**Wellbeing in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon**

**2021/22**

The ‘Wellbeing in Northern Ireland’ report was published on 9 November 2022. The report uses data from the 2021/22 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) and provides estimates for people aged 16 and over in Northern Ireland across four areas which reflect wellbeing: Loneliness, Self-Efficacy, Personal Wellbeing (Life Satisfaction, Worthwhile, Happiness and Anxiety) and Locus of Control.

Data is broken down by a number of different categories including Local Government District (LGD). This summary report will present the data at this level only and focus on the findings for the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough.

**Loneliness**

Feelings of loneliness can negatively impact a person’s health, wellbeing and overall quality of life[[1]](#footnote-1). The measure reported in this study is based on the question ‘How often do you feel lonely?’ so it will measure the frequency with which people report feeling lonely but not the level of loneliness they experience.

There are five response options to the question - ‘often/always’, ‘some of the time’, ‘occasionally’, ‘hardly ever’ and ‘never’ and results are reported based on this five category split. Figure 1 presents the results for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon and Northern Ireland overall. In 2021/22, 6.3% of respondents in the borough reported feeling lonely often / always compared to 6.1% in Northern Ireland overall. Approximately 1 in 5 respondents in the borough reported that they never felt lonely compared to 1 in 4 in Northern Ireland overall.

Figure 1: Frequency of loneliness in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon and Northern Ireland, 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA.

Figure 2 presents the proportion of respondents who reported feeling lonely often / always or some of the time by LGD. As we can see, those living in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon reported higher proportions of loneliness than all other LGD’s except Belfast. With 23.5% of people reporting that they feel lonely often/always or some of the time, this is above the average for Northern Ireland of 20.2%

Figure 2: Proportion who reported feeling lonely ‘often/always’ or ‘some of the time’ by LGD, 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA.

The Wellbeing in Northern Ireland report was produced for the first time in 2020/21 and Table 1 below shows how the frequency with which people report feeling lonely has changed over the year across each of the LGD’s and Northern Ireland overall.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | % Change |
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 20.1% | 15.1% | -5.0% |
| Ards & North Down | 15.8% | 16.1% | 0.3% |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 21.6% | 23.5% | 1.9% |
| Belfast City | 21.9% | 25.0% | 3.1% |
| Causeway Coast & Glens | 20.1% | 22.8% | 2.7% |
| Derry City & Strabane | 21.8% | 20.7% | -1.1% |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | \* | 20.9% | \* |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 15.4% | 20.7% | 5.3% |
| Mid & East Antrim | 17.3% | 17.6% | 0.3% |
| Mid Ulster | 21.4% | 16.6% | -4.8% |
| Newry, Mourne & Down | 19.1% | 18.2% | -0.9% |
| Northern Ireland | 19.8% | 20.2% | 0.4% |

Table 1: Proportion who reported feeling lonely ‘often/always’ or ‘some of the time’ by LGD, 2020/21 & 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA. Note: (\*) denotes that the sample size is too small (less than 100) to allow sufficient analysis of this category.

Reports of feelings of loneliness have increased in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon by 1.9% since 2020/21 which is much higher than the overall increase in Northern Ireland of just 0.4%. There were increases reported in six of the eleven LGD’s while significant decreases were reported for Mid Ulster and Antrim and Newtownabbey.

**Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy describes a person’s beliefs / confidence in their capabilities to influence events that affect their lives. Generally, people with high self-efficacy have more confidence in their capabilities and will make sustained efforts to achieve their goals while people with low self-efficacy often doubt their capabilities, are less ambitious and give up on their aims when challenged. Self-efficacy is a key part of modern public policy and it is believed increasing self-efficacy in specific groups can lead to positive social change in communities[[2]](#footnote-2).

A statement-based survey tool is used to measure self-efficacy. Respondents are presented with five statement questions with each requiring a numerical score from one to five. The overall self-efficacy score is presented as a total of the five statement questions with an overall score between 5 (the lowest score) and 25 (the highest score). Scores between 5 and 17 are considered low while a score of 18 and over is considered high. The five self-efficacy statement questions are as follows:

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
3. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
4. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
5. No matter what comes my way, I’m usually able to handle it.

Figure 3: Average self-efficacy scores by LGD, 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA.

In 2021/22, the average (mean) score for self-efficacy in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon was 19.6 which is above the NI average of 19.4 and the third highest of the eleven LGD’s. Derry City & Strabane reported the lowest score of the LGD’s however, overall, all LGD’s in Northern Ireland scored over 18 which is considered high and implies that Northern Ireland, on average, has high self-efficacy.

Between 2020/21 and 2021/22, Newry, Mourne and Down was the only LGD to report an increase in their self-efficacy score. In Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, the self-efficacy score fell from 19.8 in 2020/21 to 19.6 in 2021/22.

**Low self-efficacy**

As noted previously, a total score between 5 and 17 is categorised as low self-efficacy. In 2021/22, the proportion of people with low self-efficacy in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon was slightly lower than the NI average at 17.2% having increased from 14.8% in 2020/21. When ranked from lowest to highest, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon is ranked in sixth place of all LGD’s. Lisburn & Castlereagh reported the lowest proportion of people with low self-efficacy at just 11.2% while Mid and East Antrim had the highest proportion of people with low self-efficacy at 22.6% in 2021/22. In Northern Ireland overall, the proportion of the population with low self-efficacy was reported at 17.6% which was an increase from 15.0% in 2020/21, signifying worse wellbeing for this measure.

While all other LGD’s reported an increase in the proportion of people with low self-efficacy between 2020/21 and 2021/22, in Newry, Mourne and Down, the proportion dropped significantly from 21.8% in 2020/21 which was the highest of all LGD’s, to 13.5% in 2021/22 which was the second lowest.

Figure 4: Proportion of the population with low self-efficacy by LGD, 2020/21 & 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA. Note: There is no estimate for Fermanagh & Omagh for 2020/21 as the sample size was too small (less than 100) to allow sufficient analysis of this category.

**Personal Wellbeing**

**Wellbeing is one of the strongest determinants of an individual’s health**[[3]](#footnote-3)**. Personal**wellbeing is a measure of how satisfied people are with their lives, their sense that what they do in life is worthwhile, and their levels of happiness and anxiety. NISRA has participated in the Measuring National Wellbeing Programme since it was established in 2010 and incorporate the following questions in the CHS:

* overall, how **satisfied** are you with your life nowadays?
* overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are **worthwhile**?
* overall, how **happy** did you feel yesterday?
* overall, how **anxious** did you feel yesterday?

Respondents are asked to score each question on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely” which means that a higher score indicates better wellbeing in relation to ‘life satisfaction’, ‘worthwhile’ and ‘happiness’, and a lower score indicates better wellbeing for ‘anxiety’. The thresholds for personal wellbeing under each of the measures are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Life Satisfaction, Worthwhile and Happiness Scores | | Anxiety Scores | |
| Response | **Label** | **Response** | **Label** |
| 0-4 | Low | 0-1 | Very low |
| 5-6 | Medium | 2-3 | Low |
| 7-8 | High | 4-5 | Medium |
| 9-10 | Very High | 6-10 | High |

Table 2: Threshold labels within each of the Personal wellbeing questions.

The estimates of reported ‘life satisfaction’, feeling that things done in life are ‘worthwhile’. ‘happiness’ and ‘anxiety’ are included in the following sections.

**Life Satisfaction**

In 2021/22, the average (mean) life satisfaction score for residents of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon borough was 8.0 having increased from 7.8 in 2020/21. As per Table 2, a score of 8 is considered a high score and thus indicates an increase in wellbeing for this measure within the borough. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon and Ards & North Down had the highest life satisfaction scores of all eleven LGD’s in 2021/22. Belfast City was the only LGD to report a lower life satisfaction score in 2021/22.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 7.3 | 7.7 |
| Ards & North Down | 7.7 | 8.0 |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 7.8 | 8.0 |
| Belfast City | 7.5 | 7.3 |
| Causeway Coast & Glens | 7.6 | 7.8 |
| Derry City & Strabane | 7.5 | 7.5 |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | \* | 7.7 |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 7.8 | 7.9 |
| Mid & East Antrim | 7.7 | 7.7 |
| Mid Ulster | 7.9 | 7.9 |
| Newry, Mourne & Down | 7.5 | 7.9 |
| Northern Ireland | 7.6 | 7.7 |

Table 3: Average life satisfaction scores by LGD, 2020/21 & 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA. Note: (\*) denotes that the sample size is too small (less than 100) to allow sufficient analysis of this category.

**Happiness**

The score for happiness relates to how happy the respondent felt on the day prior to being interviewed. In 2021/22, four of the eleven LGD’s including Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon reported a score of 7.9 for happiness. This was the highest score reported and above the Northern Ireland average score of 7.7. In 2020/21, respondents from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon had reported a score of 7.6 so the increase signifies better wellbeing for this measure. The score for happiness is lowest for people living in Belfast City. Only Belfast City and Mid Ulster LGD reported a decrease in their scores for happiness since 2020/21.

Figure 5: Average happiness scores by LGD, 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA.

**Worthwhile**

In 2021/22, the average (mean) score for feeling the things we do in life are worthwhile for residents in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon was 8.1 which was down slightly from the 8.2 score reported in 2020/21.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 2021/22 |
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 7.9 |
| Ards & North Down | 7.9 |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 8.1 |
| Belfast City | 7.6 |
| Causeway Coast & Glens | 7.9 |
| Derry City & Strabane | 7.8 |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | 7.9 |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 8.1 |
| Mid & East Antrim | 7.9 |
| Mid Ulster | 8.1 |
| Newry, Mourne & Down | 8.2 |
| Northern Ireland | 7.9 |

Table 4: Average ‘worthwhile’ scores by LGD, 2021/22. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA.

Scores in all LGD’s remained relatively unchanged over the year with the greatest change reported for Belfast City which now has the lowest score for worthwhile at 7.6.

**Anxiety**

In 2021/22, the average (mean) score for anxiety for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon was 2.6 which is considered low and therefore implies better wellbeing for this measure. However, the borough was only one of three LGD’s to report a higher score for anxiety in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21 so even though both scores are considered low, the anxiety score has increased this year in the borough from 2.4 in 2020/21.

The 2021/22 figure for Northern Ireland overall, at 2.8 is significantly lower than the 3.2 score reported for 2020/21 which signifies an increasingly better wellbeing in Northern Ireland overall for this measure.

Figure 6: Average anxiety scores and the change between 2020/21 and 2021/22 by LGD. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA.

**Locus of Control**

Locus of control is a measure of the degree to which a person feels they have control over their life and is measured using a statement-based survey tool, in the same way as self-efficacy. Respondents are presented with five statements and they must indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree using a five point Likert scale. Locus of control is then presented as an overall score ranging from 5 to 25. A lower score suggests a belief that life is determined by outside factors (external) while a higher score suggests a belief in one’s own control (internal).

The five statement questions are as follows:

1. I am in control of my life.
2. If I take the right steps, I can avoid problems.
3. Most things that affect my life happen by accident.
4. If it’s meant to be, I will be successful.
5. I can only do what people in my life want me to do.

Figure 7: Average locus of control scores, 2021/22 by LGD. Source: Continuous Household Survey (CHS), NISRA.

Figure 7 presents the average locus of control scores by LGD in 2021/22. The average score for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon was 17.1 which is considered to be more internal than external. This score is significantly lower than the 17.6 recorded for the borough in 2020/21.

The locus of control scores in all LGD’s (excluding two which remained unchanged) decreased between 2020/21 and 2021/22, however the decrease was most significant in Belfast City, Lisburn and Castlereagh and the borough. The lowest (most external) score was 16.8 which was recorded for Derry and Strabane, Mid and East Antrim and Newry, Mourne and Down.

Further information on ‘Wellbeing in Northern Ireland’ can be found via the following link:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/wellbeing-northern-ireland-report-202122>

1. [wellbeing-ni-report-2021-22.pdf](file:///Z:\2.%20Community%20&%20Strategic%20Planning%20JD\NISRA%20Statistician\1.%20Jessica%20Files\Data\16.%20Wellbeing%20NI%202122\wellbeing-ni-report-2021-22.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [wellbeing-ni-report-2021-22.pdf](file:///Z:\2.%20Community%20&%20Strategic%20Planning%20JD\NISRA%20Statistician\1.%20Jessica%20Files\Data\16.%20Wellbeing%20NI%202122\wellbeing-ni-report-2021-22.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Personal wellbeing - Lancashire County Council](https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/health-and-care/health/mental-health-and-wellbeing/personal-wellbeing/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)