**Businesses**

In 2025 there were 9,400 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in the borough, accounting for 11.6% of all such businesses in Northern Ireland, the fourth highest of the eleven councils.

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| District Council Area | Number | % of NI |
| Antrim and Newtonabbey | 4,340 | 5.3% |
| Ards and North Down | 4,910 | 6.1% |
| Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon | 9,400 | 11.6% |
| Belfast | 11,815 | 14.6% |
| Causeway Coast and Glens | 6,340 | 7.8% |
| Derry City and Strabane | 5,770 | 7.1% |
| Fermanagh and Omagh | 8,850 | 10.9% |
| Lisburn and Castlereagh | 5,215 | 6.4% |
| Mid and East Antrim | 5,145 | 6.3% |
| Mid Ulster | 9,825 | 12.1% |
| Newry, Mourne and Down | 9,525 | 11.7% |
| Northern Ireland | **81,135** | |

*Table 1: VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Northern Ireland by Council in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note figures have been rounded to the nearest five and therefore may not sum to totals.*

*Figure 1: VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Northern Ireland by Council in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.*

Table 2 presents the number of businesses in the Borough between 2013 and 2025. Between 2013 and 2014 there was a fall in the number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in the borough after which the numbers increased year-on-year until 2023. In 2024, there were 60 less businesses in the Borough compared to 2023, a fall of just 0.6%. However, business numbers increased again in 2025 and the number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in the Borough is currently the highest of the years presented. In Northern Ireland overall, the number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses increased by 1,090 or 1.4% between 2024 and 2025. Overall, since 2013, there has been an increase of 1,530 businesses in the Borough. This is an increase of 19.4%, just slightly lower than the increase shown in Northern Ireland overall for the same period, 19.8%. As presented in Table 2, the proportion of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in Northern Ireland located in the borough has remained relatively steady since 2013.

|  | Number | % of NI |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2013 | 7,870 | 11.6% |
| 2014 | 7,810 | 11.5% |
| 2015 | 7,865 | 11.6% |
| 2016 | 8,100 | 11.6% |
| 2017 | 8,275 | 11.6% |
| 2018 | 8,555 | 11.6% |
| 2019 | 8,715 | 11.5% |
| 2020 | 8,725 | 11.5% |
| 2021 | 8,930 | 11.5% |
| 2022 | 9,255 | 11.7% |
| 2023 | 9,390 | 11.9% |
| 2024 | 9,330 | 11.7% |
| 2025 | 9,400 | 11.6% |

*Table 2: VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough between 2013 and 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note figures have been rounded to the nearest five.*

*Figure 2: VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough between 2013 and 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.*

Agriculture, forestry and fishing accounts for the largest proportion of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in 2025 in the Borough, although the number of businesses has remained unchanged since 2024. With 2,490 agriculture, forestry and fishing businesses, this accounts for 26.5% of all businesses in the Borough. This is followed by construction (14.3%) and retail (7.9%). Despite the fact that the number of retail businesses in the Borough has fallen by 15 (-2%) since 2024, together these three broad industry groups still account for almost half (48.7%) of all VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in the Borough. The proportion of agriculture, forestry and fishing in the borough (26.5%) is higher than the proportion in Northern Ireland overall (23.5%). The proportion of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in the professional, scientific and technical industry group is lower than Northern Ireland overall, 6.8% in the borough compared to 8.3% in Northern Ireland.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Broad Industry Group | Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon | % | Northern Ireland | % |
| Agriculture, forestry and fishing | 2,490 | 26.5% | **19,050** | 23.5% |
| Production | 715 | 7.6% | **5,580** | 6.9% |
| Construction | 1,340 | 14.3% | **11,470** | 14.1% |
| Motor trades | 410 | 4.4% | **3,040** | 3.7% |
| Wholesale | 435 | 4.6% | **3,515** | 4.3% |
| Retail | 745 | 7.9% | **6,285** | 7.7% |
| Transport and storage (inc. postal) | 505 | 5.4% | **2,925** | 3.6% |
| Accommodation and food services | 400 | 4.3% | **4,445** | 5.5% |
| Information and communication | 170 | 1.8% | **2,265** | 2.8% |
| Finance and insurance | 110 | 1.2% | **1,235** | 1.5% |
| Property | 255 | 2.7% | **2,550** | 3.1% |
| Professional, scientific and technical | 640 | 6.8% | **6,755** | 8.3% |
| Business administration and support services | 345 | 3.7% | **3,265** | 4.0% |
| Public administration and defence | \* | \* | **55** | 0.1% |
| Education | 70 | 0.7% | **770** | 0.9% |
| Health | 265 | 2.8% | **2,970** | 3.7% |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation & other svs | 500 | 5.3% | **4,965** | 6.1% |
| Total | 9,400 | 100.0% | **81,135** | 100.0% |

*Table 3: Broad industry group of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note figures have been rounded to the nearest five and therefore may not sum to totals. Figure 3: Broad industry group of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.*

The majority of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in the borough in 2025 employ fewer than 50 people, 98.1% of such businesses. This is similar to the Northern Ireland business profile of which 97.8% are businesses with less than 50 people employed. Only 1.1% of businesses in Northern Ireland and 1% in the Borough have 100 or more employees.

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| **Employee Size Band** | **Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon** | **%** | **Northern Ireland** | **%** |
| **01** | **2,850** | 30.3% | **22,730** | 28.0% |
| **1-9** | **5,665** | 60.3% | **49,740** | 61.3% |
| **10-19** | **440** | 4.7% | **4,400** | 5.4% |
| **20-49** | **265** | 2.8% | **2,520** | 3.1% |
| **50-99** | **90** | 1.0% | **870** | 1.1% |
| **100-199** | **50** | 0.5% | **435** | 0.5% |
| **200-249** | **5** | 0.1% | **95** | 0.1% |
| **250+** | **35** | 0.4% | **350** | 0.4% |
| **Total** | **9,400** | **100%** | **81,135** | **100%** |

*Table 4: Employee size band of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note figures have been rounded to the nearest five and therefore may not sum to totals. 1This sizeband includes holding companies and those companies that are not yet trading, for example, if a factory is under construction.*

*Figure 4: Employee size band of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note the zero sizeband includes holding companies and those companies that are not yet trading, for example, if a factory is under construction.*

The turnover profile for VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in 2025 is also broadly similar to that of Northern Ireland. 78.7% of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in the Borough have a turnover of less than £500,000 compared to 78.3% for Northern Ireland overall. More than one in ten (12.3%) businesses in the Borough have a turnover of £1,000,000 or more. The percentage is just slightly higher for Northern Ireland at 12.8%. The number of businesses with a turnover of £1m or more has increased in both the Borough and Northern Ireland overall by 3.1% (+35 businesses) and 3.2% (+320 businesses) respectively since 2024.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Turnover Size Band (£ thousand) | Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon | % | Northern Ireland | % |
| 0-49 | **2,105** | 22.4% | **18,590** | 22.9% |
| 50-99 | **1,615** | 17.2% | **13,550** | 16.7% |
| 100-249 | **2,435** | 25.9% | **20,825** | 25.7% |
| 250-499 | **1,240** | 13.2% | **10,555** | 13.0% |
| 500-999 | **850** | 9.0% | **7,200** | 8.9% |
| 1,000-4,999 | **855** | 9.1% | **7,690** | 9.5% |
| 5,000+ | **300** | 3.2% | **2,725** | 3.4% |
| Total | **9,400** | 100% | **81,135** | 100% |

*Table 5: Turnover size band of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note figures have been rounded to the nearest five and therefore may not sum to totals. Figure 5: Turnover size band of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operating in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland in 2025. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.*

The Business Demography, Northern Ireland Report (2023) provides an analysis of business registrations (births), de-registrations (deaths) and survivals of active businesses registered in Northern Ireland[[1]](#footnote-1). In 2023, the number of business births was greater than the number of deaths for all local government districts across Northern Ireland except Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon and Lisburn and Castlereagh. In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon there were 610 business births compared to 670 business deaths. The business death rate fell in all district council areas except Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, Lisburn and Castlereagh and Newry, Mourne and Down where it increased by 1.6, 1.1 and 0.3 percentage points respectively between 2022 and 2023.  *Figure 6: The number of business births and deaths for all district council areas across Northern Ireland in 2023.* *Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.*

For businesses registered in 2018, Mid Ulster had the highest survival rate at 52.9%, followed by Lisburn and Castlereagh (52.6%) and Fermanagh and Omagh (51.3%). The five-year survival rate for businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough has increased from 49% in 2022 to 50.4% in 2023.

*Figure 7: Five-year survival rate of businesses born in 2018 by local government district. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.*

Further information on businesses can be found via the following link:

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/business-statistics/inter-departmental-business-register>

1. [Business Demography NI | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (nisra.gov.uk)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/business-demography-ni) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)