

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



Commission Statement on
Equality in Northern Ireland

Standards of Living and Housing

Summary Report

5 of 6
Areas of Life

May 2024

This is the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's Statement on Equality in Northern Ireland. This document is a summary of data analysed for the area of life: **Standards of Living and Housing**. It is one of six documents to highlight the findings from analyses of data, to identify differences in equality outcomes, for a range of population indicators in six areas of life in Northern Ireland.

All six documents, which constitutes parts of the Statement, are drawn from the Commission's Framework for Measuring Equality in Northern Ireland. The Framework was developed through extensive consultation with those interested and representing equality groups in Northern Ireland, and through ongoing engagement for the development of population indicators and sources of evidence. The Framework will enable the Commission to identify differences in equality outcomes and to track those differences over time.

The Statement covers six broad areas of life in Northern Ireland:



Education



Employment



**Participation
in Public life**



**Health and
Social Care**



**Standards of
Living and
Housing**



**Communities that
are Welcoming
and Inclusive**

The outcome area identified for **Standard of Living and Housing** is as follows, with the **associated priority areas**:

There is equality of opportunity in access and support for everyone in Northern Ireland to an adequate standard of living and to adequate housing.

- **Standard of Living:** People in Northern Ireland have an adequate standard of living including nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, social security, social services and utilities irrespective of equality ground.
- **Access to Housing:** People in Northern Ireland have access to an appropriate, sustainable, and affordable home.
- **Housing/Independent Living:** Everyone can enjoy living conditions that promote independence, dignity, and self-respect irrespective of equality ground.

Where possible, the findings presented in this Statement highlight the observable differences **across equality groups** from the overall values recorded for entire samples of population from surveys and administrated datasets. Furthermore, and where possible, the Statement also highlights the key differences between equality groups **within** their respective **equality grounds**.

The Indicator and Data Status for the Priority Areas

Standard of Living:

Data Status: All 8 Equality Grounds Analysed; Family Resources Survey – 2021-22; Department for Communities

Across all equality grounds, where data was available in 2021-2022, those respondents more likely to experience both absolute and relative poverty in Northern Ireland were divorced/separated respondents, those who were widowed, respondents with a disability, Nationalists, respondents with dependents, and respondents in the age group of 50-64. Those who were single or Catholic were also more likely to experience relative poverty.

The Family Resource Survey defines Absolute Poverty as:

“An individual is considered to be in absolute poverty if they are living in a household with an equivalised income below 60% of the (inflation adjusted) UK median income in 2010/11. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are seeing their incomes rise in real terms”.

and Relative Poverty as:

“An individual is considered to be in relative poverty if they are living in a household with an equivalised income below 60% of UK median income in the year in question. This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the population as a whole”.

Access to Housing:

Data Status: 7 Equality Grounds Analysed; Housing Statistics - 2022; Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

Data was obtained from the NIHE Waiting List - 2020, 2021, & 2022¹. The data included applicant households with 30+ points – these households were considered to be under housing stress. The Waiting List data is a snapshot of the waiting list as it was on the last day of a specified quarter. The data provided by the NIHE, presented in this report on a whole (entire) household level was by the following equality grounds: Religion, Household's with Dep Children, Household's with Wheelchair Users, Household's requiring Ground Floor Accommodation, and Ethnic Origin. This report presents the equality ground data for age, sex and marital status for the 1st applicant in the household.

Where data was available, for first applicants in the household, the equality groups with the greater percentage shares within their respective equality grounds, of households applying for housing and considered to be in housing stress were those belonging to females, those in group age of 30-39, and those of unknown marital status, followed by single applicants (33%).

For households as a whole, the equality groups with the greater percentage shares within their respective equality grounds, of households applying for housing and considered to be in housing stress were those belonging to Catholic households, households with no dependents white households, households with a non-wheelchair users (98%) and households with a no ground floor required.

Housing/Independent Living:

Data Status: To Be Determined.

¹ As stated by the data provider "It is important to note the GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018 regarding the potential risk of identifying individuals and individual households. Guidance from NISRA suggests that equality monitoring information should not be disclosed in sensitive cases where individuals or individual households could be identified. Also, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) 'Anonymisation: Managing Data Protection Risk' Code of Practice states 'where less than 10 responses have been given to an answer that identifies something factual, all variables relating to that question have been suppressed'. However, 'it should be noted that attitudinal questions are not bound by this rule, in addition to responses of 'Don't know', 'Refused', 'Other' or similar. As the information provided is considered sensitive some statistical disclosure controls may have been placed on the tables with the omission of data in cases where there are less than ten Applicants. Also based on the ICO guidance highlighted above the 'Refused'; category has not been anonymised".



Priority Area:

Standard of Living

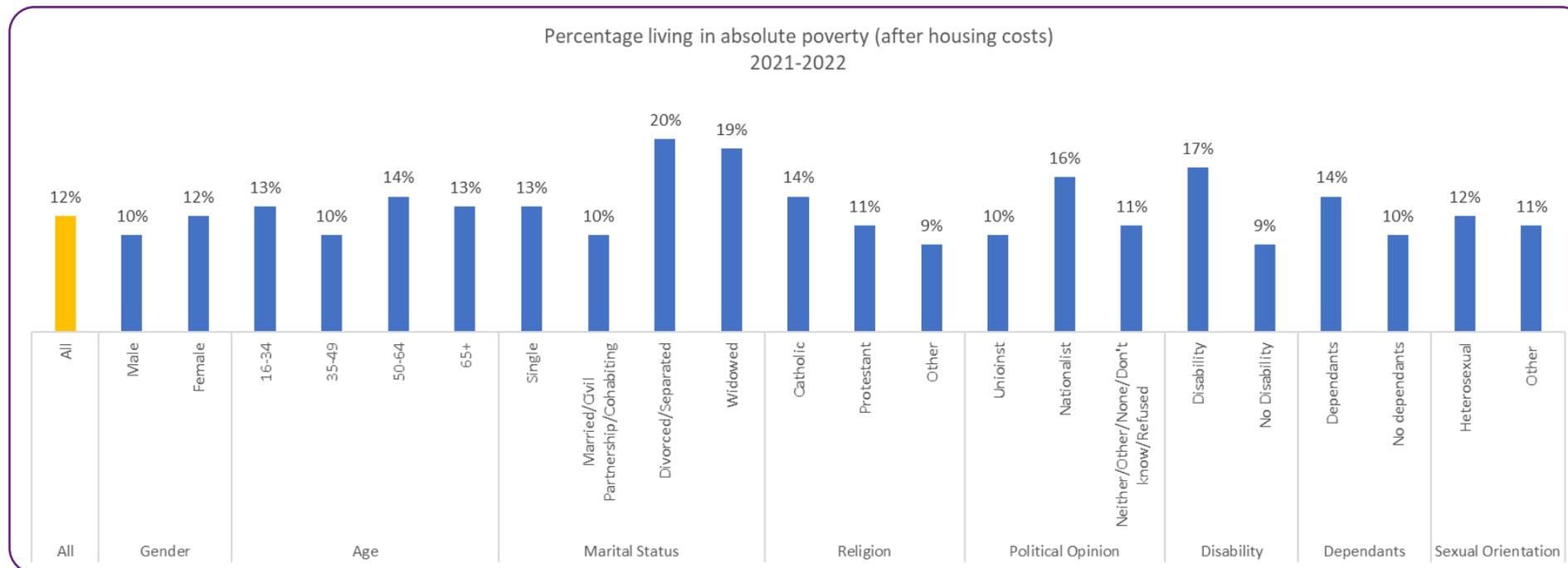
People in Northern Ireland have an adequate standard of living including nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, social security, social services and utilities irrespective of equality ground.

Population Indicator: Percentage of people living in households below 60% of contemporary median income after housing costs (Percentage of people living in Absolute Poverty after housing costs).

Data Source: Family Resources Survey

Data Provider: Department for Communities

Across all the equality grounds, where data was available in 2021-2022, those respondents **more likely to experience absolute poverty** were divorced/separated respondents (20%), those who were widowed (19%), respondents with a disability (17%), Nationalist respondents (16%), respondents with dependents (14%), and respondents in the age group of 50-64 (14%) compared to the overall rate of 12%.

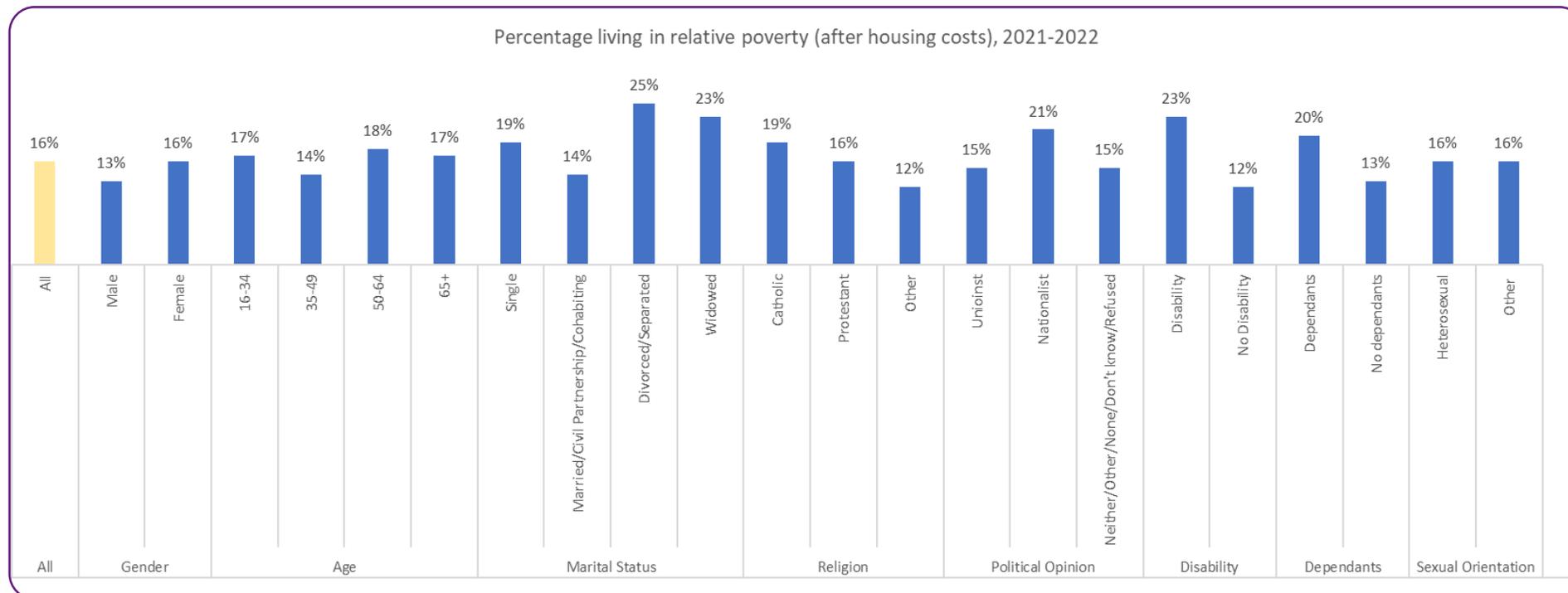


Population Indicator: Percentage of people living in households below 60% of contemporary median income after housing costs (Percentage of people living in Relative Poverty after housing costs)

Data Source: Family Resources Survey

Data Provider: Department for Communities

Across all the equality grounds, where data was available in 2021-2022, those respondents **more likely to live in relative poverty** were divorced/separated (25%), widowed (23%), single (19%) respondents, respondents with a disability (23%), Nationalist respondents (21%), respondents with dependents (20%), Catholic respondents (19%), and respondents in the age group of 50-64 (18%) compared to the overall rate of 16%.





Priority Area:

Access to Housing

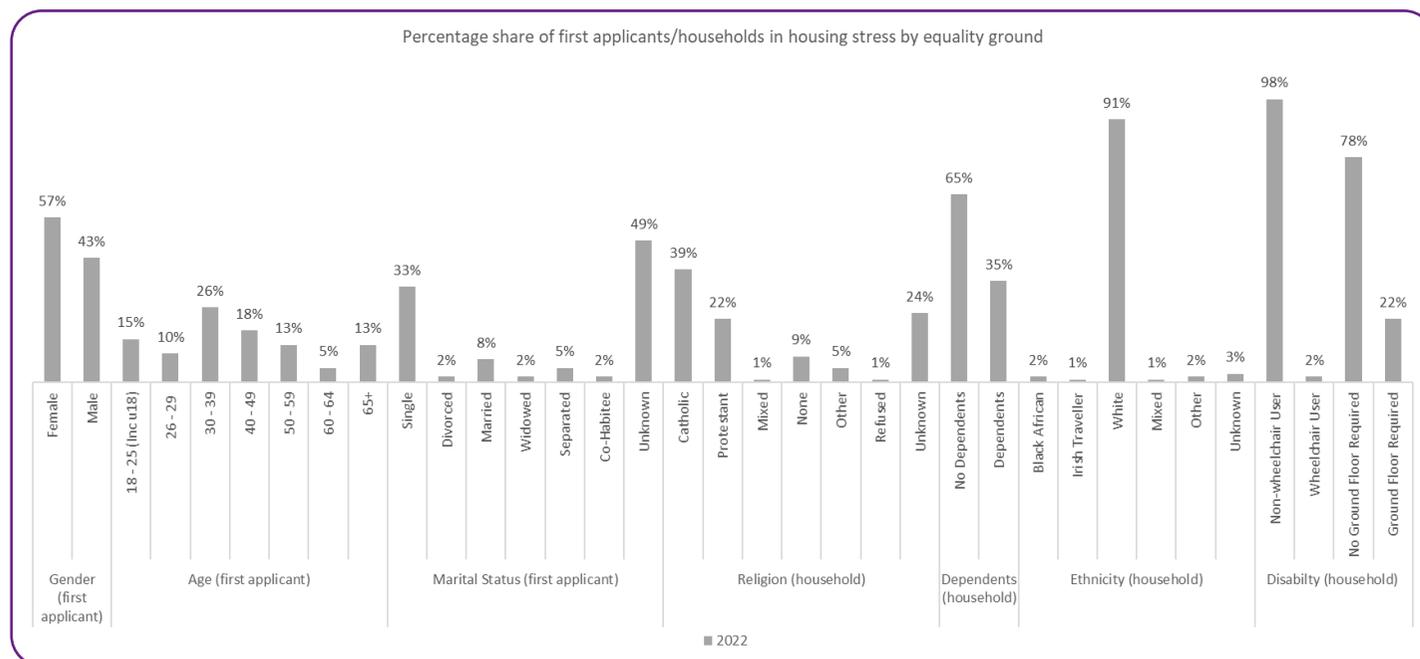
People in Northern Ireland have access to an appropriate, sustainable, and affordable home.

Population Indicator: Percentage of households in housing stress by equality ground.

Data Source: Housing Statistics

Data Provider: Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

Where data was available, for first applicants in the household, the equality groups **with the greater percentage shares within their respective equality grounds**, of households applying for housing and considered to be in housing stress were those belonging to: females (57%) compared to males (43%); those in group age of 30-39 (26%) compared with other age groups 26-29 (10%), 40-49 (18%), 50-59 (13%), 60-64 (5%) and 65+ (13%); and those of unknown marital status (49%) followed by single applicants (33%) compared who were divorced (2%), married (8%), widowed (2%), separated (5%) and cohabiting (2%). For households as a whole, the equality groups with the greater percentage shares within their respective equality grounds, of households applying for housing and considered to be in housing stress were those belonging to: Catholic households (39%) compared to Protestant households (22%), mixed households (1%), other (5%), none (9%), refused (1%) and unknown (24%), households with no dependents (65%) compared with households with dependents (35%); white households (91%) compared with households of other ethnicities (all other ethnic groups <3% each); households with a non-wheelchair users (98%) compared with households with a wheelchair user (2%), and households with a no ground floor required (78%) compared with household with a ground floor required (22%).





Priority Area:

Housing/Independent Living

Everyone can enjoy living conditions that promote independence, dignity, and self-respect irrespective of equality ground.

Population Indicator: TBD

Data Source: TBD

Data Provider: TBD



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