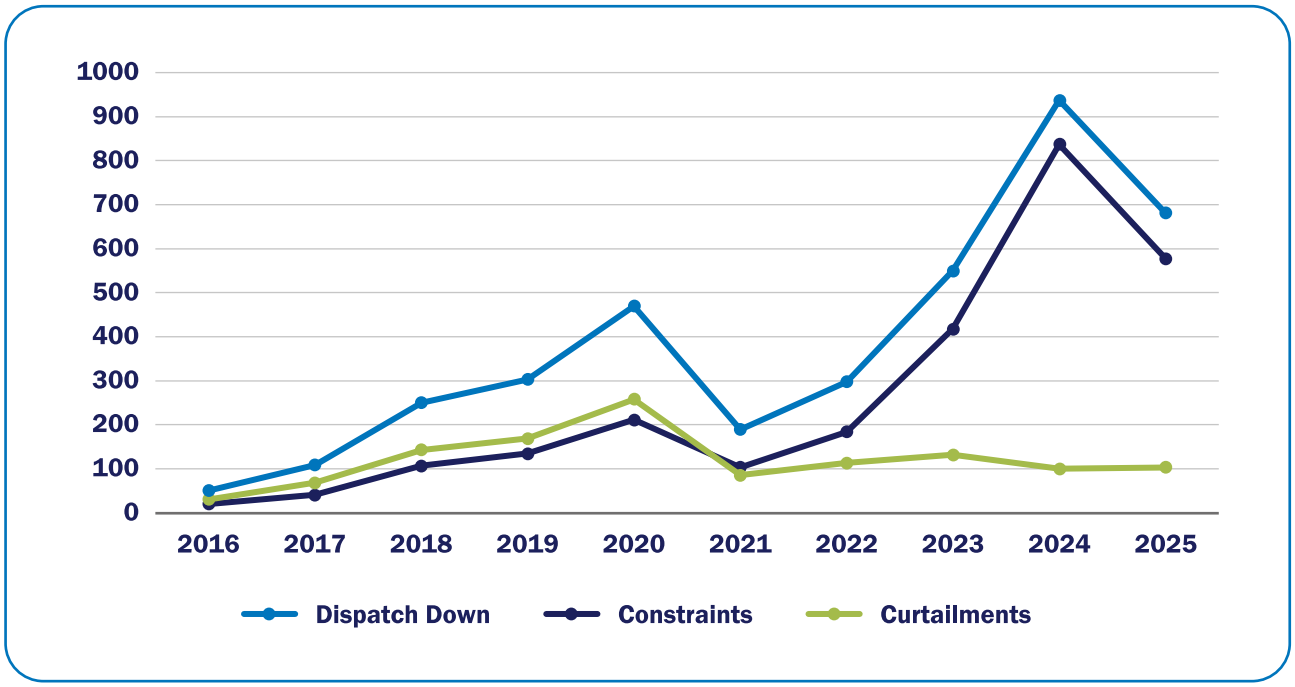
1. All applications received in the period may not have had a decision issued within the same time period. Applications received may also include some applications that are subsequently withdrawn.
2. As at end March 2026, data for 2024/25 was the most up-to-date renewable energy information available.
3. Other includes Landfill Gases, Waste Incineration and Heat Pumps.

125 Planning permission is required for all wind turbines. This includes turbines for domestic purposes, hospitals, factories, farms, schools etc. (see https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/wind for further details).

126 Solar panels on domestic properties can be installed without the need to apply for planning permission provided a number of limitations and conditions are met (see https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/photovoltaic-panels for further details).

Annex 4.1 Dispatch Down Volumes Analysis

Chart 4.8 Volume (GWh) of Dispatch Down, Constraints and Curtailment, 2016 to 2025



Source: Eirgrid (www.eirgrid.ie/grid/system-and-renewable-data-reports

Chart 4.8 above uses data from EirGrid and shows a generally increasing trend in dispatch down between 2016 and 2024 in which curtailments remained steady and constraint increased. The highest annual constraint volume occurred in 2024 at 837 GWh, which was the major contributing factor to overall dispatch down which reached 937 GWh for that year.

For 2025, curtailment levels remained similar to previous years, but the reduction in constraints to 578 GWh was the main driver in the 27% fall in dispatch down to 681 GWh.

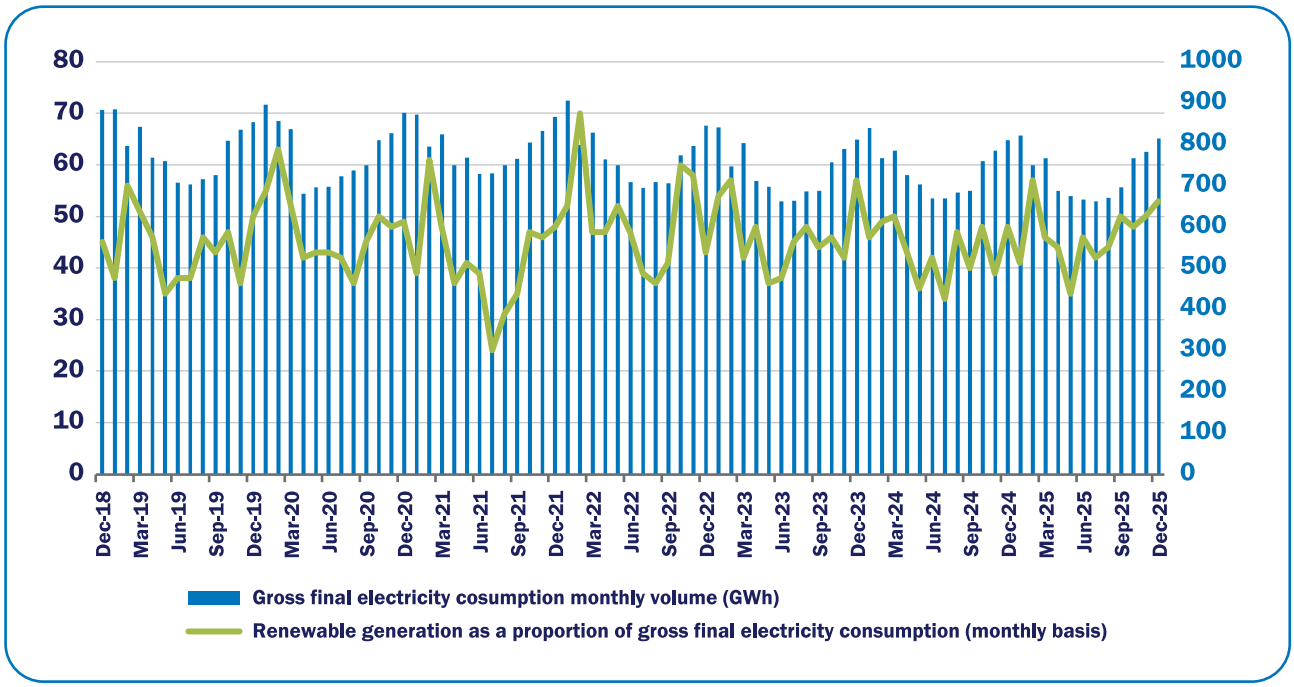
Future levels of dispatch down could be reduced through upgrades and expansions of the electricity grid, increased flexibility in electricity demand-side management, and increased capacity for energy storage and deployment. In December 2024, SONI published an Action Plan[127] on how they plan to reduce the historically high levels of Dispatch Down seen in recent years.

127 Draft Dispatch Down Action Plan - System Operator for Northern Ireland - December 2024.pdf

Annex 4.2 Renewable Generation Proportion and Total Consumption Volume by Month

The chart below highlights the seasonal nature of electricity consumption (i.e. higher in winter months and lower in summer months). Whilst a change in total consumption does have some effect on the renewable proportion, it is renewable generation that has a much more significant impact on the proportion as shown in Chart 4.3 earlier.

Chart 4.9 Percentage of Electricity Consumption from Renewable Sources and Total Consumption Volume by Month (GWh), December 2018 to December 2025



Source: DfE (https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/Economy/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-report.html)

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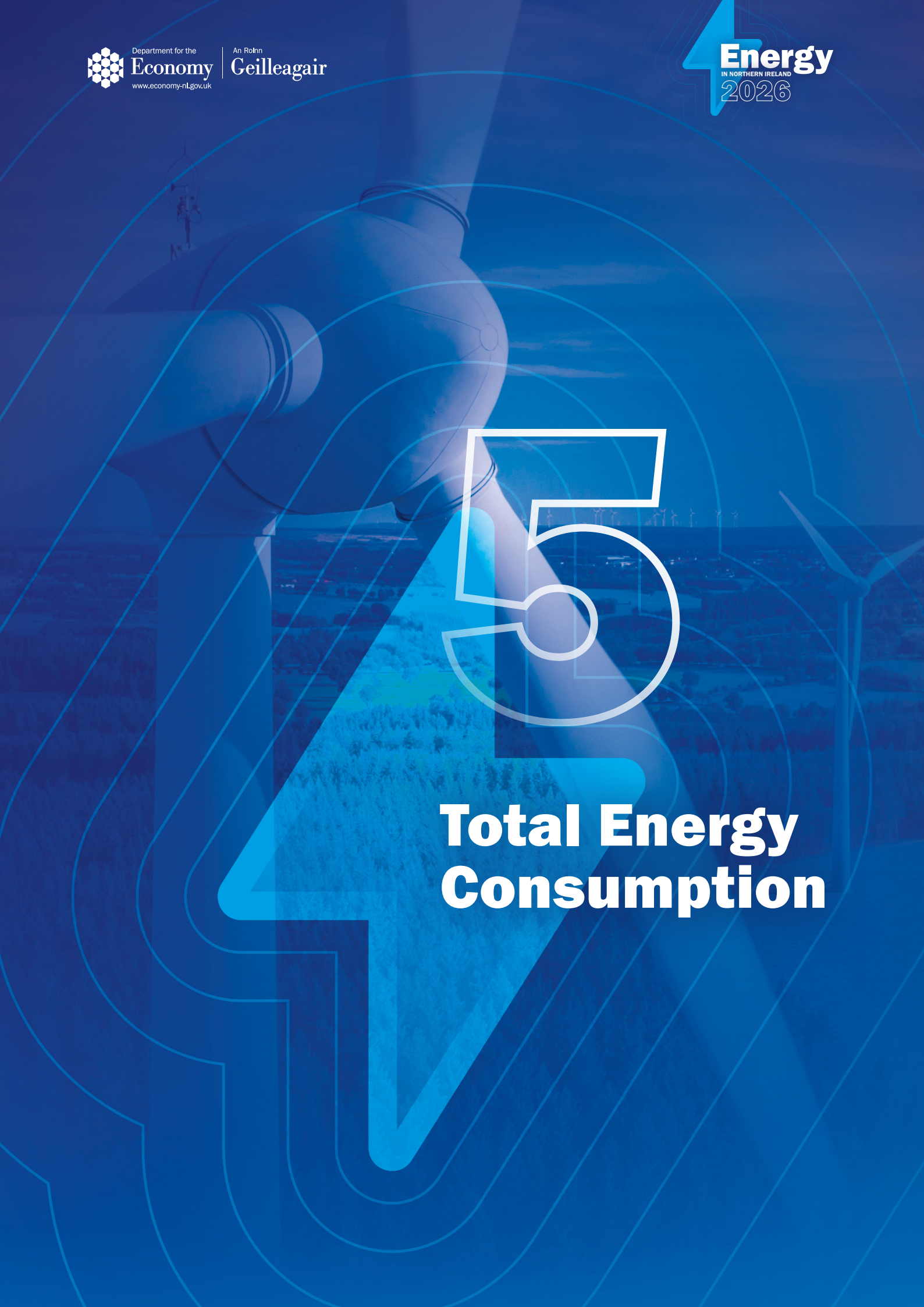
An Roinn Geilleagair

Energy IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2026



5 Total Energy Consumption

CHAPTER 5: TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Summary of Key Points

- In 2023, some 41,030 GWh of total energy was consumed in Northern Ireland. Consumption of these energy products in 2023 was some 8% lower than in 2015.
- In terms of the purpose for using fuels, of the 41,030 GWh of energy consumed an estimated 44% was for Heat, 39% was for Transport and the remaining 17% was for Power (electricity).
- The largest contributor to consumed energy is petroleum products, which accounted for around 57% of total final energy consumption in 2023 and between 55-62% in each year 2015 to 2022. The volume of petroleum products consumed in NI has fallen by 15% over the period 2015 to 2023.
- Of the 23,190 GWh of petroleum products consumed in Northern Ireland in 2023, 61% was for Road Transport; a further 27% was due to domestic consumption and around 8% was consumption by industry.
- Coal accounted for just 2.4% of final energy consumption in 2023. This has fallen from 4.7% in 2013. In 2023, total coal consumption in NI was at its lowest level on record, at some 981 GWh and, of this, industry and commerce accounted for around 85% of total coal consumption with domestic sector consumption accounting for the other 15%.
- The total number of gas connections in Northern Ireland continues to rise each year, although rises were not seen across all market segments. Over the ten-year period 2015 to 2025 the total number of gas connections in Northern Ireland rose substantially, by over 129,000 or 60%, with gas consumption rising by 20% over the same period.
- The combined total of diesel and petrol consumed in Northern Ireland in 2023 for road transport was some 1.3 million tonnes of oil equivalent. Over the ten-year period 2013-2023, consumption by diesel cars in Northern Ireland rose by 1% whilst consumption by petrol cars and motorcycles fell by 21%.
- In 2023, around three quarters of all diesel and petrol road transport consumption was due to personal use (i.e. consumption by buses, cars and motorcycles) while the remaining quarter was due to freight transport consumption (i.e. consumption by HGVs and LGVs).
- Total Northern Ireland energy consumption as a proportion of GB consumption has been steady at around 3% in each year 2015 to 2023.

Introduction

This chapter provides some focus on other areas of energy in addition to electricity to provide an overview of total energy consumption in Northern Ireland. It begins by looking at sub-national final energy consumption data produced by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) which is available as a historic series at Northern Ireland and sub-Northern Ireland level. It then looks at other sources of information on gas and also in further detail on DESNZ road transport (petrol and diesel) consumption statistics for Northern Ireland. It is worth noting that revisions to energy data are common over time as sources, methods, and reporting improve. The figures shown here are the latest available, but they may differ from those reported in previous Energy in Northern Ireland publications.

DESNZ Total Final Energy Consumption Data

The total final energy consumption datasets published by DESNZ cover each region of the United Kingdom. The datasets exclude some sectors and fuels. It was recognised that it would not be meaningful to allocate energy consumption locally or regionally for some energy uses, in particular aviation (air transport) and shipping (national navigation). It was also not possible to model non–energy use of petroleum products and natural gas. Together these excluded fuels account for around a 15.5% share of total final energy consumption in the UK in 2023[128].

As shown in Table 5.1 overleaf, some 41,030 GWh of energy was consumed in Northern Ireland in 2023. Compared to 2015, total final energy consumption in Northern Ireland has decreased by 7.7%. As gas data for Northern Ireland is not included before 2015, it is not possible to do comparisons over a longer time period for DESNZ-published total final energy consumption. However, as shown in the table, values for all other individual energy types are available for the 10-year period back to 2013.

By far the largest contributor to these sources of consumed energy is petroleum products[129]: these accounted for 57% of total final energy consumption in 2023 and around 55-62% in each year 2015-2022. The volume of petroleum products consumed in NI has fallen markedly: by 12% over the 5-year period 2018-2023 and by 19% over the 10-year period 2013-2023, with the largest contributor to falls in volume consumed coming from decreases in domestic petroleum products use (home heating oil) likely a result of the extension of the gas network and households switching to gas heating.

Electricity and gas each contributed around 17% of total final energy consumption in Northern Ireland in 2023. Electricity consumption values published by DESNZ averaged around 7,700 GWh from 2013-2019 dropping to an average of under 7,300 for the period 2020-2023. Gas consumption increased significantly between 2015-2020 (+28%), reflecting the extension of the gas network, though total gas consumption has levelled off at an average of around 7,000 GWh for the period 2021-2023, perhaps reflecting lower use due to volatile prices even while the gas network continues to grow. The consumption of bio energy and waste products has shown a modest increase in its overall share from around 4% in 2015 to 6% in the 2023.

128 See page 47 of the Sub-national Consumption Statistics Guidance Booklet here for further details.
129 Petroleum products include petrol, diesel and home heating oil.

Of the 23,190 GWh of petroleum products consumed in Northern Ireland in 2023, 61% was for Road Transport; a further 27% was due to domestic consumption and around 8% was consumption by industry. Coal accounted for around 2% of final energy consumption in 2023 and total coal consumption was at its lowest level at some 981 GWh: of this, industry and commerce accounted for around 85% of total coal consumption with domestic sector consumption accounting for the other 15%.

Table 5.1 Northern Ireland Final Energy Consumption (GWh), 2013-2023

	Coal (1)			Manufactured fuels (2)			Petroleum products (1)							Gas(4)			Electricity			Bioenergy & wastes				All fuels	Consuming Sector		
Year	I&C	Dom	Total	I&C	Dom	Total	I&C	Dom	Road[3]	Rail	Pub Sec	Agri	Total	I&C	Dom	Total	I&C	Dom	Total	I&C	Dom	Road[3]	Total	Total	I&C	Dom	Road
2013	1,429	453	1,882	166	235	401	2,527	9,185	15,528	107	161	1,204	28,711	..	..	..	4,692	3,114	7,807	641	459	497	1,597	40,396	10,819	13,445	16,132
2014	1,418	382	1,800	81	214	295	2,773	8,033	15,300	110	191	1,029	27,437	..	..	..	4,706	2,934	7,640	668	443	520	1,630	38,802	10,867	12,006	15,930
2015	1,315	387	1,702	21	207	228	2,739	7,869	15,153	109	135	1,237	27,243	3,627	2,298	5,924	4,871	2,846	7,717	726	491	413	1,631	44,445	14,671	14,098	15,676
2016	1,261	381	1,642	19	206	224	2,671	8,137	15,112	110	137	1,205	27,371	3,415	2,411	5,827	4,879	2,829	7,709	701	523	407	1,630	44,402	14,287	14,487	15,628
2017	1,029	372	1,400	25	224	248	2,330	7,697	15,143	109	110	1,129	26,517	3,729	2,833	6,562	4,907	2,880	7,786	1,039	532	401	1,973	44,487	14,297	14,537	15,653
2018	987	364	1,351	25	227	252	2,394	7,833	14,902	103	195	915	26,341	3,538	2,735	6,273	4,864	2,820	7,684	1,289	575	544	2,408	44,309	14,206	14,553	15,549
2019	845	342	1,187	30	212	242	1,982	7,769	14,606	105	169	973	25,604	4,068	3,006	7,074	4,769	2,817	7,585	1,219	600	716	2,535	44,227	14,054	14,746	15,427
2020	804	334	1,138	44	195	240	1,702	7,707	12,501	78	189	878	23,056	4,263	3,313	7,576	4,289	3,007	7,296	1,411	617	710	2,737	42,043	13,581	15,173	13,289
2021	770	337	1,108	38	194	231	1,812	7,328	14,390	86	210	879	24,705	3,997	3,251	7,248	4,633	2,873	7,506	1,093	650	670	2,413	43,210	13,433	14,632	15,146
2022	728	319	1,047	58	223	281	1,930	5,728	14,465	85	155	753	23,116	3,745	3,052	6,797	4,545	2,677	7,222	1,069	634	911	2,614	41,076	12,983	12,633	15,461
2023	834	147	981	51	194	245	1,803	6,306	14,057	91	150	783	23,190	3,976	2,949	6,924	4,468	2,673	7,141	863	670	1,015	2,548	41,030	12,929	12,938	15,163

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/total-final-energy-consumption-at-regional-and-local-authority-level-2005-to-2023)

Notes:

(1) For coal and petroleum, industry consumption includes all consumption from the following sectors, as defined in the Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES): Industry, Energy Industry use, Heat Generation, Miscellaneous. Excludes coal used for electricity generation (or other transformation purposes). I&C coal consumption includes a small amount of consumption in Rail, Public Sector and Agriculture.

(2) Includes only manufactured solid fuels and not derived gases.

(3) The biofuels, bioethanol and biodiesel (blended into petrol and diesel respectively) are not included under road transport petroleum consumption, but reported separately under "Bioenergy and waste: Road Transport ".

(4) Northern Ireland gas consumption figures are not available from DESNZ prior to 2015.

Table Key: I&C = Industrial & Commercial; Dom = Domestic; Road = Road Transport; Pub Sec = Public Sector; Agri = Agriculture.

Sub-Northern Ireland Final Energy Consumption Estimates

Final energy consumption data are also published by DESNZ at District Council Area level: the latest available data is for 2023. Table 5.2 overleaf shows that the Belfast council area had the highest volume of energy consumption accounting for 5,949 GWh of consumption or 14.5% of the Northern Ireland total. Only one other council area, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (5,042 GWh, 12.3%) had consumption over 5,000 GWh.

Petroleum Products

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon council area was the district council with the largest share of Northern Ireland consumption of petroleum products in 2023 (at 3,088 GWh or 13.3% of total NI consumption), followed by Newry, Mourne & Down (at 2,616 GWh or 11.3% of the total) and Mid Ulster (at 2,460 GWh or 10.6% of the total). These three council areas had around twice or more petroleum products consumption than the council area with the lowest consumption of petroleum products in 2023 (Ards & North Down which had 1,309 GWh of consumption or 5.6% of the total). Looking at petroleum products consumption as a share of all fuels by council area highlights some differences. In 2023, just over one third (35.7%) of total final energy consumption in Belfast council area was due to petroleum products consumption while the corresponding proportions in Fermanagh & Omagh (73.0%), Newry, Mourne & Down (71.5%) and Causeway Coast & Glens (67.4%) were much higher.

Gas and Electricity

Gas consumption accounted for some 37.6% of total final energy consumption for Belfast council area but only around 5% or less in three council areas: Newry, Mourne & Down, Fermanagh & Omagh and Mid Ulster. Electricity consumption accounted for 22.8% of total energy consumption for Belfast but there was no marked difference to the Northern Ireland average of 17.4% for the other ten council areas.

Coal

While coal represents a much smaller proportion of consumption in overall volume terms (just 2.4% of total final energy consumption in 2023), it is interesting to note that two council areas, Derry City & Strabane and Mid Ulster together accounted for almost three quarters of all coal consumption in Northern Ireland in 2023.

Consuming Sector

Over two fifths of all final energy consumption in Derry City & Strabane (43.2%) was due to consumption by industry/commercial compared to just over 20% for Ards & North Down and Newry, Mourne & Down council area. Conversely, around half of final energy consumption in Ards & North Down (49.9%) and over two fifths in Belfast (42.2%) was due to domestic consumption compared to only 21.8% in Mid Ulster.

[Note that Table 5.2 overleaf is an abridged version of the District Council analysis available. Further sector splits (industrial, commercial, domestic, road transport etc.) of fuel types consumed by council area are available at the link given below the table.]

Table 5.2 Northern Ireland Final Energy Consumption by District Council Area (GWh), 2023

	Coal [1]	Manufactured Fuels [2]	Petroleum products [1]	Gas	Electricity	Bioenergy & Wastes	All Fuels	Consuming Sector			All fuels as a % of NI total
Area	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Industrial	Domestic	Transport	
Antrim & Newtownabbey	32	15	1,913	496	559	235	**3,249**	850	1,040	1,360	7.9%
Ards & North Down	19	20	1,309	632	452	130	**2,563**	516	1,278	768	6.2%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	45	25	3,088	696	867	320	**5,042**	1,577	1,401	2,064	12.3%
Belfast	21	23	2,125	2,236	1,354	189	**5,949**	2,216	2,511	1,222	14.5%
Causeway Coast & Glens	34	20	2,152	300	475	212	**3,193**	763	978	1,452	7.8%
Derry City & Strabane	370	31	1,725	525	636	284	**3,570**	1,543	1,015	1,012	8.7%
Fermanagh & Omagh	36	17	2,220	*	510	246	**3,039**	760	730	1,549	7.4%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	27	18	1,818	729	494	191	**3,278**	1,064	1,017	1,197	8.0%
Mid and East Antrim	19	16	1,765	473	486	157	**2,915**	782	1,006	1,127	7.1%
Mid Ulster	352	36	2,460	*	707	354	**3,921**	1,471	856	1,595	9.6%
Newry, Mourne & Down	25	24	2,616	186	578	230	**3,660**	739	1,103	1,818	8.9%
Unallocated	0	0	0	651	24	0	**651**	647	5	0	1.6%
Northern Ireland	981	245	23,190	6,924	7,141	2,548	**41,030**	12,929	12,938	15,163	100.0%

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/total-final-energy-consumption-at-regional-and-local-authority-level-2005-to-2023)

Notes to table: (1) For coal and petroleum, industry consumption includes all consumption from the following sectors, as defined in the Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES): Industry, Energy Industry use, Heat Generation, Miscellaneous. Excludes coal used for electricity generation (or other transformation purposes). I&C coal consumption includes a small amount of consumption in Rail, Public Sector and Agriculture. (2) Includes only manufactured solid fuels and not derived gases.

Gas

The Utility Regulator is responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's natural gas industry. Similar to the electricity system shown in chapter 3 earlier, the gas system can be divided into three main areas: transmission, distribution and supply[130].

Transmission

Gas transmission deals with the large high-pressure pipelines that convey gas to the distribution systems. There are four transmission pipelines in Northern Ireland:

1. Scotland to Northern Ireland Pipeline (SNIP) is 135 kilometres long and runs from Twynholm in Scotland to Ballylumford. The SNIP is owned by Premier Transmission Limited which is part of the Mutual Energy Ltd group of companies.

2. Belfast Gas Transmission Pipeline (BGTP) is 26 kilometres long and is connected to the SNIP and to the North West Pipeline. It also supplies gas to the Belfast distribution network. The BGTP is owned by Belfast Gas Transmission Limited (BGTL) which is part of the Mutual Energy Ltd group of companies.

3. North West Pipeline (NWP) is 112 kilometres long and runs from Carrickfergus to Coolkeeragh power station. It is owned by BGE Northern Ireland (BGE NI).

4. South North Pipeline (SNP) is 156 kilometres long and runs from County Antrim to Gormanstown in County Meath, Ireland where it links into the NWP. It is owned by BGE Northern Ireland (BGE NI).

A map of these current main transmission gas pipelines is shown in Annex 5.1.

Distribution

Gas distribution deals with the medium and low pressure gas mains that convey gas to licensed areas within Northern Ireland and there are currently three distribution areas: Phoenix Natural Gas Limited (PNGL) operates the network in the Greater Belfast and East Down distribution licensed area[131], Kinecx Energy (formerly firmus energy (Distribution) Limited) operates the network in the 'Ten Towns' distribution licensed area[132] and Evolve (previously SGN Natural Gas Limited) operates the network in the West distribution licensed area[133].

130 The information on transmission, distribution and supply was sourced from the Utility Regulator (see http://www.uregni.gov.uk/gas/ and https://www.uregni.gov.uk/networks), https://phoenixenergyni.com/assets/documents/PEGL-Access-Statement-2025_251104_171141.pdf, http://www.gastothewest.com/ and https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/topics/energy/gas

131 The Greater Belfast and East Down area includes: Belfast, Lisburn, Bangor, Holywood, Donaghadee, Groomsport, Millisle, Newtownards, Carryduff, Comber, Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus, Whitehead and Larne plus towns and villages in East Down, including Annahilt, Ballygowan, Ballynahinch, Castlewellan, Crossgar, Downpatrick, Dromore, Drumaness, Dundrum, Hillsborough, Newcastle, Saintfield and Spa.

132 These ten towns being: Londonderry, Limavady, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Newry, Craigavon, Antrim, Banbridge and Armagh. Kinecx has since taken natural gas to several additional urban areas as listed at https://kinecxenergy.co.uk/about/.

133 SGN Natural Gas is responsible for providing gas to main towns in the west including Coalisland, Cookstown, Derrylin, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Magherafelt, Omagh and Strabane.

Supply[134]

Gas supply companies supply customers with gas into their homes/businesses. In the Greater Belfast market, four suppliers were active in supplying gas to domestic customers (as at end December 2025): SSE Airtricity (81% of domestic connections), firmus energy (19%), Flogas (<1%) and Go Power (<1%) and six suppliers are active in supplying gas to industrial & commercial customers: SSE Airtricity (47% of I&C connections), firmus (23%), Go Power (15%), Flogas (15%), Flogas ES (<1%) and Electric Ireland (<1%).

In the Ten Towns market, firmus is the only supplier active in supplying gas to domestic customers, but there are six suppliers active in supplying industrial & commercial customers: firmus (64%), Flogas (18%), Go Power (15%), SSE Airtricity (3%), Flogas ES (<1%) and Electric Ireland (<1%).

In the West area, SSE Airtricity is the sole domestic supplier, with firmus (43%), Flogas (21%), Go Power (19%), SSE Airtricity (16%) and Electric Ireland (1%) active in the industrial & commercial market.

Gas Connections

The next table shows the number of connections in each of the three distribution networks split by domestic and Industrial & Commercial (I&C) sectors[135].

Table 5.3 shows that in 2025 over 98% of connections were in the domestic and small I&C sector in the Greater Belfast network (operated by Phoenix Natural Gas), the Ten Towns area (operated by firmus energy) and the West area (operated by evolve).

Of the over 344,000 total connections to the gas network in 2025, some 76.1% are in the Greater Belfast area, 22.4% in the Ten Towns area and the remaining 1.5% in the West area. The share in overall connections has been changing over time with the Ten towns area taking a larger percentage share of connections each year (up from 13.0% in 2015 to 22.4% in 2025) and also the West area (the first connections there were in 2017 and connection numbers have increased quickly each year to over 5,000 in 2025). Those I&C customers with 73,200 kWh or more of consumption and connected to any of the three networks made up only 1.2% of total connections in Northern Ireland in 2025. However, as Table 5.4 shows below, these customers are responsible for 55% of total Northern Ireland gas consumption.

Data for 2015 and 2020 has been included in Table 5.3 to highlight the significant increase in gas connections in recent years. Over the ten-year period 2015 to 2025 the total number of gas connections in Northern Ireland rose substantially, by over 129,000 or 60%. Over the same period, the rise in the number of connections in the Greater Belfast area was over 75,000 (40%) whilst connections in the Ten Towns area were more than two and a half times higher (a rise of over 49,000 or 176%).

134 Information in this section is from Utility Regulator's Q4 2025 Quarterly Retail Energy Market Monitoring Report published 11 March 2026.

135 Connections and consumption for domestic and small I&C customers are grouped together (relating to those customers consuming <73,200 kWh/annum). Information for the West area are only available for 2018 onwards.

Table 5.3 Number of Gas Connections in Northern Ireland by Distribution Licensed Area, 2015, 2020 and 2023 to 2025

Market Segment	Connections at end of							As a % of total connections in 2025
	2015	...	2020	...	2023	2024	2025	
Greater Belfast	**186,720**		**230,679**		**251,673**	**256,817**	**261,763**	**76.1%**
Domestic & Small I&C[136]	183,703		227,525		248,597	253,804	258,849	75.2%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	2,618		2,756		2,687	2,646	2,555	0.7%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	296		277		276	257	251	0.1%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	103		121		113	110	108	0.0%
Ten Towns	**27,910**		**54,552**		**69,098**	**73,042**	**77,040**	**22.4%**
Domestic & Small I&C	26,771		53,323		67,880	71,821	75,812	22.0%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	894		977		987	983	988	0.3%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	155		165		142	153	150	0.0%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	90		87		89	85	90	0.0%
West	**0**		**1,327**		**3,935**	**4,664**	**5,251**	**1.5%**
Domestic & Small I&C	0		1,297		3,880	4,604	5,186	1.5%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	0		11		31	34	38	0.0%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	0		5		8	11	12	0.0%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	0		14		16	15	15	0.0%
Total	**214,630**		**286,558**		**324,706**	**334,523**	**344,054**	**100.0%**
Domestic & Small I&C	210,474		282,145		320,357	330,229	339,847	98.8%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	3,512		3,744		3,705	3,663	3,581	1.0%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	451		447		426	421	413	0.1%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	193		222		218	210	213	0.1%

Source: Utility Regulator (https://www.uregni.gov.uk/transparency-reports)

The number of connections in the West distribution area is expected to keep increasing in the coming years as more customers join this relatively new network[137]. Natural gas is now available to properties in Artigarvan, Coalisland, Cookstown, Derrylin, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Magherafelt, Omagh and Strabane with over 5,000 gas connections since the network went live in 2020[138].

Over the five-year period 2020 to 2025, there was a 20% rise in total gas connections (up by 57,496) but this was driven by the increase in 'Domestic & Small I&C' sector (up 57,702) and indeed there were falls in the total number of connections in each I&C group. However, changes in I&C connections were different across each distribution area over this 5-year period: in Greater Belfast, connections fell in all three I&C groups, in the Ten Towns area one of the three groups showed a fall and in the West area there was a rise in connections in all three groups.

136 The domestic and small I&C sector relates to any customers using less than 73,200 kWh per annum.
137 See http://gastothewest.com/
138 See https://evolvenetwork.co.uk/news/evolve-celebrates-5000-gas-connections-in-just-five-years

Annual Gas Consumption

Table 5.4 Annual Gas Consumption (GWh) in Northern Ireland by Distribution Licensed Area, 2015, 2020 and 2023 to 2025

	Consumption (GWh) during							As a % of total consumption in 2025
Market Segment	2015	...	2020	...	2023	2024	2025	
Greater Belfast	**4,070**		**4,648**		**4,137**	**4,337**	**4,206**	**60.5%**
Domestic & Small I&C	2,096		2,717		2,333	2,466	2,440	35.1%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	581		627		501	566	540	7.8%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	334		302		303	292	272	3.9%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	1,060		1,002		1,000	1,013	953	13.7%
Ten Towns	**1,747**		**1,872**		**1,913**	**1,955**	**1,905**	**27.4%**
Domestic & Small I&C	236		528		563	623	645	9.3%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	226		245		213	244	229	3.3%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	170		180		165	171	160	2.3%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	1,115		918		972	917	870	12.5%
West	**0**		**698**		**776**	**832**	**843**	**12.1%**
Domestic & Small I&C	0		12		32	41	44	0.6%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	0		2		6	8	9	0.1%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	0		4		12	11	17	0.2%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	0		680		725	772	773	11.1%
Total	**5,817**		**7,218**		**6,826**	**7,124**	**6,953**	**100.0%**
Domestic & Small I&C	2,331		3,257		2,929	3,130	3,130	45.0%
I&C 73,200 - 732,000 kWh	807		875		720	818	778	11.2%
I&C > 732,000 - 2,196,000 kWh	504		486		479	474	449	6.5%
I&C > 2,196,000 kWh	2,175		2,600		2,698	2,702	2,596	37.3%

Source: Utility Regulator (https://www.uregni.gov.uk/transparency-reports)[139]

Despite increasing gas connections as shown in Table 5.3, total gas consumption in Northern Ireland fell slightly between 2024 and 2025 (a decrease of 2.4%). Over this period Domestic & Small I&C consumption was steady at 3,130 GWh but there were falls in consumption in all the larger I&C groups of around 4-5%. Gas consumption in 2025 was also lower than five years earlier: in 2020 total consumption was 7,218 GWh, around 4% higher than in 2025.

Three-fifths (60.5%) of total consumption in 2025 was in the Greater Belfast network area, 27.4% in the Ten towns licensed area and the remaining 12.1% in the West network area. The West region accounts for 12.1% of NI consumption but just 1.5% of connections: this is due to a small number of very large users.

139 Data for this table is derived from Annual and Quarterly Utility Regulator's Transparency Reports (see here).

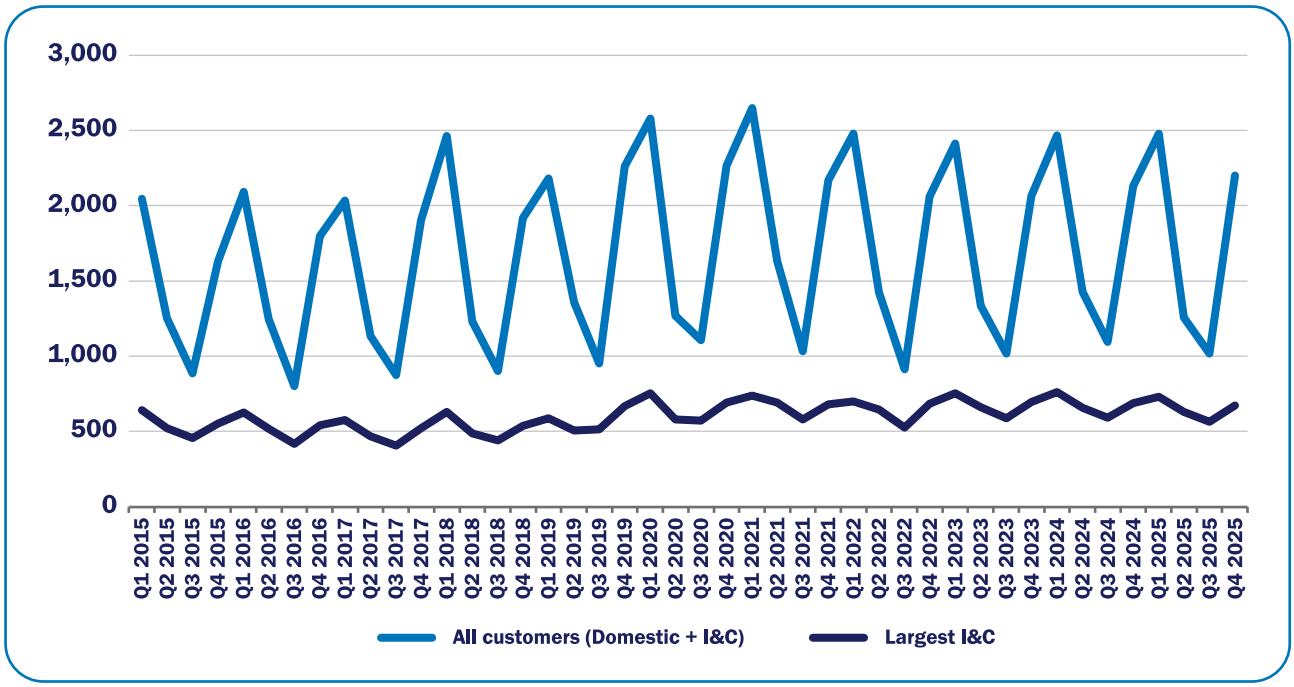
Over the ten-year period between 2015 and 2025, gas consumption in Greater Belfast rose by 3%, while Ten Towns saw a 9% increase and there was 843 GWh of new consumption in the West region, with the overall increase for Northern Ireland at 20%. However, the changes for each market segment were quite different. In the Greater Belfast area, domestic and small I&C consumption rose by 16% whilst consumption in the same sector in the Ten Towns area in 2025 was more than two and a half times that in 2015 (+174%). There were falls in consumption in all three I&C categories in Greater Belfast over the ten-year period and falls in the two largest I&C consumption categories in the Ten Towns area.

Whilst overall consumption in the West area is relatively small compared to the established networks in Greater Belfast and Ten Towns areas, it is worth noting that almost three quarters (843 GWh or 74%) of the overall increase in gas consumption in Northern Ireland from 2015 to 2025 (1,136 GWh) was due to increases in gas consumption in the West area.

Quarterly Gas Consumption

Like electricity consumption (shown in Chart 3.1 earlier), gas consumption is seasonal and varies considerably over the year as shown in Chart 5.1 below.

Chart 5.1 Quarterly Total Gas Consumption in Northern Ireland (GWh), Q1 2015 to Q4 2025



Source: Utility Regulator (https://www.uregni.gov.uk/market-information)

Overall gas consumption (including domestic and Industrial & Commercial customers) is significantly lower during the second and third quarters of the year (spring and summer) and reaches its highest levels in the winter months (Q1 and Q4). This seasonal pattern is expected, as customers primarily use gas for heating.

The chart also shows consumption for the largest Industrial & Commercial (I&C) customers – i.e. the approximately 200 largest consuming I&C customers (who each consume >2,196,000 kWh per year). This shows that, whilst there is indeed some seasonal change in consumption among this group, it is less marked than the quarterly changes for all customers (both domestic and I&C). For example, the average increase from Q3 to Q4 for the largest I&C group over the period shown is around 23%, whereas for all customers the average increase from Q3 to Q4 was 112% (i.e. on average gas consumption for all customers in Q4 is more than twice consumption in Q3). This would suggest that gas consumption for the largest I&C customers is not as dependent on weather conditions but rather that gas consumption for these customers is based on their requirements for gas for other purposes such as industrial processing.

Data showing the number of meters and gas consumption at a District Council level for Northern Ireland is published by DESNZ and the most recent data is shown overleaf.

Table 5.5 Northern Ireland Gas Consumption, Number of Meters and Average Consumption by District Council Area, 2024 Gas Year

	Number of meters			Consumption (GWh)			Average Consumption (kWh)		
Area	Domestic	Non-domestic	Total	Domestic	Non-domestic	Total	Domestic	Non-domestic	Total
Antrim & Newtownabbey	30,254	1,087	31,341	290.7	207.0	497.6	9,607	190,405	15,878
Ards & North Down	42,022	1,606	43,628	432.2	204.1	636.3	10,285	127,116	14,586
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	18,845	818	19,663	154.6	547.1	701.7	8,202	668,874	35,686
Belfast	131,317	6,926	138,243	1,214.9	1,046.1	2,261.1	9,252	151,042	16,356
Causeway Coast & Glens	10,422	444	10,866	81.1	178.7	259.8	7,781	402,387	23,905
Derry City & Strabane	21,422	817	22,239	172.1	396.9	569.0	8,035	485,753	25,585
Fermanagh & Omagh	1,554	*	*	13.5	*	*	8,686	*	*
Lisburn & Castlereagh	32,381	1,555	33,936	323.7	415.1	738.7	9,995	266,919	21,768
Mid and East Antrim	24,399	1,138	25,537	218.3	270.2	488.6	8,948	237,462	19,131
Mid Ulster	1,778	*	*	15.9	*	*	8,952	*	*
Newry, Mourne & Down	8,580	453	9,033	68.0	131.4	199.4	7,927	290,058	22,075
Northern Ireland	322,974	14,958	337,932	2,985.0	4,044.1	7,029.0	9,242	270,361	20,800

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-national-gas-consumption-statistics-in-northern-ireland)

Note: the data in the table above covers the 2024 gas year, which is the period 15th May 2024 to 15th May 2025. This will differ to data in Tables 5.3 and 5.4 earlier, which relate to the calendar year 2025. In addition, the table above splits consumption and number of meters by domestic or non-domestic whereas in Tables 5.3 and 5.4 Domestic and small Industrial & Commercial are grouped together. Where * is shown, figures have been supressed to ensure that the statistics are not disclosive.

Gas Consumption – District Council Level

Table 5.5 shows that, for the 2024 Gas Year, the majority of gas consumption is in urban council areas and where the gas network is well established. Belfast District Council area on its own accounted for almost one third (32%) of all Northern Ireland gas consumption, with Lisburn and Castlereagh accounting for another 11% of all gas consumption. Together homes and businesses located in these two council areas were responsible for over two fifths (43%) of all gas consumption in Northern Ireland.

Number of Meters – District Council Level

Understandably, most meters are in council areas that have the highest consumption values. Some 41% of all meters were in Belfast District Council area, 13% of all meters were in Ards & North Down followed by Lisburn and Castlereagh (10%). These three council areas accounted for around two thirds (64%) of all domestic and non-domestic meters.

For the domestic sector, there is a strong relationship between the number of gas meters and gas consumption. For example, Belfast has 41% of all domestic gas meters and 41% of domestic gas consumption, Ards & North Down has 13% of meters and 14% of consumption and Lisburn & Castlereagh has 10% of meters and 11% of consumption. However, even small differences in these proportions can lead to some notable differences in consumption per meter as shown below.

Consumption per Meter - District Council Level

Table 5.5 shows consumption per meter and there is some variation in average domestic consumption across the council areas (although all average consumption values for councils are within about 15% of the NI average value). Four council areas had average domestic consumption values for the 2024 Gas Year close to or below 8,000 kWh (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, Causeway Coast & Glens, Derry City & Strabane and Newry, Mourne & Down) while two areas had average domestic consumption values for 2024 close to or above 10,000 kWh (Ards & North Down and Lisburn and Castlereagh). Indeed, average domestic consumption values for the 2024 Gas Year in Ards & North Down at 10,285 kWh were some 32% above the council area with the lowest average domestic consumption (Causeway Coast & Glens at 7,781 kWh).

Ofgem produce Typical Domestic Consumption Values (TDCVs)[140] which are industry standard values for the annual gas usage of a typical domestic consumer for GB. For 2023, TDCVs for gas show that annual consumption of 7,500 kWh per year would be considered ‘low’ usage; consumption of 11,500 kWh per year would be considered ‘medium’ (or average) usage and 17,000 kWh per annum would be deemed ‘high’ usage. The Northern Ireland average for domestic customers for the 2025 Gas Year was around 9,200 kWh, so this is equivalent to between low and medium consumption. Gas consumption in individual households can be affected by a number of factors such as cost of gas, how well insulated the house is, the type and size of house, number of occupants etc.

140 See https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/decision/decision-typical-domestic-consumption-values-2023

In particular, floor area is an important determinant of domestic gas demand, with the largest floor area category (over 200 square metres), consuming over three and a half times as much gas as the smallest category (50 square metres or less)[141]. This may be one of the factors that accounts for some of the differences evident in gas consumption across District Council areas in Northern Ireland.

Table 5.6 Northern Ireland Gas Consumption and Number of Meters by District Council Area, 2019, 2023 and 2024 Gas Years[142]

Council Area	Total Number of Meters			Total Consumption (GWh)		
	2019	2023	2024	2019	2023	2024
Antrim & Newtownabbey	24,976	30,344	31,341	542	496	498
Ards & North Down	37,278	42,629	43,628	697	632	636
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	12,905	18,604	19,663	646	696	702
Belfast	126,046	136,608	138,243	2,550	2236	2261
Causeway Coast & Glens	7,258	10,228	10,866	258	300	260
Derry City & Strabane	15,392	21,293	22,239	472	525	569
Fermanagh & Omagh	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lisburn & Castlereagh	27,870	32,886	33,936	779	729	739
Mid and East Antrim	20,082	24,655	25,537	505	473	489
Mid Ulster	*	*	*	*	*	*
Newry, Mourne & Down	4,625	8,305	9,033	161	186	199
Northern Ireland	276,554	328,505	337,932	7,074	6,924	7,029

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-national-gas-consumption-statistics-in-northern-ireland)

Table 5.6 shows total figures by District Council for the latest available Gas Year, along with comparable data from one year and five years before. Overall, there was a 22% increase in the number of gas meters in Northern Ireland over the five-year period 2019 to 2024 gas years. Over this period, the percentage increase in the number of meters was lower in council areas where the gas network has been long established - e.g. Belfast (10%), Ards & North Down (17%), Lisburn & Castlereagh (22%) and Antrim & Newtownabbey (25%) - with much higher percentage rises in areas where the gas network continued to be expanded over the period - e.g. Newry, Mourne & Down (95%), Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (52%), Causeway Coast & Glens (50%), and Derry City & Strabane (44%).

Whilst meter numbers have risen considerably, gas consumption has been steady when comparing the 2019 and 2024 gas years, with some notable differences at a council level. Over the 2019 to 2024 gas years, gas consumption in Northern Ireland remained virtually the same at just over 7,000 GWh (a fall of just 0.6%)[143]. Consumption in Belfast was down 11% and there were falls of 9% In Ards & North Down and 8% in Antrim & Newtownabbey over the period. Conversely, there were rises of 21% in Derry City & Strabane and 24% in Newry, Mourne & Down.

141 See page 8 from 'National Energy Efficiency Data – Framework' published by DESNZ here
142 2019 Gas year is mid-May 2019 to mid-May 2020; 2023 Gas year is mid-May 2023 to mid-May 2024; and 2024 Gas year is mid-May 2024 to mid-May 2025. Where * is shown, figures have been supressed to ensure that the statistics are not disclosive.
143 It is worth noting though that gas consumption did change within this period, from a high of 7,576 GWh in the 2020 Gas Year to a low of 6,797 for the 2022 Gas Year.

Whilst the figures for Fermanagh & Omagh and Mid Ulster council areas are not available separately, these two council areas combined have seen significant increases in gas connections and consumption with the roll out of the Gas to the West project. In 2019, there were only 122 meters and consumption of 464 GWh in these two council areas combined but by the 2024 Gas Year this had grown to around 3,500 meters and around 677 GWh of consumption. The rise in gas consumption in these two council areas (+213 GWh or 46%) offset almost three quarters of the fall in gas consumption in Belfast over the period (-289 GWh).

Unlike GB, the gas network in some Northern Ireland council areas is relatively new and continues to expand. However, it is likely that gas consumption in Northern Ireland council areas where the network is well established has, like England and Wales, been affected by higher domestic energy prices as well as the generally higher cost of living[144].

Road Transport Energy Consumption

DESNZ produce a range of data on road transport energy consumption at Northern Ireland level and also at District Council level[145]. These detail the amount of petrol and diesel used and data are available split by vehicle type (buses, cars, HGV etc.) and by use (personal or freight)[146].

As Table 5.7 shows, between 2013 and 2023 the total amount of diesel and petrol consumed in Northern Ireland due to road transport fell by 6% (a fall of some 82,000 tonnes of oil equivalent) to just under 1.3 million tonnes of oil equivalent. This was comprised of a fall of around 108,000 tonnes in personal consumption (i.e. buses, cars and motorcycles) but a rise (26,000 tonnes) in freight transport consumption (i.e. HGV and LGV) over this 10-year period.

There has been a marked fall in consumption by petrol cars and motorcycles in Northern Ireland (by over 116,000 tonnes of oil equivalent or 21%) over the period 2013-2023 but consumption by diesel cars rose slightly over the same period (a rise of around 7,000 tonnes of oil equivalent or 1%). In 2013 consumption by diesel cars was 2% lower than the volume of consumption by petrol vehicles (with a difference of around 13,250 tonnes of oil equivalent) but this changed in 2014 when consumption by diesel cars was 9% higher than consumption by petrol vehicles. This difference increased year on year up to 2019.

For each year 2019 to 2021, diesel car consumption was around 35% higher than petrol vehicle consumption (an average difference of some 140,000 tonnes of oil equivalent more diesel than petrol was consumed by cars in each of these years). For the most recent year available, 2023, diesel car consumption is still much higher than petrol consumption, but the volume difference has fallen to just under 110,000 tonnes of oil equivalent. By comparison and in contrast, in GB in 2023, petrol vehicle consumption was 22% higher than diesel car consumption.

144 See page 17 from 'National Energy Efficiency Data – Framework' published by DESNZ here
145 Data is available on a comparable basis from 2005 onwards.
146 See Section 6 of the DESNZ methodology booklet for more details on these datasets (link here).

Overall, in each year about three quarters of all diesel and petrol road transport consumption is due to personal use (i.e. consumption by buses, cars and motorcycles) while the remaining quarter is due to freight transport consumption (i.e. consumption by HGVs and LGVs).

Comparisons with Great Britain

Table 5.7 also shows some key GB proportions for comparison and there are some significant differences. For GB in 2023, with the exception of buses, a higher proportion of consumption takes place on motorways, and a lower proportion of consumption is due to transport on minor roads. This is perhaps to be expected given that the proportion of the road network in GB that is motorway is more than twice that of Northern Ireland (around 1%[147] for GB in 2023 compared to 0.4%[148] in 2023 in Northern Ireland).

Only 7% of both diesel and petrol car consumption in Northern Ireland in 2023 was due to the use of such vehicles on motorways, while in GB the proportions were 18% and 15% respectively. In the freight sector, differences are even more marked. In 2023, only 13% of fuel consumption by HGVs and 7% of fuel consumption by LGVs in NI was due to driving by such vehicles on motorways compared to 47% and 21% in GB respectively. The proportion of such fuel consumption by HGVs on A roads and minor roads is much higher in Northern Ireland. This is particularly the case for HGVs on minor roads (26% in NI) compared to just 6% in GB.

147 Taken from Road Lengths in Great Britain: 2023 (see link here).
148 See Northern Ireland Road Network and Condition Statistics 2022-23 (see link here).

Table 5.7 Northern Ireland Road Transport Energy Consumption (Tonnes of Oil Equivalent), 2013 to 2023

	Personal												Freight							
	Buses				Diesel Cars				Petrol Cars & Motorcycles[149]				HGV				Diesel and Petrol LGV[150]			
	Motorways	A roads	Minor roads	Total	Motorways	A roads	Minor roads	Total	Motorways	A roads	Minor roads	Total	Motorways	A roads	Minor roads	Total	Motorways	A roads	Minor roads	Total
2013	2,530	12,031	3,463	18,024	40,385	231,920	257,076	529,382	39,527	233,838	269,266	542,631	24,326	135,799	51,144	211,269	4,750	33,864	37,996	76,610
2014	2,537	12,215	3,476	18,228	42,291	242,979	263,601	548,871	37,303	220,447	246,333	504,083	24,398	136,364	51,900	212,661	4,750	34,076	37,540	76,366
2015	2,546	12,430	3,524	18,500	43,047	247,414	265,320	555,781	36,079	212,920	233,405	482,403	24,416	136,259	52,829	213,503	4,745	34,241	29,284	68,270
2016	2,552	12,634	3,774	18,961	43,787	251,768	269,318	564,873	34,773	204,875	223,905	463,553	24,529	137,304	55,992	217,826	4,748	34,430	29,962	69,139
2017	2,558	13,621	3,799	19,978	44,376	260,406	267,891	572,673	33,636	201,774	212,243	447,653	24,660	145,092	56,757	226,509	4,745	35,424	29,586	69,755
2018	2,561	13,816	3,821	20,199	44,598	259,601	268,804	573,003	32,959	195,841	207,204	436,005	24,592	143,609	61,147	229,348	4,740	35,202	29,611	69,553
2019	2,559	13,885	3,787	20,230	44,475	261,098	265,513	571,087	32,415	193,608	200,501	426,524	24,555	144,162	61,674	230,391	4,726	35,469	29,075	69,270
2020	1,448	10,303	3,921	15,672	31,794	200,512	256,684	488,990	22,928	146,508	192,112	361,548	26,195	119,852	63,632	209,680	3,282	27,807	28,959	60,047
2021	1,590	11,963	4,009	17,562	34,791	225,560	296,896	557,247	25,019	163,759	224,052	412,831	29,386	139,430	70,600	239,415	3,964	31,103	32,774	67,841
2022	1,969	12,767	3,985	18,721	39,410	235,812	286,800	562,022	29,220	175,860	222,578	427,657	31,747	144,512	66,846	243,105	4,638	33,505	32,466	70,609
2023	2,346	12,763	3,906	19,015	39,137	227,409	269,959	536,505	30,423	177,011	219,125	426,559	32,844	147,192	63,328	243,364	4,798	33,844	31,880	70,522
NI % 2023	12%	67%	21%	100%	7%	42%	50%	100%	7%	41%	51%	100%	13%	60%	26%	100%	7%	48%	45%	100%
GB % 2023	6%	45%	49%	100%	18%	40%	42%	100%	15%	39%	46%	100%	47%	47%	6%	100%	21%	38%	41%	100%

	Total			% of Total		
	Personal	Freight	Total	Personal	Freight	Total
2013	1,090,037	287,879	1,377,916	79%	21%	100%
2014	1,071,183	289,027	1,360,210	79%	21%	100%
2015	1,056,684	281,773	1,338,457	79%	21%	100%
2016	1,047,387	286,965	1,334,353	78%	22%	100%
2017	1,040,304	296,264	1,336,568	78%	22%	100%
2018	1,029,206	298,901	1,328,107	77%	23%	100%
2019	1,017,841	299,661	1,317,501	77%	23%	100%
2020	866,210	269,727	1,135,937	76%	24%	100%
2021	987,639	307,257	1,294,896	76%	24%	100%
2022	1,008,400	313,714	1,322,114	76%	24%	100%
2023	982,079	313,886	1,295,965	76%	24%	100%
GB 2023	25,336,342	14,269,140	39,605,482	64%	36%	100%

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-road-transport-energy-consumption-at-regional-and-local-authority-level-2005-to-2023)

149 Petrol cars account for over 99% of consumption in this category.
150 Diesel LGV accounts for around 99% of consumption in this category. LGVs can be used for a number of tasks (carrying freight, transport or for private use) so not all LGV traffic is related to freight transport.

Sub-National Road Transport Energy Consumption

DESNZ also publish road transport consumption data for the 11 council areas in Northern Ireland and data for the most recent year (2023) is shown in Table 5.8 overleaf.

The council area with the highest total consumption (and also for both personal and freight consumption) is Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon with consumption at about 176,500 tonnes or 14% of the total. The three biggest consuming District Councils (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, Newry, Mourne & Down and Mid Ulster) together accounted for over one third (36%) of total Northern Ireland petrol and diesel consumption for road transport use in 2023.

Buses

Consumption of diesel[151] by buses was highest in the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon council area, the only area with over 3,000 tonnes of oil equivalent used and representing 16% of the NI total. In Newry, Mourne & Down, consumption was just under 3,000 tonnes of oil equivalent meaning these two council areas accounted for around one-third (31%) of diesel consumption by buses in Northern Ireland in 2023.

Cars

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon District Council was the top consuming council in terms of petrol and diesel use by cars, accounting for over 13% of total Northern Ireland consumption in 2023. In addition, other council areas outside the Greater Belfast area make up the other highest consuming council areas, namely Newry, Mourne & Down (12%), Mid Ulster (11%), Fermanagh & Omagh (11%) and Causeway Coast & Glens (10%). Together these five council areas account for over half (56%) of all petrol and diesel use by cars.

HGV

In terms of diesel use by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), again Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon District Council area had the largest share (at 15% or over 36,000 tonnes of oil equivalent), followed by Antrim & Newtownabbey and Newry, Mourne & Down (12% each), with these three councils together accounting for almost two-fifths (39%) of HGV diesel use in Northern Ireland in 2023.

Consumption by Use

Overall, some three quarters (76%) of all petrol and diesel fuel consumed for road transport purposes in Northern Ireland in 2023 was for personal use with about one quarter (24%) used by freight. At a council level there were similar splits between personal use and freight use across most council areas. However, some differences include Ards & North Down with a personal use proportion of 81%, whilst in Antrim & Newtownabbey council area the percentage of petrol and diesel used for personal use was lower than average, at 69%. In most council areas though, the personal/freight consumption split was very close to the Northern Ireland average.

151 Petrol cars, motorcycles and petrol LGV are petrol consuming vehicles, while buses, diesel cars, HGV and diesel LGV are diesel consuming vehicles.

Table 5.8 Road Transport Energy Consumption at District Council level (Tonnes of Oil Equivalent), 2023

	Personal				Freight						
District Council Area	Buses	Diesel Cars	Petrol Cars	Motorcycles	HGV	Diesel LGV	Petrol LGV		Personal	Freight	Total
Antrim and Newtownabbey	2,079	43,812	34,399	238	29,745	5,659	81		80,527	35,485	116,012
Ards and North Down	1,072	28,861	22,795	180	8,854	3,502	53		52,907	12,409	65,316
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	3,057	71,305	56,274	334	36,263	9,097	133		130,971	45,493	176,464
Belfast	1,877	42,298	33,826	288	21,613	3,781	61		78,289	25,455	103,744
Causeway Coast and Glens	1,504	53,257	42,078	245	19,365	6,869	101		97,085	26,335	123,420
Derry City and Strabane	961	37,069	29,492	184	14,860	4,126	63		67,705	19,049	86,755
Fermanagh and Omagh	1,411	56,348	44,704	239	23,327	7,043	106		102,703	30,475	133,178
Lisburn and Castlereagh	1,258	42,172	33,151	238	19,884	5,225	77		76,819	25,186	102,005
Mid and East Antrim	1,102	39,990	31,630	219	16,829	6,063	87		72,941	22,979	95,920
Mid Ulster	1,781	57,790	45,579	249	24,030	7,598	111		105,400	31,739	137,139
Newry, Mourne and Down	2,912	63,605	49,927	289	28,595	10,530	154		116,733	39,280	156,012
Northern Ireland	19,015	536,505	423,855	2,704	243,364	69,493	1,028		982,079	313,886	1,295,965

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-road-transport-energy-consumption-at-regional-and-local-authority-level-2005-to-2023)

[Note that LGVs can be used for a number of tasks such as carrying freight, providing transport, carrying equipment or for private use, meaning that not all LGV traffic is related to freight transportation.]

Total Energy Consumption for Northern Ireland

The following table provides information on total energy consumption[152] in Northern Ireland using the total final energy consumption data published by DESNZ. Final energy consumption data are subject to revision. Revisions are made with each annual publication of data and may be due to forecasted values being replaced with actual data[153] or they can arise due to methodology changes[154] and changes may affect the whole time series. The figures shown here are the latest available, but they may differ from those reported in previous Energy in Northern Ireland publications.

Table 5.9 Total Final Energy Consumption in Northern Ireland (GWh), 2015 – 2023

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Petroleum Products	27,243	27,371	26,517	26,341	25,604	23,056	24,705	23,116	23,190
Electricity	7,717	7,709	7,786	7,684	7,585	7,296	7,506	7,222	7,141
Gas	5,924	5,827	6,562	6,273	7,074	7,576	7,248	6,797	6,924
Bioenergy & Wastes	1,631	1,630	1,973	2,408	2,535	2,737	2,413	2,614	2,548
Coal	1,702	1,642	1,400	1,351	1,187	1,138	1,108	1,047	981
Manufactured Fuels	228	224	248	252	242	240	231	281	245
Total Energy Consumption in Northern Ireland	**44,445**	**44,402**	**44,487**	**44,309**	**44,227**	**42,043**	**43,210**	**41,076**	**41,030**
Total Energy Consumption in GB[155]	1,498,099	1,485,955	1,498,099	1,504,994	1,495,014	1,386,297	1,409,856	1,372,266	1,353,885
NI as a % of GB	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	2.9%	3.0%	3.0%	3.1%	3.0%	3.0%

Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/total-final-energy-consumption-at-sub-national-level)

Over the period 2015-2019, total energy consumption in Northern Ireland was virtually unchanged at around 44,400 GWh. Total consumption in GB was also stable over this period at approximately 1.5 million GWh. Northern Ireland energy consumption as a proportion of GB consumption was stable at around 3.0% in each year 2015 to 2019. The 5% fall in NI total final energy consumption between 2019 and 2020 highlighted the effect of Covid lockdowns: petroleum products consumption was down 10% over the year whilst gas consumption increased by 7%. After a 3% increase in total consumption between 2020 and 2021, total final energy consumption fell again between 2021 and 2022 and has been steady at just over 41,000 GWh for 2022 and 2023 (the most recent years for which data is available). Changes in GB total final energy consumption have been very similar to Northern Ireland energy consumption changes and thus the NI consumption as a proportion of GB consumption remained stable at around 3.0%.

The table does highlight some differences in consumption of individual fuels. Looking at the 5-year period 2018-2023, the overall fall in final energy consumption was 7%: however, petroleum products consumption was down 12%, coal consumption was down 27%, whilst there was a 10% rise in gas consumption over the same period.

152 This excludes any gas or coal consumption by power stations in Northern Ireland as this fuel is used to generate electricity which is then included in the electricity consumption figures here. Also, as noted earlier, energy consumption by aviation (air transport) and shipping (national navigation) are excluded from DESNZ total final energy consumption data.
153 See DESNZ Statistical Revisions Policy
154 See page 18 of Residual Fuels Methodology Summary which describes a methodology change for oil and solid fuels use.
155 See https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/total-final-energy-consumption-at-sub-national-level for full spreadsheets. GB total includes a small amount of unallocated consumption (i.e. consumption that could not be allocated to any particular UK region).

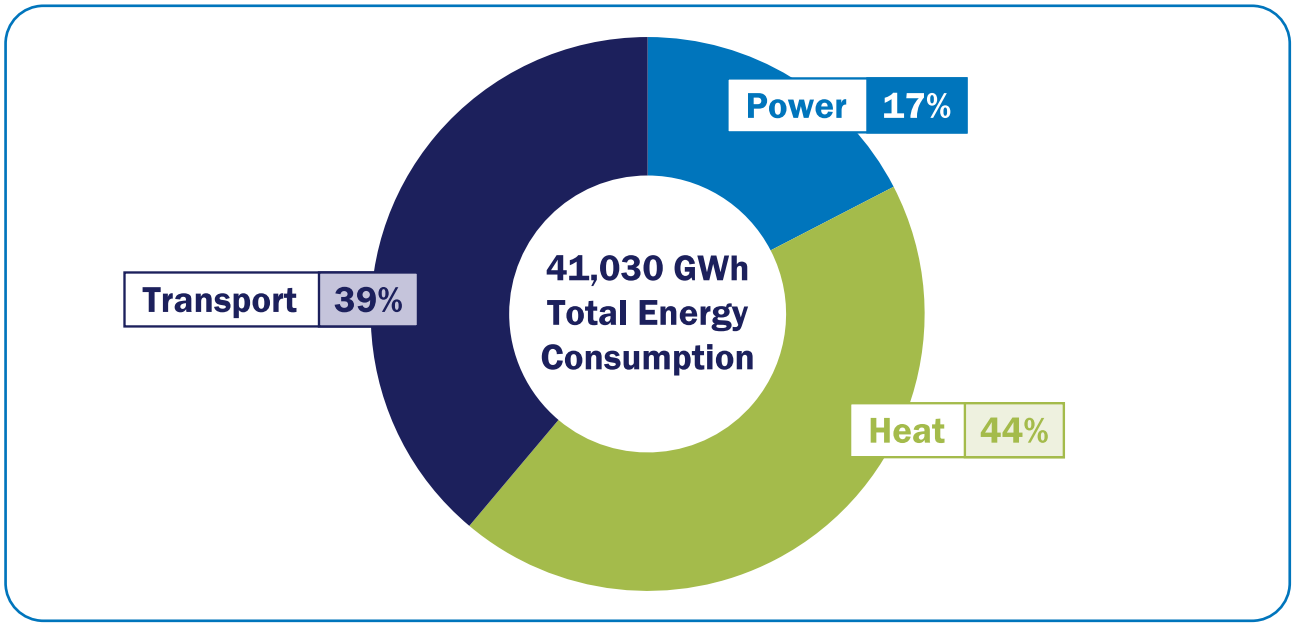
Total Energy Consumption by Purpose for Northern Ireland

The following chart presents the final energy consumption data in Table 5.9 above split by the main purpose for/sector consuming the energy: i.e. into Transport, Power (electricity) and Heat sectors.

Splitting the data into these purposes/sectors is not straightforward and the chart below is an approximation. As an example, while it is reasonable to assume that all petroleum product use for 'road transport' or 'rail' can be assigned to the 'Transport' sector it is less clear for assigning other volumes. Electricity consumption in the 'domestic' sector, for example, could probably mostly be categorised as 'Power': however, some domestic electricity consumption will be consumed as 'Heat' (e.g. Economy 7 heating or air conditioning) and indeed some for 'Transport' (charging electric vehicles). This would be the same for Industrial & Commercial electricity consumption.

As the exact split for each type of energy consumed by purpose/sector is not known, they have been assigned to one sector based on where it is assumed the majority of consumption takes place. The table in Annex 5.2 details how each component of energy consumption has been assigned to one of the three purposes/sectors: Transport, Heat or Power.

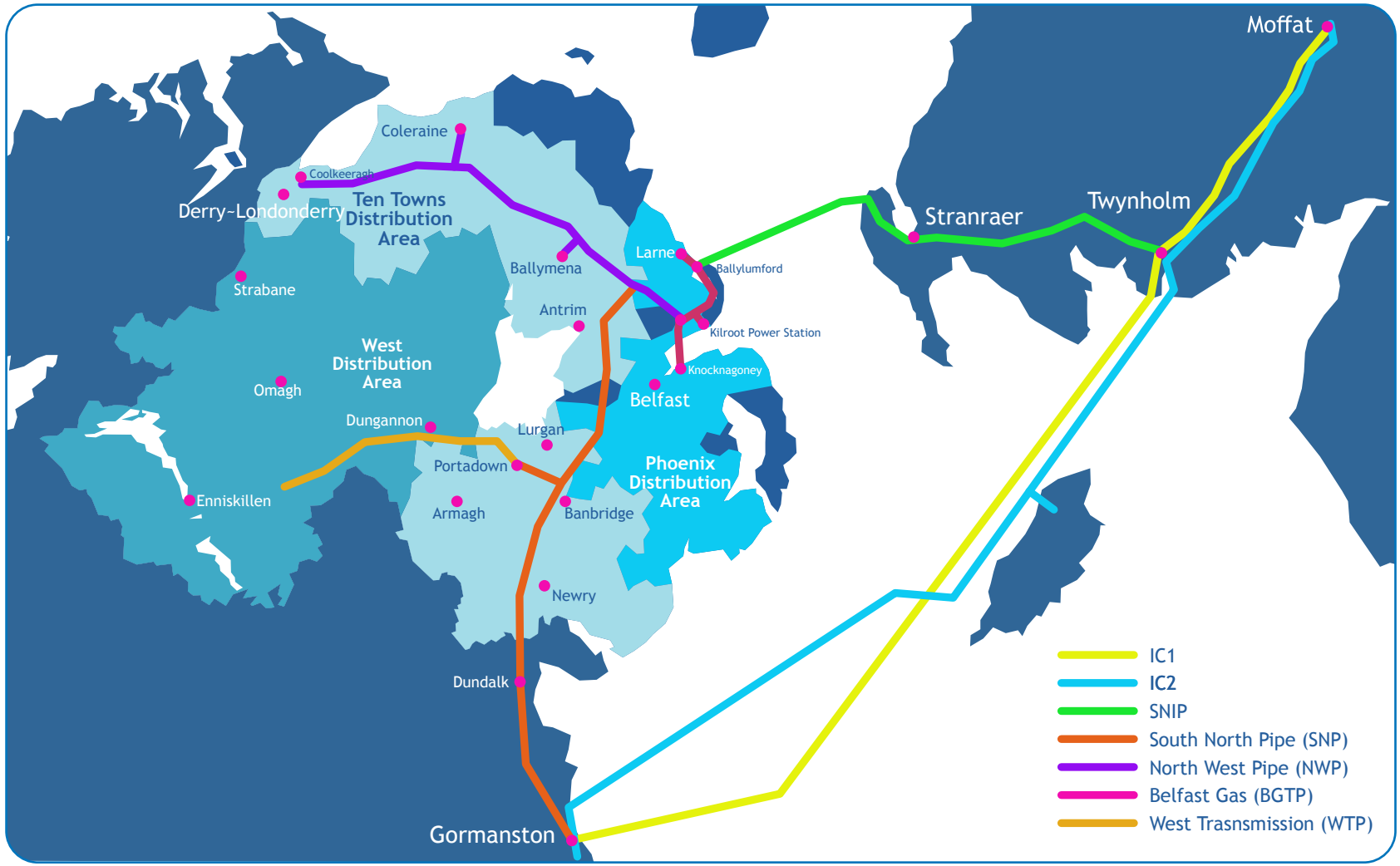
Chart 5.2 Total Final Energy Consumption by Purpose in Northern Ireland, 2023



Source: DESNZ (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/total-final-energy-consumption-at-sub-national-level)

As the chart above shows, of all energy consumption in Northern Ireland in 2023 around 44% (or about 18,000 GWh) was for the purposes of Heat (this includes consumption of kerosene for domestic and non-domestic heating plus all natural gas consumption and all coal consumption by domestic and non-domestic). About another two-fifths (39% or some 16,000 GWh) of all energy consumed was for Transport purposes (i.e. petrol and diesel consumption for road and rail) and the remaining 17% (or around 7,000 GWh) was accounted for by electricity consumption (i.e. Power).

Annex 5.1 Map of Transmission Gas Pipelines

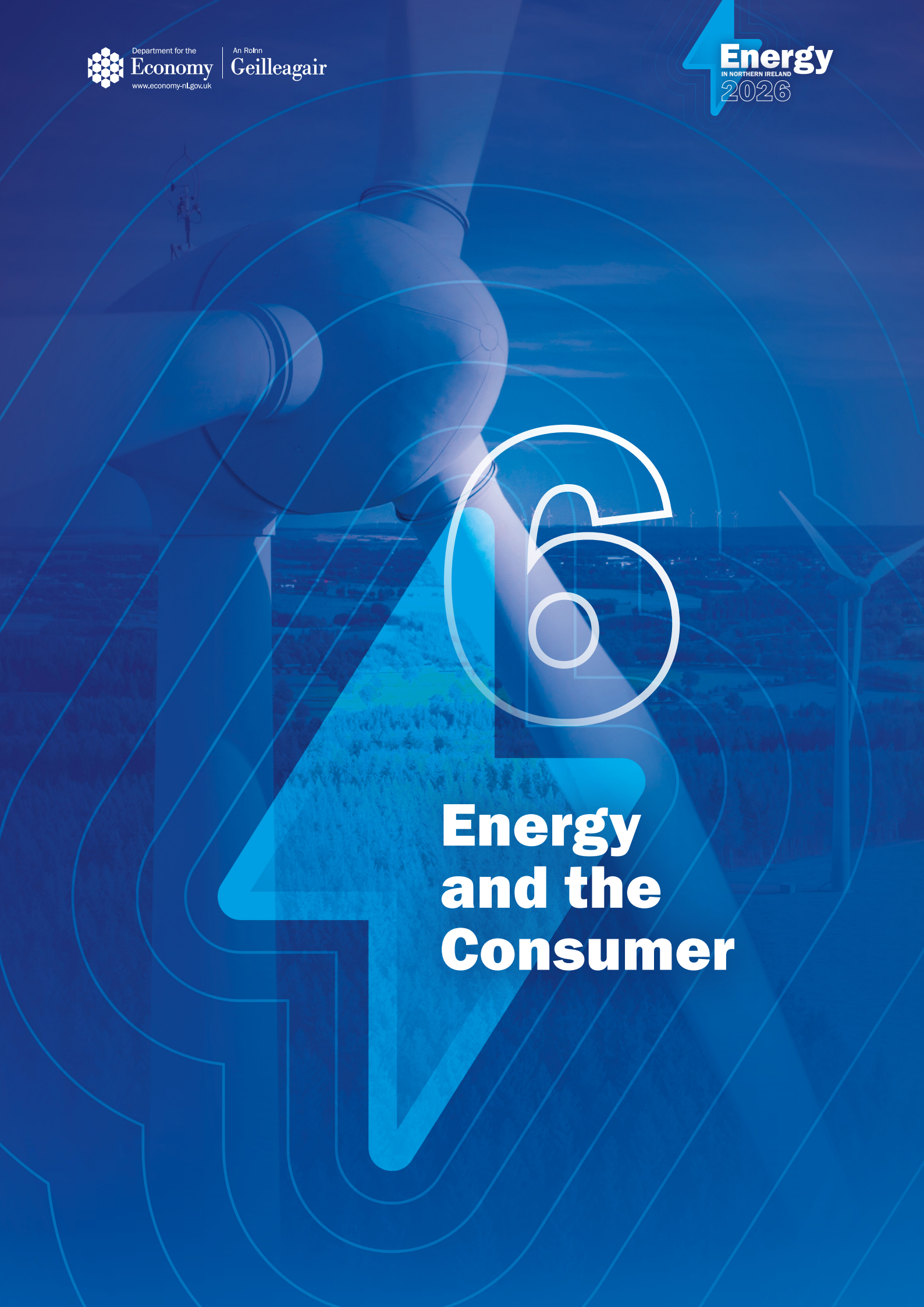


Source: GMO (https://www.gmo-ni.com/assets/documents/Publications/NI-Gas-Capacity-Statement/NIGCS-2024-25.pdf)

Annex 5.2 Assignment of Energy Consumption to Power, Heat or Transport Purpose/Sector

	2023 Consumption (GWh)	Power, Heat or Transport
Coal		
Industrial & Commercial	833.2	**Heat**
Domestic	147.1	**Heat**
Rail	0.1	**Transport**
Public Sector	1.0	**Heat**
Total Coal	**981.4**	**>99% Heat**
Manufactured fuels		
Industrial	51.3	**Heat**
Domestic	193.6	**Heat**
Total Manufactured Fuels	**244.8**	**100% Heat**
Petroleum products		
Industrial & Commercial	1,802.6	**Heat**
Domestic	6,306.5	**Heat**
Road transport	14,056.9	**Transport**
Rail	90.9	**Transport**
Public Sector	149.9	**Heat**
Agriculture	783.3	**Transport**
Total Petroleum Products	**23,190.0**	**36% Heat, 64% Transport**
Gas		
Industrial & Commercial	3,975.8	**Heat**
Domestic	2,948.7	**Heat**
Total Gas	**6,924.5**	**100 % Heat**
Electricity		
Industrial & Commercial	4,468.4	**Power**
Domestic	2,672.9	**Power**
Total Electricity	**7,141.2**	**100% Power**
Bioenergy & wastes		
Industrial & Commercial	863.2	**Heat**
Domestic	669.7	**Heat**
Road transport	1,015.2	**Transport**
Total	**2,548.1**	**60% Heat, 40% Transport**
ALL FUELS		
TOTAL	**41,030.0**	**44% HEAT, 39% TRANSPORT, 17% POWER**

Department for the Economy
www.economy-ni.gov.uk
An Roinn Geilleagair



6 Energy and the Consumer

CHAPTER 6: ENERGY AND THE CONSUMER

Summary of Key Points

Household Expenditure on Energy

- Northern Ireland recorded the highest weekly household expenditure on all types of energy of any UK region with expenditure in 2022-24 around 25% above the UK average.
- Weekly household expenditure on electricity in Northern Ireland was the second highest of all regions in the period 2022-2024, some 7% higher than the UK average and around 18% above the UK region with the lowest expenditure.
- Weekly expenditure on gas in Northern Ireland was around half of the UK average expenditure but households in Northern Ireland spent nine times as much per week on other fuels (e.g. home heating oil) compared to the UK in the period 2022-2024.
- Northern Ireland had the lowest overall domestic electricity unit cost of all UK regions in 2025 at 30.42p per kWh. This was 3% lower than the UK average.
- Domestic electricity prices for Northern Ireland in January-June 2025 were 36% above the EU average (median) figure and higher than all but one of the 14 EU countries compared.
- For the period January-June 2025, domestic gas prices in Northern Ireland were 5% lower than the EU median price but 29% higher than UK average prices.
- Home heating oil prices rose from an average of around £520 for 900 litres in February 2026 to over £1,000 for 900 litres in both March and April 2026 due to the conflict in the Middle East.

Non-Domestic Expenditure on Energy

- In the period January-June 2025, Northern Ireland non-domestic electricity prices were markedly below UK prices in all categories. Prices were 21% lower for very small users, 15% lower in the small category, 31% lower in the small/medium category, 41% lower in the medium category and 40% lower than the UK for large/very large users.
- Northern Ireland non-domestic electricity prices were substantially above the EU median price in all categories over the period January-June 2025: in the very small category (24% higher), small category (21% higher), small/medium category (26% higher), the medium category (30% higher) and in the large/very large category (39% higher).

Road Fuel Prices

- Diesel and petrol pence per litre (ppl) prices rose sharply in early 2026 due to the conflict in the Middle East: petrol increased from about 124.5 ppl in February to around 152 ppl by April, while diesel rose more steeply, from around 132 ppl to around 183 ppl over the same period.

Introduction

This chapter looks at energy from the consumer perspective including household expenditure on energy, and some energy price data. Comparisons with other regions are provided where possible. It is important to note that consumer expenditure on goods and services is related to, but different from, the prices of consumer goods and services. For example, with a fixed price for a good/service, expenditure will differ between consumers depending on how much of the good/service they purchase. Whilst pricing of a good/service, for example, could be constant on a national basis, regional variation in demand for goods/services will be one of the main factors underpinning regional variations in expenditure. This distinction between prices and expenditure becomes more complicated when there are regional differences in both prices for goods and services and regional differences in consumer demand. This complexity applies to statistics and information on energy consumption, prices and expenditure.

Household Expenditure on Energy

The Living Costs and Food Survey published by the Office for National Statistics provides data on the amount of weekly household expenditure on electricity, gas and other fuels. This is presented in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Weekly Household Expenditure by UK Countries and Regions (£), 2022-2024[156]

Region	Electricity	Gas	Other fuels	Total weekly expenditure on energy	Total weekly expenditure (on all commodities and services)	Expenditure on energy as a % of total weekly expenditure
North East	16.50	15.50	1.30	33.30	466.80	7.1%
North West	17.10	16.00	0.70	33.80	539.50	6.3%
Yorkshire & the Humber	17.30	15.30	1.30	33.90	533.70	6.4%
East Midlands	17.40	14.30	1.10	32.80	540.60	6.1%
West Midlands	18.10	14.70	1.80	34.60	545.30	6.3%
East	19.50	13.70	2.60	35.80	604.80	5.9%
London	17.30	14.60	0.10	32.00	624.70	5.1%
South East	19.20	15.80	1.10	36.10	662.00	5.5%
South West	19.30	12.40	2.60	34.30	618.80	5.5%
England	18.10	14.70	1.30	34.10	584.40	5.8%
Wales	18.80	14.30	1.30	34.40	534.30	6.4%
Scotland	18.80	14.30	1.30	34.40	499.30	6.9%
Northern Ireland	**19.40**	**7.40**	**16.20**	**43.00**	**550.20**	**7.8%**
United Kingdom	18.20	14.40	1.80	34.40	573.30	6.0%

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) Living Costs and Food Survey (www.ons.gov.uk)

156 Figures cover the period financial year ending 2022 to financial year ending 2024. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

The table above highlights a number of differences in expenditure on energy in Northern Ireland compared to other UK regions. Firstly, Northern Ireland had the highest household weekly expenditure on energy of any UK region. Weekly household expenditure on energy in Northern Ireland was 25% higher (at £43.00 per week in the period 2022-24) compared to the UK average of £34.40. This difference is likely to be driven by a combination of factors including: energy mix and the higher dependence on home heating oil in Northern Ireland; geographic and weather conditions (with Northern Ireland being one of the windier parts of the UK); energy pricing; and lower household income levels.

Weekly household expenditure on electricity in Northern Ireland was the second highest of all regions (at £19.40), 6.6% higher than the UK average and 17.6% more than the UK region with the lowest expenditure on electricity (North East). Expenditure on Gas and Other fuels in Northern Ireland is very different from any other region of the UK and this has been the case for some time. For example, in 2022-24, weekly spending on gas in NI (£7.40) was only about half of the UK average weekly expenditure (£14.40) while households in Northern Ireland spent nine times as much per week on other fuels (£16.20) compared to the UK average (£1.80). The main reasons for such differences are the availability of mains gas and, consequently, the propensity for oil use for home heating purposes. Unlike Northern Ireland, mains gas is widely available throughout GB, and this means it is the main type of central heating for that region.

Compared to the previous period (2021-2023[157]), total expenditure on energy (electricity, gas and other fuels) was higher in all regions in the period 2022-2024. In Northern Ireland weekly expenditure on energy increased by £6.00 (+16%) over the period 2021-23 to 2022-24 compared to £5.80 (+20%) for England, £5.30 (+18%) for Scotland and £4.60 (+15%) for Wales.

Table 6.2 Comparison of Energy Expenditure and Central Heating Type by Country – NI, UK, RoI

	Proportion of weekly energy expenditure that is spent on[158]:			Proportion of households with central heating that is[159]:		
Region	**Electricity**	**Gas**	**Other fuels**	**Oil only**	**Gas only**	**Other**
Northern Ireland	45%	17%	38%	50%	32%	19%
UK	53%	42%	5%	5%	73%	23%
Ireland	53%	19%	28%	39%	33%	28%

Sources: ONS[160], CSO[161] [162], HOCL[163]

157 Figures for the period financial year ending 2021 to financial year ending 2023 available at https://www.ons.gov.uk.
158 The most recent data for NI and UK refers to the period 2022-2024. The most recent data for Ireland refers to 2022-2023.
159 This is taken from Census data for each country and refers to 2021 for NI, 2021/22 for UK and 2022 for Ireland.
160 NI and UK weekly energy expenditure data is from the Office for National Statistics' Living Costs and Food Survey available at www.ons.gov.uk
161 Republic of Ireland weekly energy expenditure data from Central Statistics Office's Household Budget Survey relate to 2022-23 and are available at https://www.cso.ie
162 Proportion of households with central heating data for the Republic of Ireland is taken from the 2022 Census, available on the Central Statistics Office's website at https://data.cso.ie/table/CPNI33.
163 Proportion of households with central heating data for the UK and NI is taken from House of Commons Library (HOCL) analysis at https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/constituency-data-central-heating-2021-census/. This analysis is based on Census data for each country.

In terms of weekly expenditure, Table 6.2 above shows that expenditure on electricity accounted for around half of all weekly household expenditure on energy for each country. For gas and other fuels, Northern Ireland and Ireland have a spending profile that are quite closely aligned and both significantly different from the UK. Only 17% of weekly household energy expenditure in Northern Ireland and 19% in Ireland was on gas, less than half the proportion compared to the UK (42%). Almost two-fifths (38%) of all weekly energy expenditure in Northern Ireland was on 'other fuels' such as home heating oil, coal etc., compared to 28% in Ireland but just 5% for the UK as a whole.

As with the energy expenditure profile, the proportions by central heating type in Northern Ireland and Ireland are much more closely aligned compared to the UK. Similar to NI (32%), around one third of households in Ireland (33%) had gas central heating compared to 73% in the UK. Oil central heating is still widely used in Northern Ireland (50%) and Ireland (39%) but accounted for just 5% for the UK.

Figures in Table 6.2 show the proportion of households with central heating for comparison purposes. Census response options differed across England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, so central heating types have been grouped into broader categories for consistency[164]. In Ireland, the Census asked for the main type of central heating, while in Northern Ireland all types were recorded. This means NI results include extra categories for homes with more than one type of system. Annex 6.1 provides the full breakdown of central heating types from Census 2021 for Northern Ireland. It shows that 62% of NI households had oil heating either as their only system or alongside another type of central heating.

The remaining sections in this chapter look at different forms of energy price data with the latest data available used in each case.

Electricity Prices – Domestic Customers

The electricity markets across the UK and the Devolved Regions within the UK are complex and fluid and arriving at comparable price and billing estimates represents a challenging exercise. DESNZ produce a standardised measure of regional electricity bills based on the average unit costs of suppliers across a range of payment methods. Importantly, the estimated bill is based on a standardised domestic consumption figure of 3,400kWh/year. We know that average domestic electricity consumption within Northern Ireland varies by District Council area from around 2,700 kWh in Belfast to over 3,600 kWh in Mid Ulster with a NI average of some 3,200 kWh (see Table 3.1 Chapter 3) which indicates the extent to which an average consumption figure of 3,400 kWh may differ from actual consumption at different geographies. On that basis, whilst the regional unit cost of electricity may provide an indication of price differentials across the UK, the estimated average bill, based on a standardised domestic consumption figure of 3,400 kWh, is unlikely to entirely reflect regional variation in electricity consumption.

164 See House of Commons Library website for more information.

Table 6.3: Average Annual Domestic Electricity Costs for UK Regions based on Consumption of 3,400kWh/year: Unit cost (Pence per kWh), Bill (£) and Rank, 2025

Payment type	Credit			Direct debit			Prepayment			Overall		
Region	Unit cost	Bill	Rank	Unit cost	Bill	Rank	Unit cost	Bill	Rank	Unit cost	Bill	Rank
East Midlands	32.09	1,091	13	30.18	1,026	13	29.99	1,020	14	30.44	1,035	14
Eastern	33.09	1,125	8	31.05	1,056	10	30.83	1,048	10	31.36	1,066	9
London	32.07	1,090	14	30.14	1,025	14	29.89	1,016	15	30.59	1,040	13
Merseyside & North Wales	36.20	1,231	1	34.22	1,164	1	34.09	1,159	1	34.48	1,172	1
North East	33.15	1,127	7	31.22	1,062	7	30.95	1,052	8	31.47	1,070	7
North Scotland	34.51	1,173	2	32.09	1,091	2	31.96	1,087	2	32.45	1,103	2
North West	33.52	1,140	5	31.63	1,075	3	31.48	1,070	4	31.91	1,085	3
Northern Ireland	**31.33**	**1,065**	**15**	**29.91**	**1,017**	**15**	**30.99**	**1,054**	**7**	**30.42**	**1,034**	**15**
South East	33.41	1,136	6	31.30	1,064	6	31.12	1,058	6	31.62	1,075	6
South Scotland	32.91	1,119	10	31.22	1,061	8	30.94	1,052	9	31.44	1,069	8
South Wales	33.88	1,152	3	31.40	1,067	5	31.37	1,067	5	31.75	1,079	5
South West	33.70	1,146	4	31.50	1,071	4	31.62	1,075	3	31.84	1,083	4
Southern	33.09	1,125	9	30.80	1,047	12	30.69	1,043	12	31.11	1,058	11
West Midlands	32.77	1,114	12	30.84	1,048	11	30.46	1,036	13	31.09	1,057	12
Yorkshire	32.85	1,117	11	31.07	1,057	9	30.79	1,047	11	31.32	1,065	10
UK	33.08	1,125	-	31.16	1,059	-	31.05	1,056	-	31.45	1,069	-

Source: DESNZ (www.gov.uk)

The table above shows that in 2025, Northern Ireland had the lowest unit cost and annual bill of all UK regions for overall domestic electricity costs (across all payment methods), with an average annual bill (based on 3,400kWh/year annual consumption) of £1,034, over 3% or £35 below the UK average. Northern Ireland has recorded the lowest overall unit costs and annual bills of any UK region each year since 2016, except for 2024 when it had the second lowest costs[165].

There were, however, some notable differences across payment types. In 2025, NI 'Credit' and 'Direct debit' customers had the lowest bill and unit cost of all UK regions, while NI 'Prepayment' customers had the seventh highest bill and unit cost of all UK regions.

Table 6.1 earlier showed that Northern Ireland had the second highest weekly expenditure on electricity of all UK regions over the period 2022-24, while Table 6.3 showed that unit costs for electricity in 2025 for domestic customers in Northern Ireland were the lowest of all UK regions. These data, whilst from different sources, appear contradictory. If average annual domestic electricity consumption is higher in Northern Ireland than in other regions then this could explain why reported expenditure on electricity is higher even though the unit cost is lower. Whilst there may be issues with direct comparisons of average annual domestic electricity consumption between GB and NI, the data show that average (mean) consumption in Northern Ireland in 2024-25 (as shown in Table 3.1 earlier at 3,179 kWh) was actually slightly lower than mean consumption in GB in 2024 (at 3,323 kWh[166]).

165 See data at www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/annual-domestic-energy-price-statistics
166 See page 14 of Subnational electricity and gas consumption statistics published by DESNZ

However, although Northern Ireland's mean domestic electricity consumption is slightly lower than that of Great Britain, the median[167] consumption in Northern Ireland (2,711 kWh) is higher than the GB median (2,471 kWh). This suggests that a typical household in Northern Ireland uses more electricity than a typical household in GB and that GB has more households that use very high amounts of electricity which pushes up their mean consumption. This difference in the shape of the consumption distribution may help explain why Northern Ireland records higher average weekly expenditure on electricity than GB despite having lower unit costs: a greater proportion of households in Northern Ireland are clustered around relatively higher usage levels, which can push up reported expenditure in survey-based estimates such as the Living Costs and Food Survey.

As discussed above, whilst the regional unit cost of electricity may provide an indication of price differentials across the UK, the estimated average regional bills produced by DESNZ, based on a standardised domestic consumption figure of 3,400 kWh, is unlikely to entirely reflect regional variation in electricity consumption and may instead be driven more by regional differences in unit cost. It is also worth bearing in mind that the Living Costs and Food Survey estimates of regional household weekly expenditure is from a survey sample of households and not a census of the whole population and therefore estimates are subject to sampling variability.

Attempts at understanding and reconciling the messages from these two sources of data is ongoing although the challenges are considerable. A previous exploration[168] of the underpinning issues proved useful in rehearsing and testing the various factors that potentially impact however, ultimately, it did not fully account for the differences between the two sources.

Both sources of data on expenditure and price respectively are inherently different metrics and, ultimately, what may be of more value when considering, is not the inherent differences between them, but rather the trends in each over time.

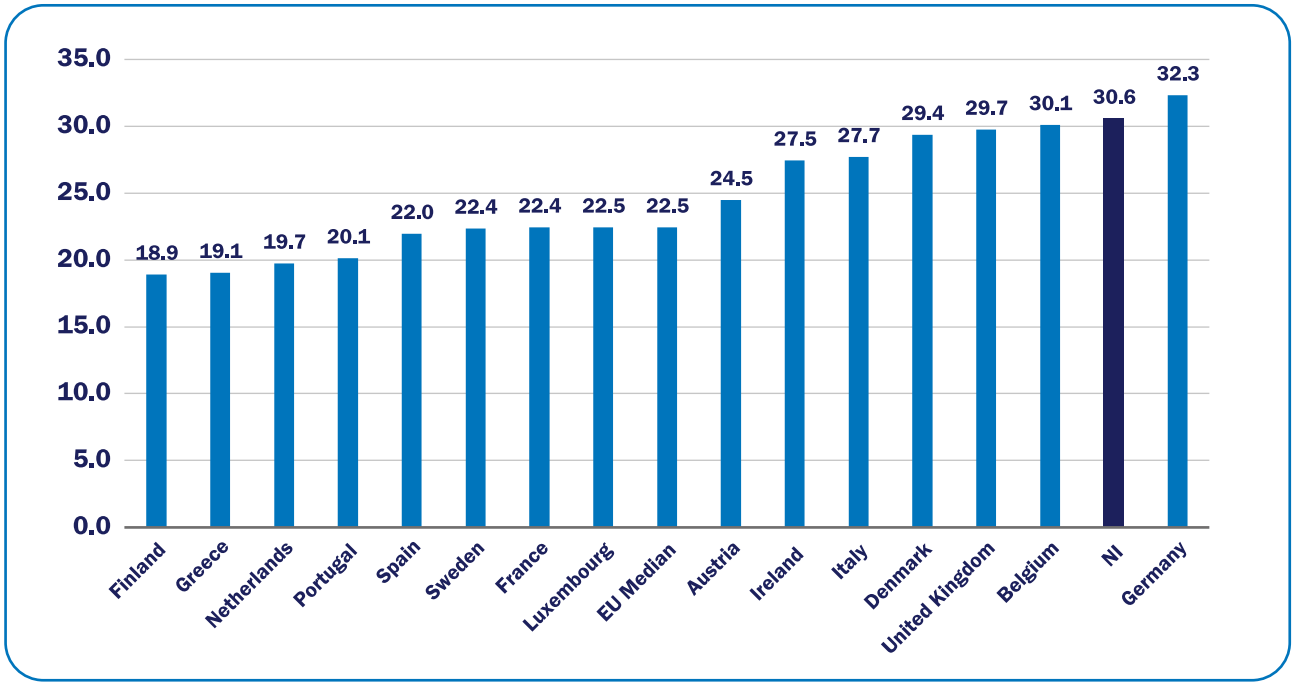
167 Mean electricity consumption is calculated by taking total domestic electricity consumption and dividing by the number of household meters, while median consumption is the middle value, with half of all households having consumption above and half below the median value.

168 See www.mceconomics.co.uk

Comparison with EU

Electricity prices for domestic customers in Northern Ireland can also be compared with other EU countries. The chart below compares the Northern Ireland price with prices for other EU countries for the first semester in 2025.

Chart 6.1 Domestic Electricity Prices in the EU for Medium[169] Consumers (p/kWh), January-June 2025



Source: DESNZ[170] and Utility Regulator[171]

For domestic customers, the Northern Ireland calculated price for the period January to June 2025 was 30.6 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) including taxes. This was 3% above the UK figure of 29.7 p/kWh, 36% above the EU14 plus UK average (median) figure of 22.5 p/kWh, and 11% higher than the Republic of Ireland price of 27.5p/kWh. Northern Ireland had the second-highest price among EU14 plus UK, with only Germany's price being higher.

Electricity Prices – Non-Domestic Customers

The Utility Regulator regularly publishes data on electricity prices for the non-domestic sector[172]. These figures are presented in the charts and tables below.

Business users who consume more than 50 MWh per year can obtain an individual quotation from active electricity suppliers in the Northern Ireland market. Many of these customers, especially the larger customers, follow a tender exercise and subsequently agree individual contracts with their supplier, often with unique terms and conditions (including price).

169 Medium sized domestic customers (annual consumption of between 2,500 and 4,999 kWh) is selected for the purpose of analysis as this consumption category reflects the majority of domestic customers in NI. Prices include all taxes to reflect the final prices paid by domestic customers.
170 See Table 5.6.2: Medium consumers (2,500-4,999 KWh) including taxes at www.gov.uk
171 See page 17 of Quarterly Retail Energy Market Monitoring Report at www.uregni.gov.uk
172 See Quarterly Retail Energy Market Monitoring Reports at www.uregni.gov.uk

Due to the bilateral nature of such agreements, non-domestic electricity prices for Northern Ireland are not published by suppliers and such information has historically not been available from any other source.

Due to this data gap, the Utility Regulator developed average electricity non-domestic prices per consumption band and since 2013 has reported these for Northern Ireland. The Utility Regulator follow DESNZ's format and methodology[173] which means Northern Ireland prices can then be compared to those collected and published by DESNZ for the UK and Eurostat for the EU Member States.

Non-Domestic Market Breakdown

The information from the Utility Regulator on non-domestic electricity prices is available for the period January-June 2025 broken down into different user groups depending on their annual consumption. As Table 6.4 shows, the largest proportion of non-domestic customers in Northern Ireland is in the smallest consumption size band. These 'very small' consumers accounted for 72.9% of total Industrial & Commercial (I&C) customers at the end of Quarter 2 2025 but only 6.9% of consumption.

Table 6.4: Northern Ireland Non-domestic Market Breakdown, End of Q2 2025

Size of consumer	Annual Consumption Bands (MWh)	% of I&C customers	% of I&C consumption	I&C connection numbers
Very small	< 20	72.9%	6.9%	55,944
Small	20 - 499	25.8%	32.3%	19,770
Small/Medium	500 - 1,999	1.0%	17.0%	793
Medium	2,000 - 19,999	0.3%	25.9%	239
Large/Very Large	> 20,000	0.03%	17.9%	20

Source: Utility Regulator (www.uregni.gov.uk/Q3 2025 REMM report)

The majority of consumption is accounted for by a much smaller number of users with annual consumption above 500 MWh, namely the 'small/medium', 'medium' and 'large/very large' groups. Together these three groups accounted for only 1.4% of all non-domestic customers, but they were responsible for over three-fifths (60.8%) of non-domestic electricity consumption in January-June 2025. These findings are in line with the data presented in Table 3.2 earlier – i.e. that a small number of large industrial and commercial users consume a disproportionate amount of electricity.

It should be noted that few, if any, of Northern Ireland's largest energy users would be considered 'energy intensive' by international, EU or UK standards. Most businesses therefore consume relatively little electricity, but a very small number are heavily reliant on it[174].

173 For further details on the methodology used, see pages 17-18 of https://www.uregni.gov.uk/files/uregni/media-files/Q1%202021%20QTR%20-%20Final.pdf. It should be noted that the comparability of the derived NI prices to the other Member States can be greatly affected by fluctuations in the Euro GBP exchange rate.

174 Source: The Cost of Doing Business in Northern Ireland (www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/cost-doing-business)

Non-Domestic Electricity Prices

The charts overleaf show industrial and commercial (or non-domestic) electricity prices in the 14 EU countries[175] and for the UK and Northern Ireland by consumption size band for January-June 2025. The charts show non-domestic average unit prices, including Climate Change Levy (CCL)[176] but excluding VAT. As VAT is a refundable expense for many businesses, excluding VAT means that the values are more representative of the actual energy costs for businesses. Smaller electricity users typically have to sign up to available tariffs from providers (similar to domestic customers), whereas larger users have more scope to negotiate tailored deals, often with unique terms and conditions (including price), based on their much higher consumption. Indeed, as the charts show, the price per kilowatt hour falls as consumption increases for all countries shown.

Comparisons with Other Regions

UK

Chart 6.2 shows that non-domestic electricity prices in Northern Ireland in the period January-June 2025 were below UK prices in all categories. Prices in Northern Ireland were 21% lower in the very small category and 15% lower in the small category. The price differentials were even greater in the larger consumption bands: Northern Ireland prices were 31% lower than the UK in the small/medium category, 41% lower in the medium category and 40% lower in the large/very large category.

EU

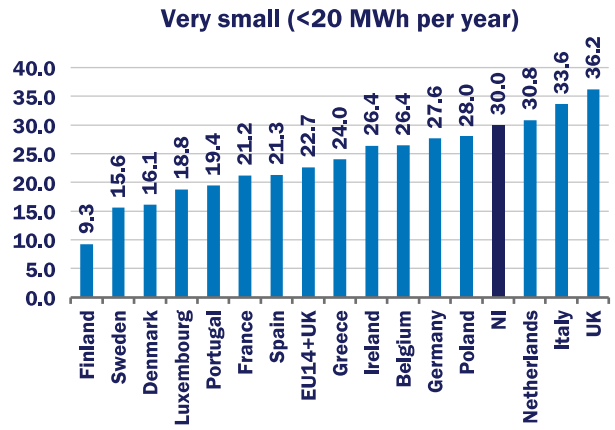
Northern Ireland prices in the period January-June 2025 were above the EU median price in all categories and were amongst the most expensive in the EU in all categories. Northern Ireland prices were substantially above the EU median price in the largest consuming sectors: in the small/medium category (26% higher), the medium category (30% higher) and in the large/very large category of non-domestic electricity consumers (39% higher).

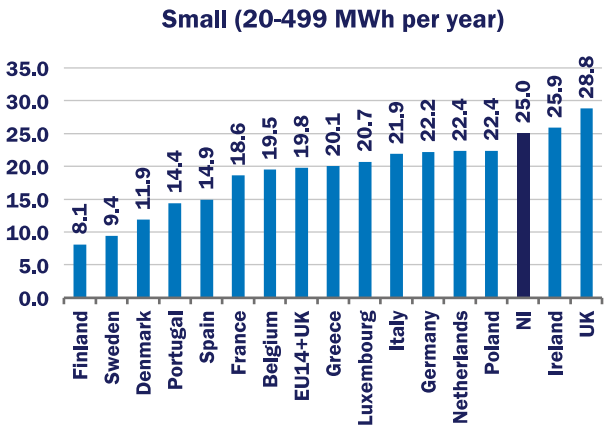
Ireland

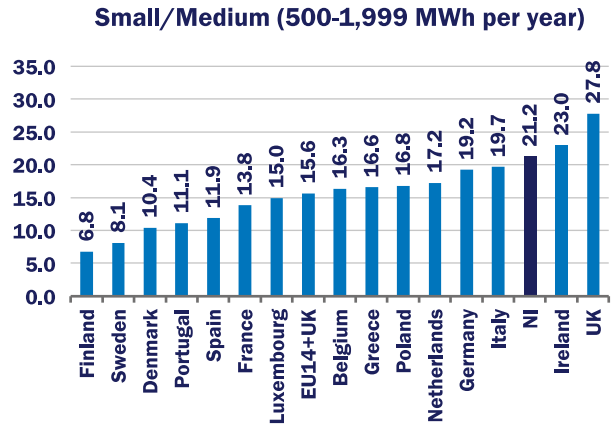
Northern Ireland prices were higher in the period January-June 2025 for the very small group but lower for all other categories compared to prices in Ireland. NI prices were 14% higher than prices in Ireland in the very small category (Table 6.4 showed that around 71% of non-domestic customers are in this category). Prices in all other groups were lower in NI though the differences were fairly small: in the small category (which accounts for around a quarter of Northern Ireland I&C customers) NI prices were 3% lower; they were 7% lower in the small/medium category, 2% lower in the medium category and 3% lower in the large/very large group.

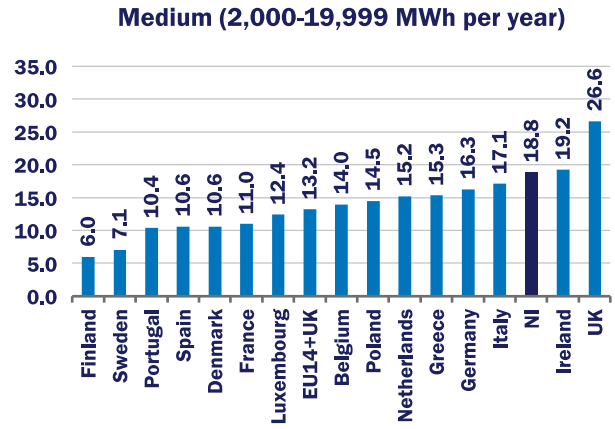
175 Some graphs do not include all 14 EU countries due to availability of data from Eurostat or DESNZ.
176 The Climate Change Levy (CCL) is a tax on electricity, gas and solid fuels delivered to non-domestic consumers. The rate changes every year. From 1 April 2025, it was 0.775p/kWh for electricity: see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change-levy-rates

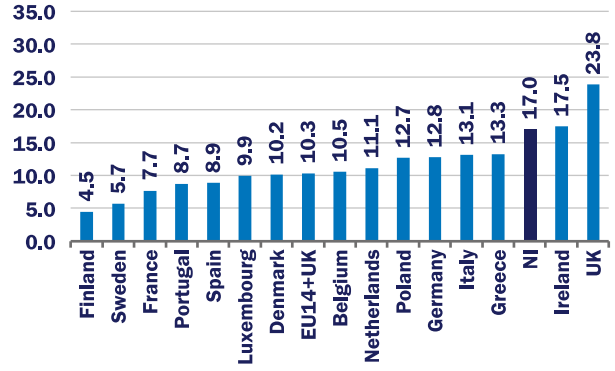
Chart 6.2 Non-Domestic Electricity Prices by Consumption Size Band (p/kWh)[177], January-June 2025











Price Differentials

	NI and UK	NI and EU14+UK Median
Very small	-21%	+24%
Small	-15%	+21%
Small/Medium	-31%	+26%
Medium	-41%	+30%
Large+ Very Large	-40%	+39%

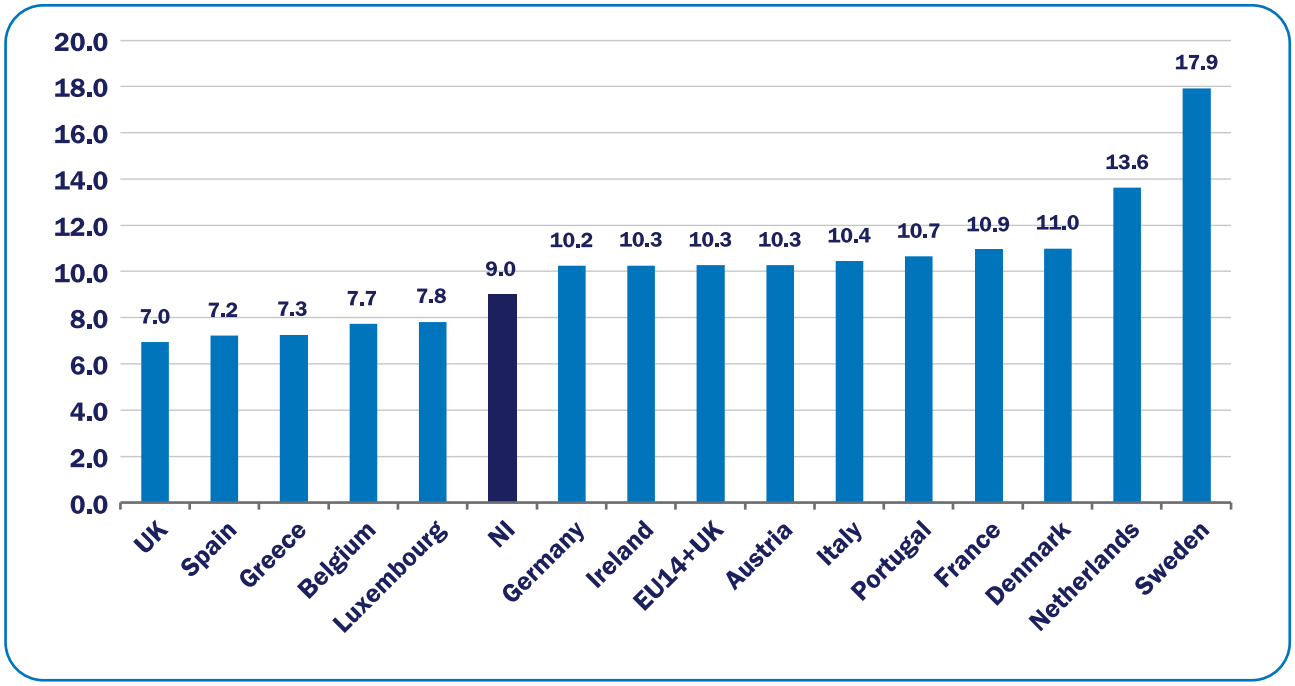
Source: Utility Regulator (https://www.uregni.gov.uk/remm-transparency-reports-2025)

177 All prices are pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh). Prices exclude VAT but include other taxes

Gas Prices

The Utility Regulator publishes information on domestic gas prices in Northern Ireland and compares these against other EU countries and this data is shown in the chart below.

Chart 6.3 Domestic Gas Prices Including Taxes in the EU14 plus UK for Medium Consumers (p/kWh), January-June 2025



Source: Utility Regulator (www.uregni.gov.uk/QREMM report Q4 2025)

Northern Ireland's average domestic gas price for medium customers[178] was some 1.3 pence per kWh (p/KWh) below the EU median in the first half of 2025. Prices were 14% (1.3p/kWh) lower than both Ireland and the EU14 plus UK median, but 23% (2.1p/kWh) higher than the UK average. Based on an average annual gas consumption of 9,242 kWh (for 2024 Gas Year as shown in Table 5.1 earlier), households paid approximately £117 less than if charged at EU average or Ireland rates, yet almost £190 more than if they were at UK average prices.

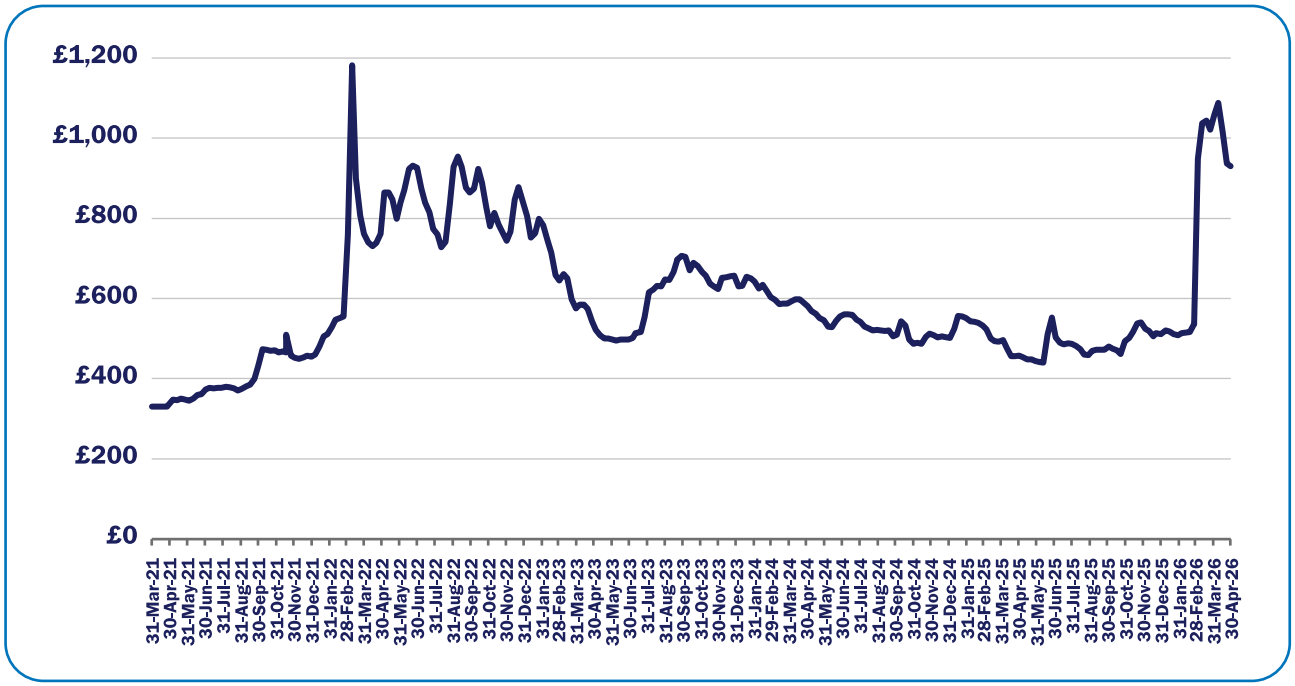
It should be noted that the tariffs shown for all countries in Chart 6.3 are subject to change as price increases or decreases can be announced by gas providers on a regular basis. For example, in September 2025, the Utility Regulator announced a decrease of 8.47% to the regulated tariffs for domestic and small business gas customers of SSE Airtricity Gas Supply (Greater Belfast and West areas) and a decrease of 7.86% for Firmus Energy (Ten Towns)[179].

178 Medium consumers are those with annual consumption between 5,557 -55,557 kWh. This consumption category reflects the majority of domestic customers in NI.
179 See https://www.uregni.gov.uk/news-centre/utility-regulator-concludes-review-regulated-electricity-and-gas-tariffs

Home Heating Oil Prices

The Consumer Council have, since 2021, published weekly updated home heating oil price data for Northern Ireland. The historical series for 900 litres of home heating oil is shown in the chart below.

Chart 6.4 Home Heating Oil, Average Price for 900 litres, Northern Ireland 2021-2026



Source: Consumer Council www.consumercouncil.org.uk/home-heating/price-checker/archive

As noted earlier (see Annex 6.1 for full breakdown), some 62% of households in Northern Ireland had oil heating either as their only system or alongside another type of central heating system. This level of dependency on heating oil, which is wholly imported, means Northern Ireland households are particularly vulnerable to unpredictable shocks to oil prices. The Consumer Council has published weekly data on the cost of home heating oil since March 2021. Chart 6.4 above shows the cost for 900 litres of home heating oil for the 5-year period to April 2026.

The chart shows a steep increase in the price of home heating oil between 2021 and early 2022. In March 2021, the average cost of 900 litres in Northern Ireland was around £330, but prices rose steadily through the year, reaching approximately £555 by February 2022, an increase of around 68%. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February 2022, caused oil prices to jump immediately[180], peaking at almost £1,200 for 900 litres in early March 2022, nearly four times the cost observed a year earlier. Although prices fell back relatively quickly from this peak, they remained historically high for much of 2022, averaging around £800 per 900 litres for most of the year.

180 See https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn02106/

Prices began to ease during 2023, falling to around £500 in mid-May 2023, before rising again later in the year to over £700 by October 2023. From late 2023 onwards, the overall trend was downward, with prices falling through 2024 and into 2025. By June 2025, the average price had declined to around £440 for 900 litres, the lowest level in almost four years. More recently, the chart shows new, very large, short-term increases linked to the conflict in the Middle East. Weekly prices rose from an average of around £520 for 900 litres of home heating oil in February 2026 to an average of over £1,000 for 900 litres in both March and April 2026. At the time of writing, weekly prices had fallen below £1,000 for 900 litres in late April 2026, perhaps suggesting some easing in price pressures at this time although uncertainty remains.

Road Fuel Prices

As shown in Table 5.1 in Chapter 5 earlier, over 23,000 GWh of petroleum products were consumed in Northern Ireland in 2023, with over 14,000 GWh of this for road transport use. Therefore, consumption of petroleum products is significant, and the price paid by consumers for these fuels is worthy of separate consideration.

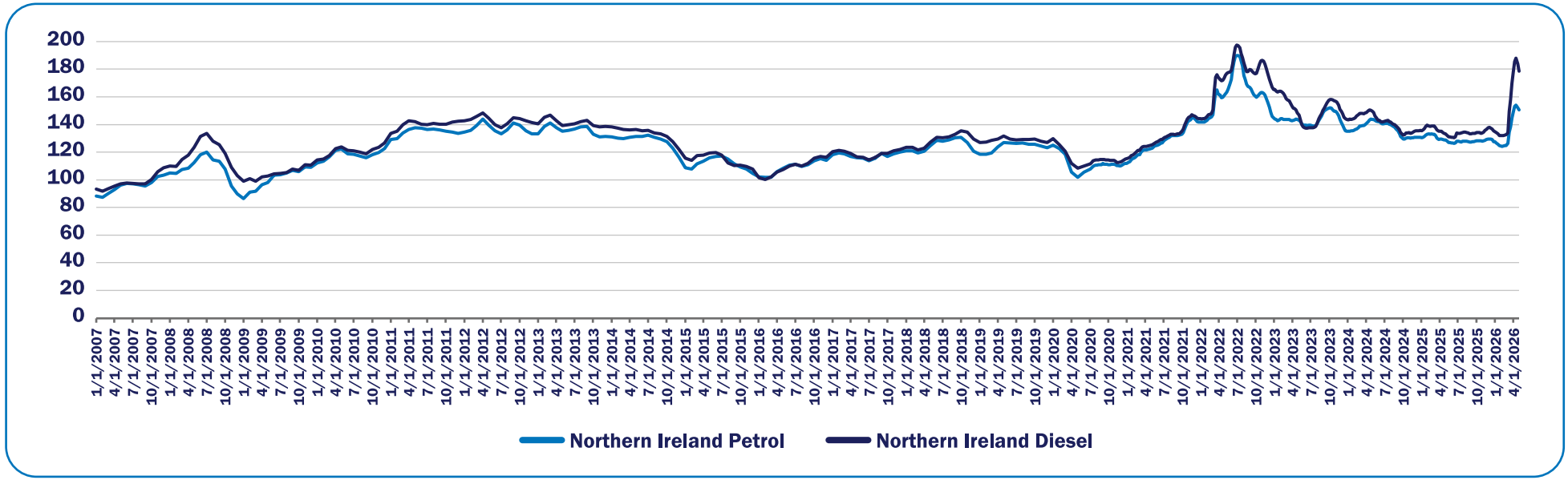
The Consumer Council publishes petrol and diesel price data for Northern Ireland on a weekly basis and also provide UK comparisons[181]. Historical data[182] (from 2007 onwards) is published by the Consumer Council and compared against UK prices and this is shown in Chart 6.5 below.

Price History

The latest figures for Northern Ireland show sharp rises in both petrol and diesel prices, linked to the conflict in the Middle East. Petrol prices increased quickly, from an average of about 124.5 pence per litre (ppl) in February 2026 to around 136 ppl in March, before rising to around 152 ppl in April 2026. Diesel prices rose even more steeply over the same period, averaging around 132 ppl in February 2026, before increasing to about 153 ppl in March, and then rising further to around 183 ppl in April 2026. This highlights the scale and speed of recent fuel price pressures.

181 See Consumer Council Fuel Price Checker Archive
182 See Consumer Council Transport Knowledge Hub. From July 2020, weekly figures are from Consumer Council data with UK comparative weekly data from DESNZ. From 2007 to 2020 price data for NI and UK is monthly and was taken from monthly reports by the AA. Analysis of the AA and DESNZ data at UK level shows a strong correlation with differences typically about 1% or less.

Chart 6.5 Price History of Petrol & Diesel in Northern Ireland (Pence per Litre), Jan 2007 to Apr 2026



Source: Consumer Council (www.consumercouncil.org.uk)

The chart shows a broadly similar long-run pattern for petrol and diesel prices in Northern Ireland, with diesel consistently priced above petrol throughout the period. From 2007 to around 2012 there is a clear upward trend, interrupted by a sharp drop around 2008–2009 that coincides with the global financial crisis. Prices then rise steadily into the early 2010s, before easing back somewhat between 2013 and 2016.

From around 2020 onwards, price volatility increases markedly. There is a noticeable dip in 2020, followed by a sharp and sustained rise through 2021 and into 2022, when both fuels reach their highest levels in the series (at 189.9 ppl for petrol and 197.5 ppl for diesel) with the conflict in Ukraine impacting prices[183]. After this peak, prices fall back during 2023 but remain well above pre-2020 levels, before stabilising through 2024–2025. The final part of the series shows a sudden spike, particularly for diesel, due to the conflict in the Middle East. Overall, the chart highlights not only long-term upward pressure on fuel prices, but also the growing scale of short-term shocks in more recent years.

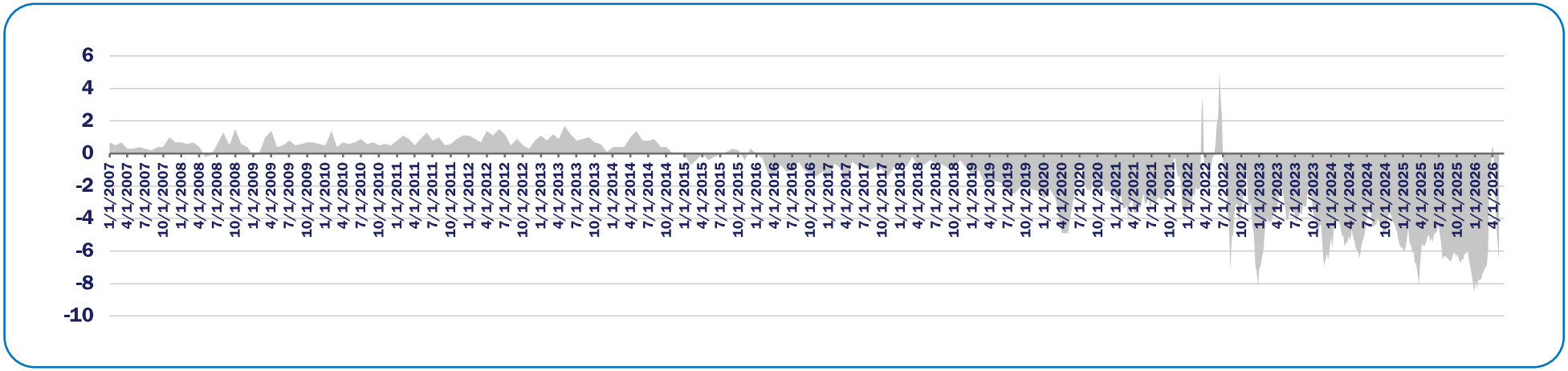
183 For example, see https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-60650159

Historic Comparison NI v UK

The charts below compare average petrol and diesel prices in Northern Ireland with the UK average. Up to the end of 2014, prices in Northern Ireland were generally higher than the UK average for both fuels. This changed in 2015, and since early 2016, Northern Ireland prices have been consistently lower than the UK average for both fuels, with only a few exceptions. Sharp increases in petrol and diesel prices linked to the Middle East conflict briefly pushed Northern Ireland prices above the UK average for a couple of weeks in late March and early April 2026. This divergence was short-lived, however, and by the end of April Northern Ireland petrol prices were 6.6ppl lower than the UK average, with diesel prices 11.3 ppl lower.

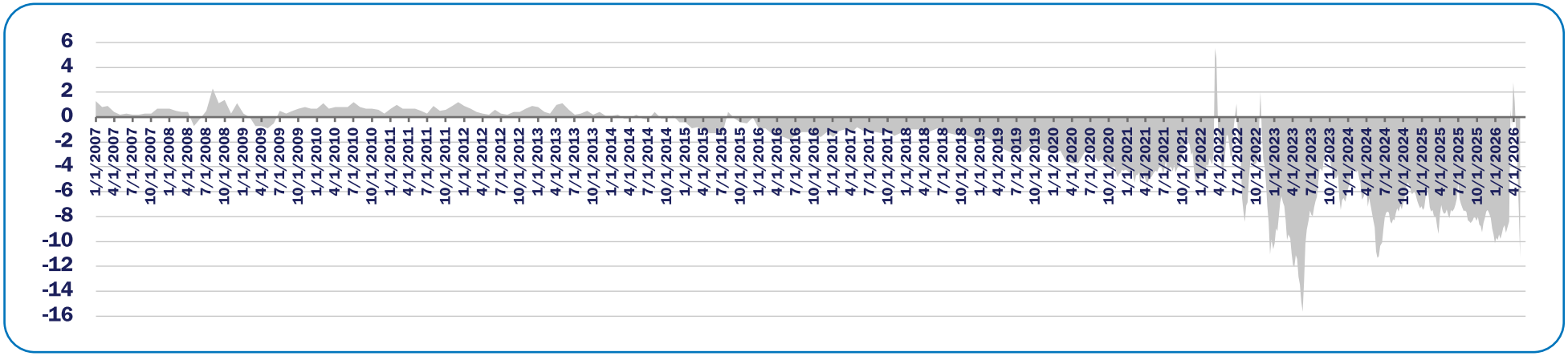
While weekly fuel price differences can be volatile, the charts show a widening gap over time, with Northern Ireland prices increasingly lower than the UK average. From 2015–2019, petrol prices moved from 0.1ppl to about 2ppl below the UK average, and diesel from 0.6ppl to 2.4ppl lower. Between 2020–2022, the gap grew to around 2.5ppl for petrol and 4ppl for diesel. By 2023–2025, the difference had increased again, with petrol averaging 5ppl less and diesel about 7.5ppl less than the UK average.

Chart 6.6 Differential in Petrol Prices between NI and UK (Pence per Litre), January 2007 to April 2026



Source: Consumer Council (www.consumercouncil.org.uk)

Chart 6.7 Differential in Diesel Prices between NI and UK (Pence per Litre), January 2007 to April 2026



Source: Consumer Council (www.consumercouncil.org.uk)

Annex 6.1 Full breakdown of NI Census 2021 Data by Central Heating Category

Central Heating Label	Count	%
One type of central heating: Oil	380,541	49.5%
One type of central heating: Mains gas	242,804	31.6%
One type of central heating: Electric (for example storage heaters)	12,171	1.6%
One type of central heating: Tank or bottled gas	5,888	0.8%
One type of central heating: Solid fuel (for example coal)	4,278	0.6%
One type of central heating: Renewable heating system	2,588	0.3%
One type of central heating: Wood (for example logs or waste wood)	784	0.1%
One type of central heating: Other	2,024	0.3%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil and solid fuel (for example coal)	47,874	6.2%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil, wood (for example logs or waste wood), and solid fuel (for example coal)	17,595	2.3%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil and wood (for example logs or waste wood)	14,527	1.9%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil and electric (for example storage heaters)	5,417	0.7%
Two or more types of central heating: Mains gas and electric (for example storage heaters)	5,347	0.7%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil and tank or bottled gas	3,706	0.5%
Two or more types of central heating: Mains gas and solid fuel (for example coal)	2,265	0.3%
Two or more types of central heating: Mains gas and wood (for example logs or waste wood)	2,169	0.3%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil, electric (for example storage heaters) and solid fuel (for example coal)	1,274	0.2%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil, electric (for example storage heaters), wood (for example logs or waste wood) and solid fuel (for example coal)	1,156	0.2%
Two or more types of central heating: Mains gas, wood (for example logs or waste wood) and solid fuel (for example coal)	1,007	0.1%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil and renewable heating system	844	0.1%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil, tank or bottled gas and solid fuel (for example coal)	836	0.1%
Two or more types of central heating: Oil and mains gas	795	0.1%
Two or more types of central heating: Other combinations	10,491	1.4%
No central heating	2,431	0.3%
TOTAL	**768,812**	**100.0%**

Source: NISRA (https://build.nisra.gov.uk)