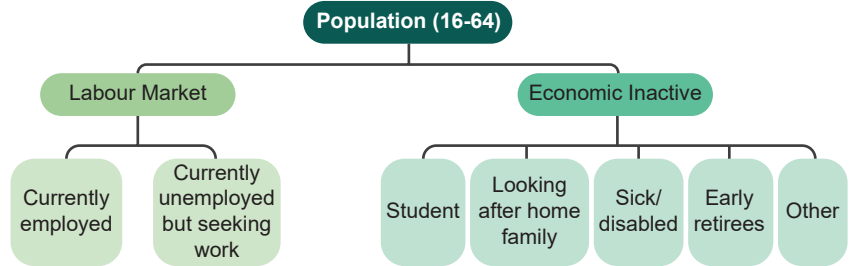


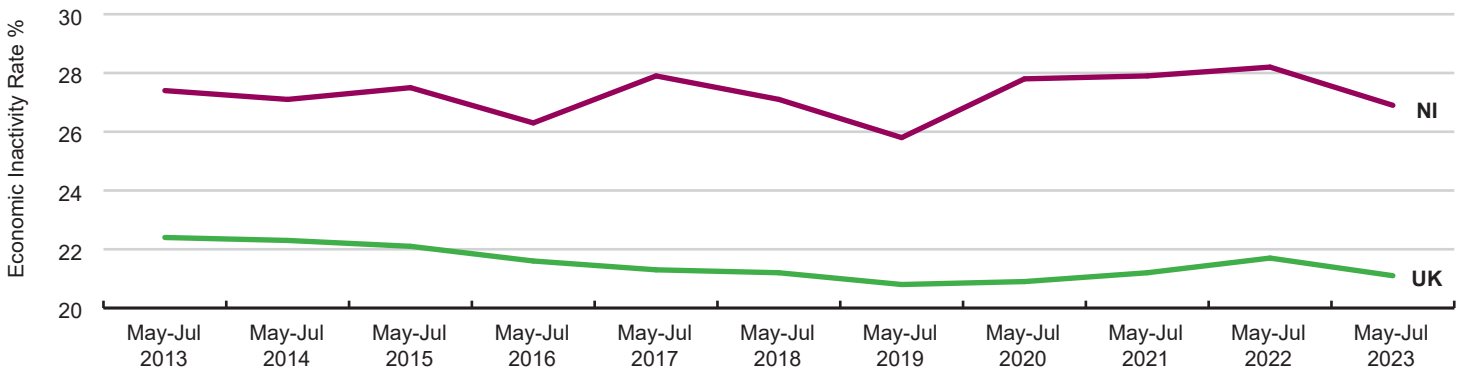
Economic Inactivity 2023

Source: Labour Force Survey, NISRA and ONS (September 2023)

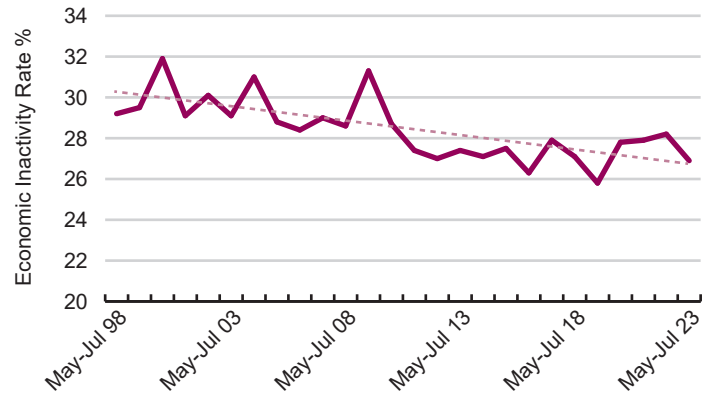
The economic inactivity rate is the percentage of the population (aged 16-64) who are not involved in the labour market and are not currently seeking employment. It includes all those who are looking after a home full-time, are sick or disabled, are students and are early retirees.



Economic Inactivity NI vs UK 2013-2023



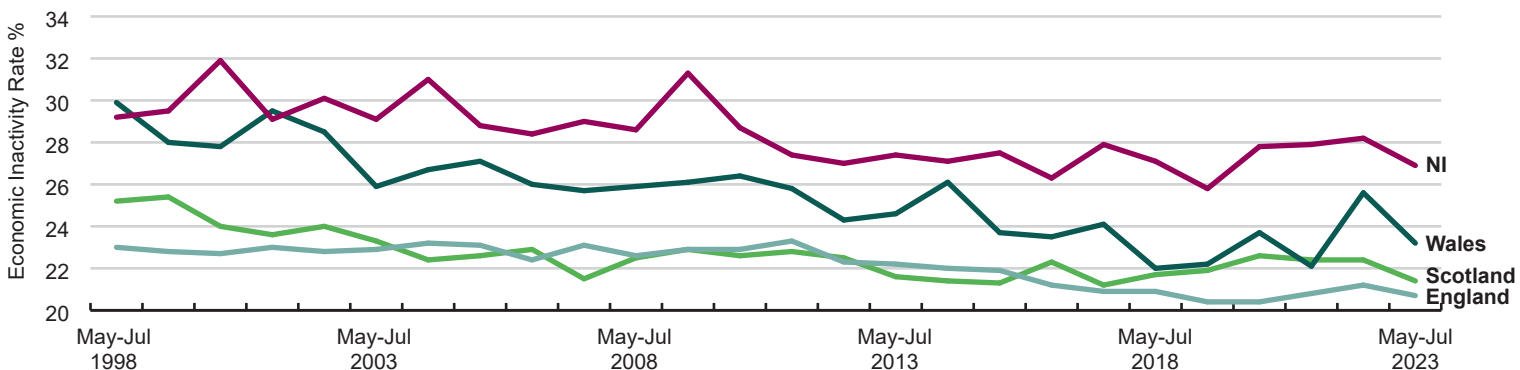
Economic Inactivity NI 1998-2023



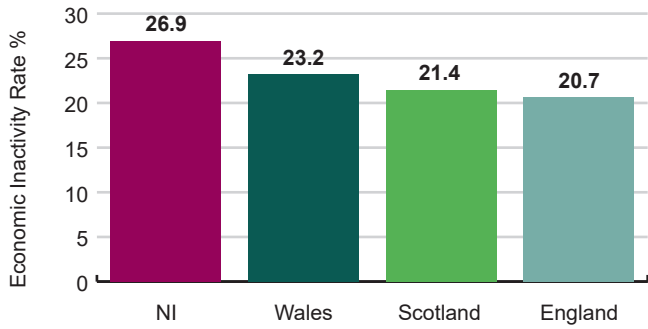
Northern Ireland's economic inactivity rate has historically been consistently higher than the UK average. While still higher than the UK average, economic inactivity in NI has recorded a consistent downward trend over the last 25 years, falling from 29.2% in July 1998 to 26.9% in July 2023.

These declines are consistent with trends recorded across the other UK countries, all of which have recorded falling inactivity rates, and are therefore unlikely to be a product of NI specific policies.

Economic Inactivity in UK Countries 1998-2023



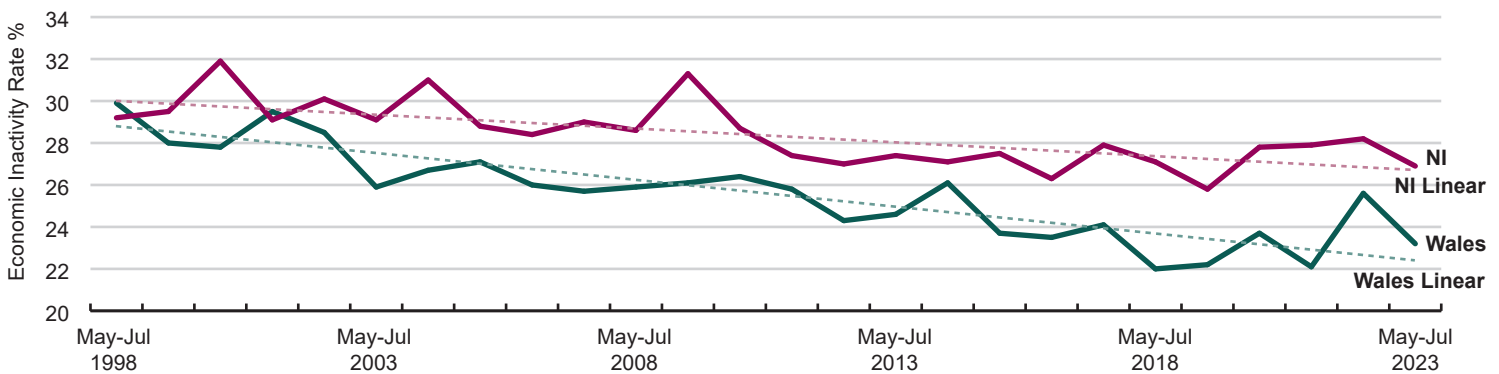
Economic Inactivity (16-64) May-July 2023



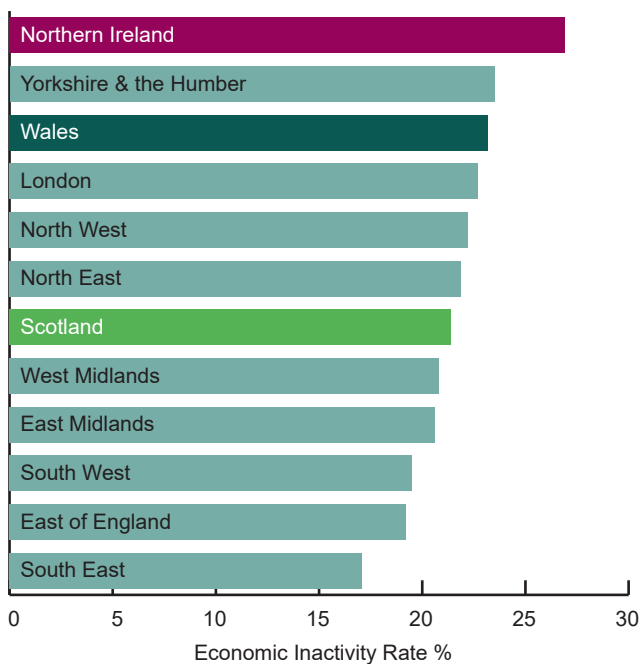
The NI economic inactivity rate is the highest among the four constituent UK countries.

In analysing potential opportunities to lower the economic inactivity rate, there may be value in studying the performance of the Welsh economy over the last 25 years. Economic inactivity in Wales has recorded the largest decline among the UK countries over this period, a 23% drop. This compares with 8% for Northern Ireland despite the two economies having similar levels of inactivity in 1998, as the chart below demonstrates.

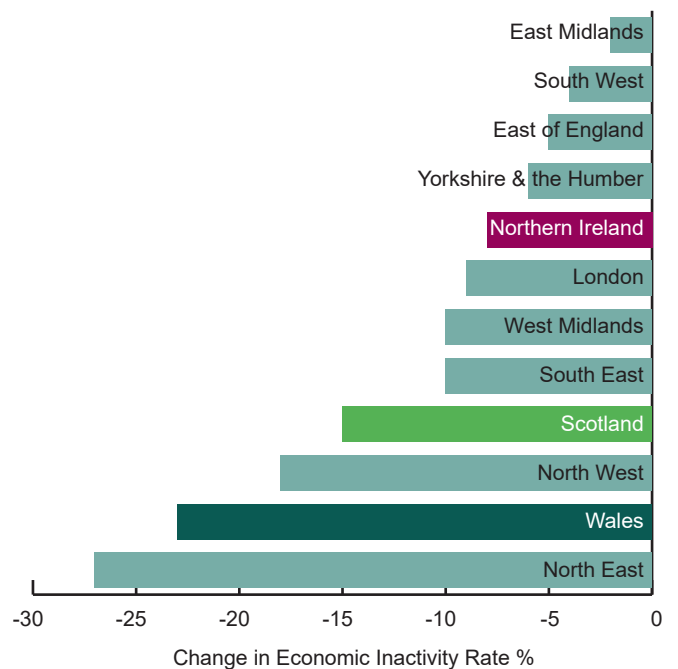
Economic Inactivity in UK Countries 1998-2023



Economic Inactivity by Region May-July 2023



Economic Inactivity by Region Change 1998-2023



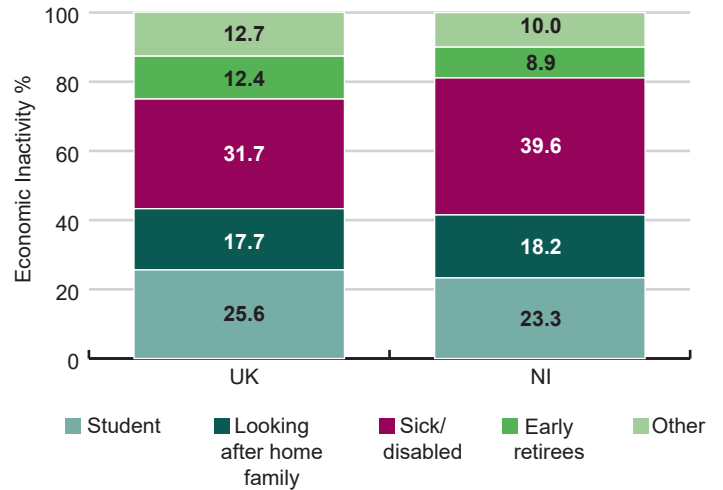
NI economic inactivity is the highest among the 12 UK regions, almost 10 percentage points ahead of the South-East of England.

The three largest falls in economic inactivity over the period 1998 to 2023 were in the North East, Wales and the North West. Of particular interest to NI analysis is the North East and Wales, both of which had a higher inactivity rate than NI in 1998, but have fallen to levels more consistent with the UK average over the 25 year time period.

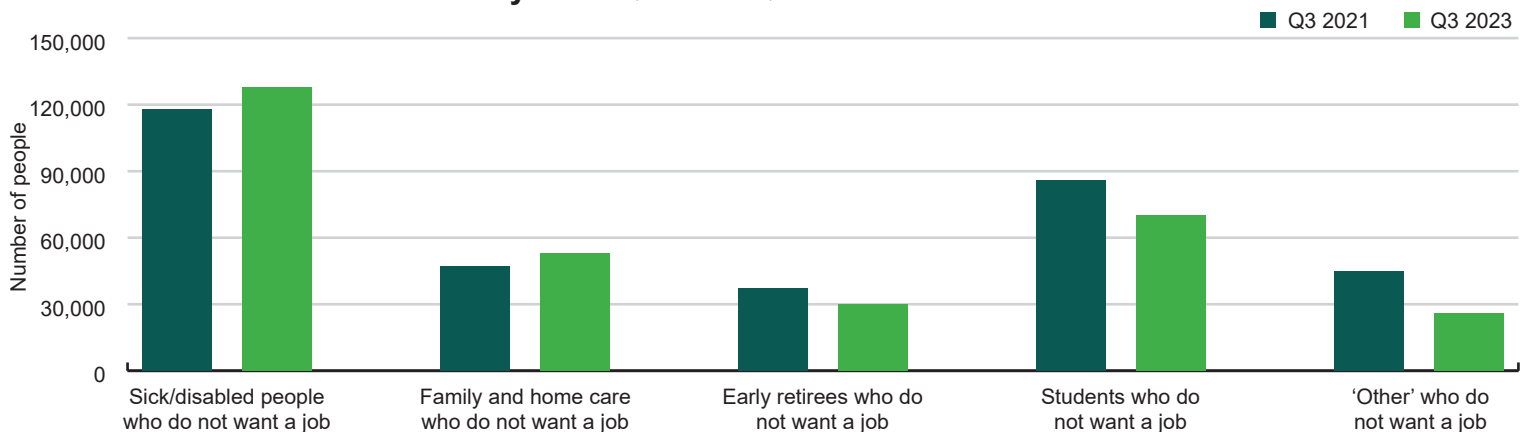
Reasons for Economic Inactivity NI vs UK Apr-Jun 2023

NI has a notably larger percentage of people out of the workforce due to sickness/disability.

- People who are economically inactive due to sickness or disability account for 39.6% (31.7% UK) of economically inactive and 10.6% (6.7% UK) of the total NI population (16-64).
- People who are economically inactive due to family and home care account for 18.2% (17.7% UK) of economically inactive and 4.9% (3.8% UK) of the NI population (16-64).
- Students account for 23.3% (25.6% UK) of economically inactive and 6.2% (5.5% UK) of the NI population (16-64).



Reasons for Economic Inactivity in NI Q3 2021-Q3 2023



The number of economically inactive in NI due to sickness/disability and family and home care have increased by 8% and 13% respectively over the last two years.

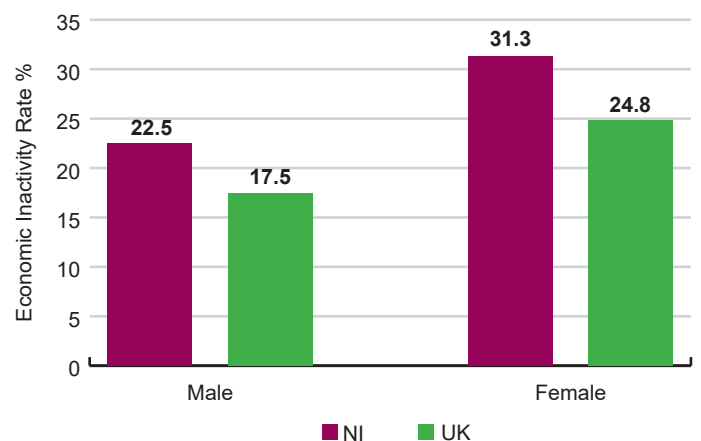
The number of economically inactive in NI due to early retirement and the number of economically inactive students have both declined by 19%.

Economic Inactivity by Gender (16-64) NI vs UK May-Jul 2023

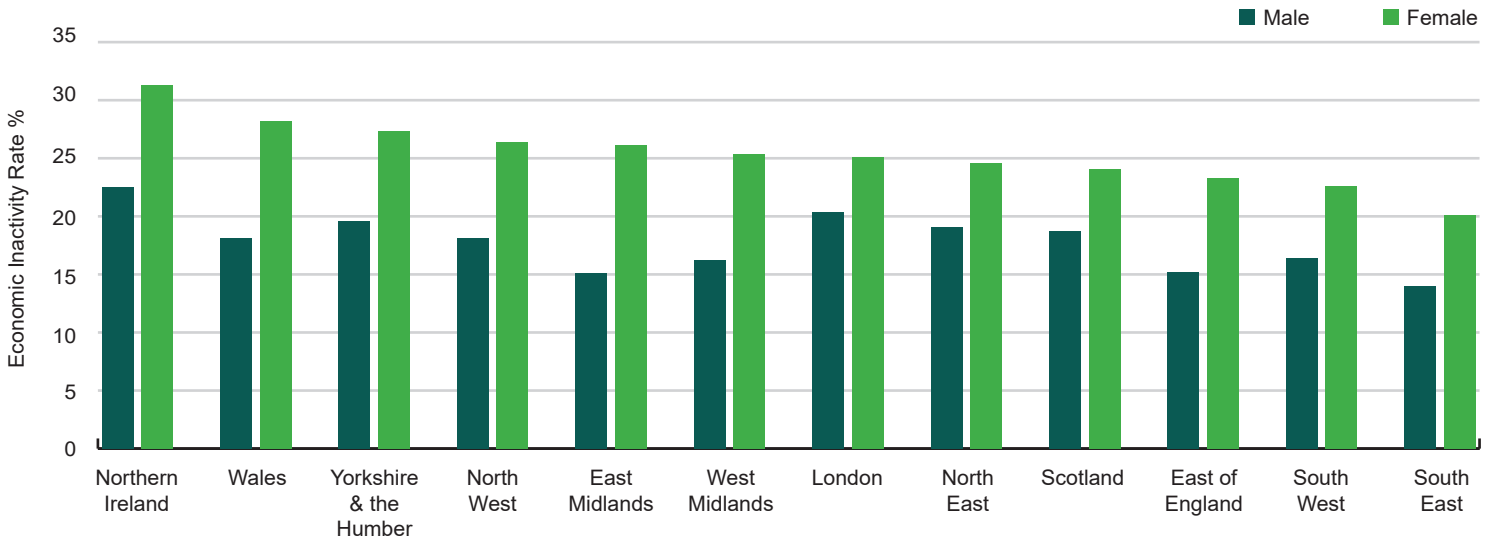
The gap between the NI and the UK economic inactivity rates differs by gender.

- The NI inactivity rate for men was 28% higher than the equivalent UK rate in May-Jul 2023 (22.5% Vs 17.5%).
- The NI inactivity rate for women was 26% higher than the equivalent UK rate in May-Jul 2023 (31.3% Vs 24.8%).

The chart below looks at inactivity by gender and region and shows that economic inactivity among both men and women in NI is the highest among the 12 UK regions at 31.3% and 22.5% respectively.



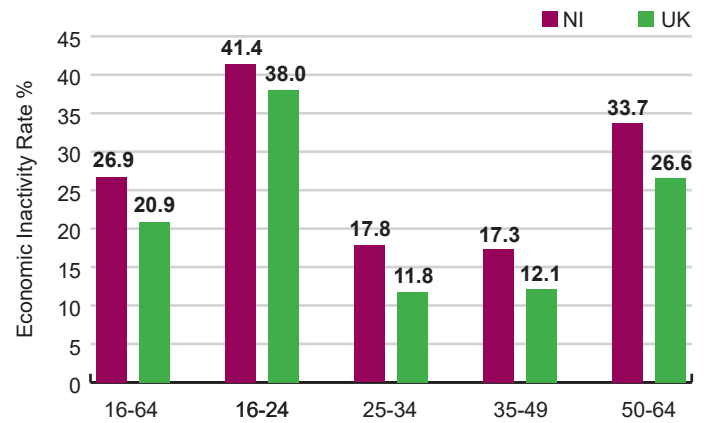
Economic Inactivity by Gender and Region May-Jul 2023



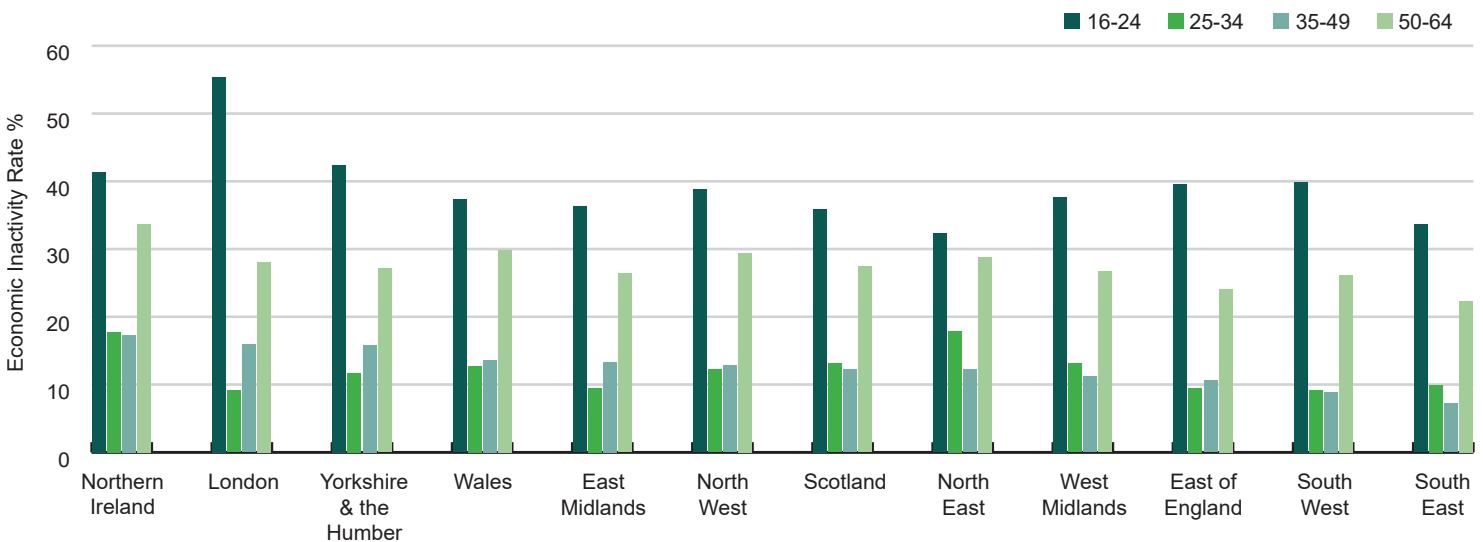
Economic Inactivity by Age NI vs UK Q2 2023*

Economic inactivity in NI is notably higher than the UK average among those aged 25 to 49. While overall the NI economic inactivity rate was 28% higher than the UK rate in Q2 2023, among 25 to 34 year olds it is 51% higher and among 35 to 49 year olds it is 43% higher.

The gap among 25 to 49 year olds also holds true when comparing among the 12 UK regions. NI has the second highest inactivity rate among 25 to 34 year olds, after the North East and the highest inactivity rate among 35 to 49 year olds.

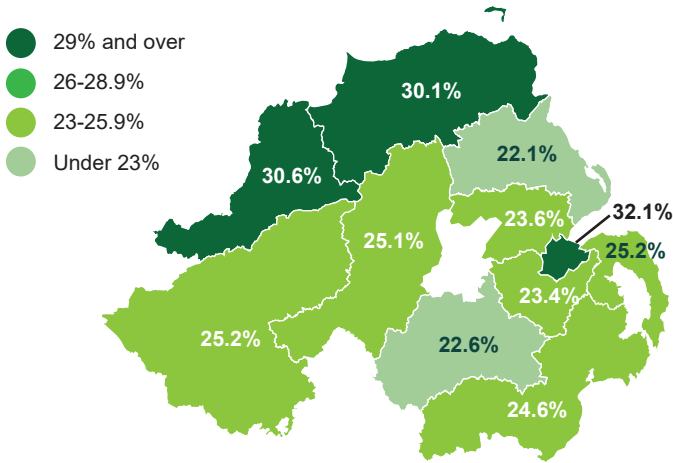


Economic Inactivity by Age and Region Q2 2023*



*Please note due to data availability these data refer to the period April to June 2023 rather than the period May to July 2023 as above.

Economic Inactivity by Council Area 2022

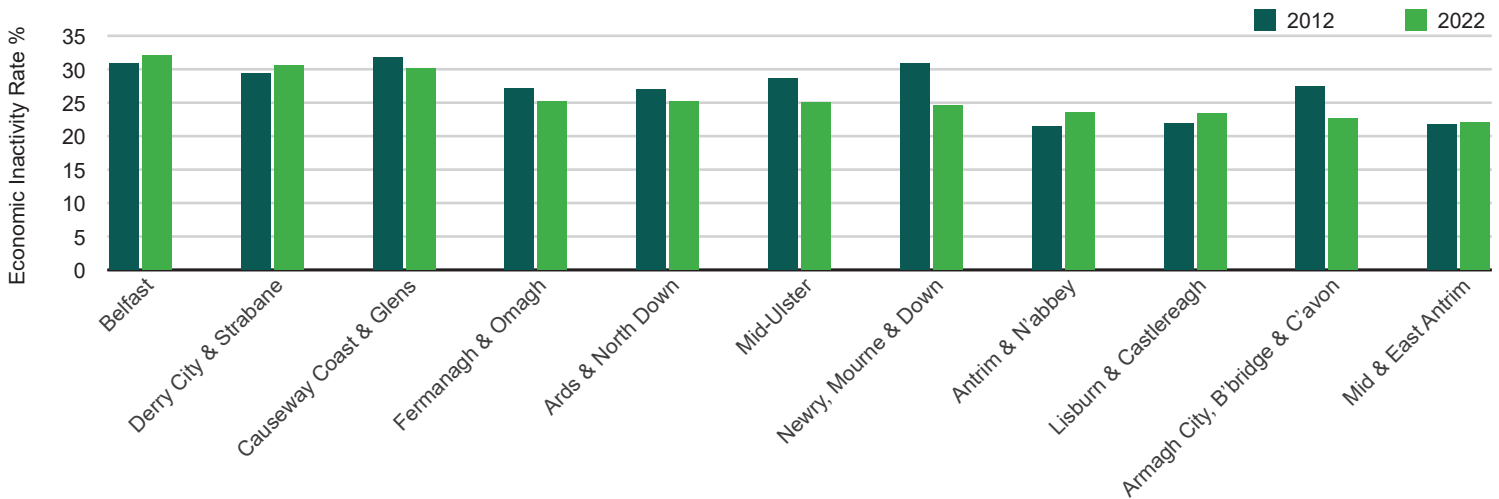


Among DCAs economic inactivity is the highest in Belfast at 32.1% and lowest in Mid and East Antrim at 22.1%. Economic inactivity in the two North West DCAs is also above 30%.

The largest decline in economic inactivity was recorded in Newry Mourne and Down which has declined from 30.9% in 2012 to 24.6% in 2022.

Among PCAs Belfast West has the highest economic inactivity at 40.1% while the lowest is Upper Bann at 21.6%.

Economic Inactivity Rate by Council 2012 and 2022



Economic Inactivity by Parliamentary Constituency Area 2022

