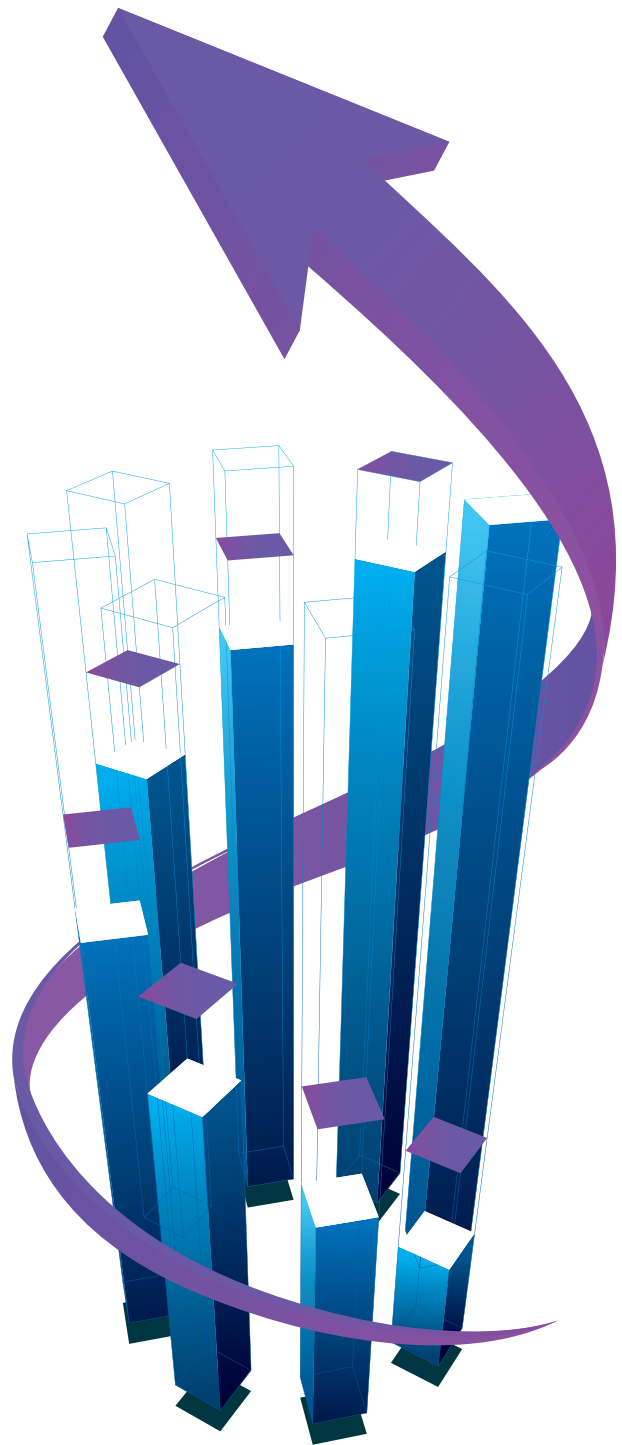


*State of the Sector VI*

# Workforce



# 7. Workforce

**The data presented in this chapter illustrates the size and characteristics of the workforce in the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. Where it is appropriate, direct comparisons have been made with previous State of the Sector reports and comparisons made with other sectors. The data presented in this section are based on information received from organisations in relation to this research and other research projects completed by NICVA over the past three years.**

There has been an increase in the number of staff employed in the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. The sector now employs an estimated 27,773 individuals (this represents 3.8% of the total Northern Ireland workforce) compared with 26,737 in 2008. However, this is still fewer than the 28,932 reported in *State of the Sector III* (NICVA, 2005). This finding clearly illustrates that the sector remains an important employer in Northern Ireland, employing more individuals than agriculture, forestry and fishing, mining and quarrying, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply, water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (19,800 employee jobs, DETI 2010).

The predominance of females in the workforce continues to be a feature of the voluntary and community sector. Seven out of ten employees are female (72.3%). This is significantly higher than the female composition in both the public sector

(51.8%) and the private sector where less than half of employees are female (46.4%).

A change in trend can be seen with regard to the number of chief executives that are female. *State of the Sector V* (NICVA, 2008) reported that almost two out of every three chief executives in the Northern Ireland voluntary and community sector were male. The NICVA *Salary Survey 2010*, however, reports that there is a gender balance with females now accounting for 48.2% of these positions.

Over 40% of the entire voluntary and community sector workforce is employed by organisations with an income of over £1 million. However, there has been an 8.4% decrease in the number of employees who work for organisations in this income band since 2008.

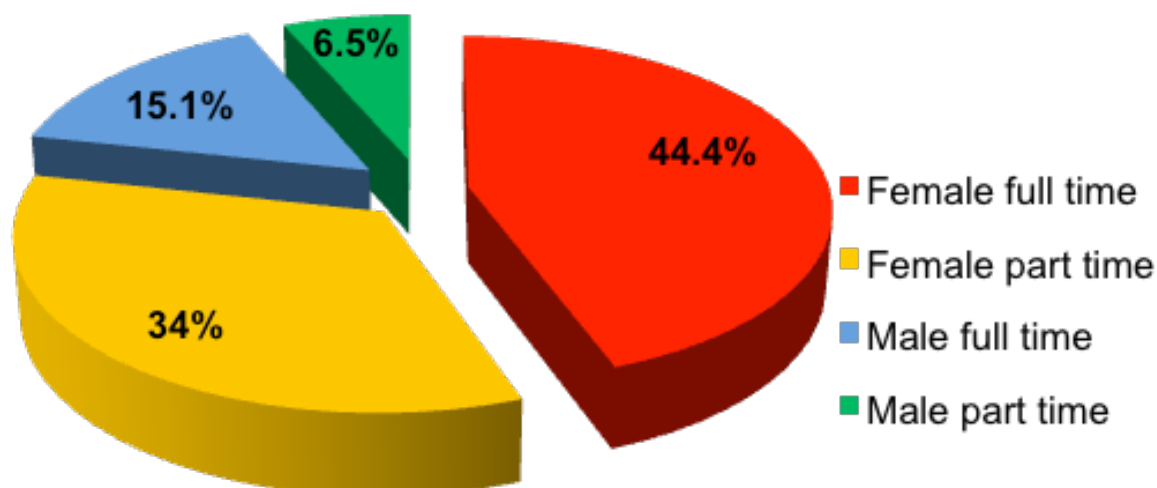
44.3% of employees work in organisations that fall either within the disability and children and families sub-sectors. Approximately 8.8% of employees fall within the older people sub-sector, while 8% of employees work in the health and wellbeing sub-sector.

8.6% of organisations stated that they intend to increase their staff levels over the next 12 months. This is significantly lower than the 26.6% of responding organisations that reported in *State of the Sector V* that they would be increasing staff in the year that followed.

## Workforce profile

The voluntary and community sector remains an important employer in Northern Ireland, with around 27,773 employees in full-time or part-time roles. This figure represents 3.8% of the total Northern Ireland workforce; an increase of 3.6% since 2008 when it was suggested that 26,737 staff were employed in the sector.

**Figure 7.1 Breakdown of male female paid workforce in the sector**



As Figure 7.1 shows, the workforce in the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland is predominantly female, accounting for over three quarters of all employees (78.4%). This is very similar to results reported in *State of the Sector V*, where 74.7% of all employees were female.

**Table 7.1 Breakdown of male female paid workforce in the sector**

	Full-time %	Part-time %	
Males	time %	30.1	100
Females	56.6	43.4	100

When examining the composition of staff, proportionally more males have full-time posts than females (69.9% of males work full-time, whereas 56.6% of females work full-time).

**Table 7.2 Breakdown of paid workforce by size of organisation**

	2011 (%)	2008 (%)
£10,000	2.5	0.4
£10,001 - £100,000	12	11.0
£100,001 - £250,000	12.2	12.4
£250,001 - £500,000	15.5	13.7
£500,001 - £1 million	13.6	9.9
£1 million plus	44.2	52.6

Table 7.2 demonstrates that there has been a reduction in the percentage of the voluntary and community sector workforce that is employed in organisations with an income of over £1 million. In 2008 over half of employees (52.6%) worked in organisations within this income band, however, this has reduced to 44.2%. There is also a reduction in the number of employees that work in organisations with an income of between £500,000 to £1 million. In 2008, 13.6% of all employees worked in organisations with this income, however, this report found that less than 10% (9.9%) now work in these organisations. While there has been a decrease in employees within organisations with higher incomes, the opposite can be said for organisations with lower incomes. Table 7.2 shows that more people (2.5%) work in organisations with less than £10,000 than before (0.4%), however, for organisations with an income of between £10,000 and £250,000 the number of employees has remained static.

**Table 7.3 Concentration of employees**

	2011 (%)	2008 (%)
1 - 5 employees	54.8	56.2
6 - 10 employees	17.8	19.3
11 - 15 employees	7.8	8.4
16 - 20 employees	3.8	4.5
21 - 25 employees	2.4	2.3
26 or more employees	13.4	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 7.3 shows that the majority of voluntary and community sector organisations employ a relatively small number of people; 54.8% employ five or less. This has obvious implications in terms of employment policies and providing sufficient support and development opportunities for staff. These findings are similar to that reported in *State of the Sector V*, where 56.2% of organisations employed between one and five individuals. Larger organisations with 26 or more employees account for 13.4% of organisations. Based on the results of the *State of the Sector VI* survey, the single largest employer in the voluntary and community sector had a workforce of 1,000 individuals.

**Table 7.4 Workforce profile by sub-sectors<sup>30</sup>**

	Mean	% of workforce
Advice services	13	4.0
Arts in the voluntary and community sector	5	1.3
Children and families	18	20.1
Community development	6	4.9
Community relations	8	1.5
Criminal justice and community safety	28	1.8
Disability	64	24.2
Education/training	13	7.2
Health and wellbeing	17	8.0
Housing and homelessness	47	3.0
Lobbying/policy	24	1.0
Older people	48	8.8
Women	64	1.8
Young people	13	5.3
Other	32	2.3

Table 7.4 looks at the breakdown of employees by different sub-sectors. Nearly one quarter of employees work within the disability sub-sector (24.2%), with organisations in this sub-sector each employing on average 64 individuals. A further 20.1% of employees work within the children and family sub-sector. The average number of staff employed in organisations within this sub-sector is 18. These findings are similar to those reported in *State of the Sector V*, which found both the disability and young people and children sub-sectors employed a high percentage of the voluntary and community workforce, with 21.3%

<sup>30</sup> In total 29 sub-sectors were identified by responding organisations. For the purpose of this chapter, 15 sub sectors were examined. Less than 1% of respondents were identified in each of the other 14 sub sectors. These are illustrated in the Appendix.

of the workforce working in each. Both this research and *State of the Sector V* reported that disability and the sub-sectors that provide services for children employ a significant proportion of the workforce.

Other sub-sectors that employ a significant number of individuals include older people (8.8%), health and wellbeing (8%) and education and training (7.2%).

## Workforce composition

The NICVA *Salary Survey 2010* examined the different job levels that exist within voluntary and community organisations and the gender of the individuals who fill these posts<sup>31</sup>.

**Table 7.5 Job levels by gender**

Cause	Male %	Female %	Count <sup>33</sup>
Chief executive	51.8	48.2	114
Director	43.9	56.1	98
Senior function head	34.3	65.7	248
Functional manager	30.8	69.2	399
Specialist/professional	25.8	74.2	902
Clerical supervisor/training	21.5	78.5	437
Admin officers/care officers	12.9	87.1	912
PA/secretary	6.3	93.7	127
Junior/trainee staff	41.1	58.9	265
Total employees	942	2,560	3,502

Base: 3,502 employees<sup>32</sup>

The Survey found that the sector is numerically dominated by females. However, the gap has closed in relation to the gender composition of chief executives. In the 2006 NICVA *Salary Survey* almost two out of every three chief executives in the sector were male (62.9%) whereas this research found that this has decreased to 51.8%. This clearly indicates that

<sup>31</sup> *Salary Survey*, NICVA, 2010

<sup>32</sup> This column shows the number of individuals in each of the defined job levels based on the responses of 329 organisations.

males no longer dominate the most senior management positions. The general trend, however, is that females dominate every other role examined as part of this survey. This is especially the case with regard to specialist/professional positions (74.2%), clerical supervisors and training (78.5%), administrative officers and care officers (87.1%) and PA/secretarial staff (93.1%).

Part-time employment is also a characteristic of the voluntary and community sector. The NICVA *Salary Survey* 2010 found that 37.1% of employees work on a part-time basis (83.8% are female). These results are very similar to those reported in the 2006 NICVA *Salary Survey* which found that 39.5% of the workforce worked part time, 84% of which were female.

## Community background of workforce

Currently there is not a clear picture of the community background of employees in voluntary and community organisations, given the limitations of data (all employers with more than ten employees (employees who work for 16 hours per week) must register with the Equality Commission and monitor employees, applicants, appointees and apprentices).<sup>33</sup> The voluntary and community sector is mostly made up of small to medium sized organisations (67% have an income of less than £100,000). 75.5% of organisations have fewer than ten employees and therefore do not have to register with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, thus limiting the amount of data available on the voluntary and community workforce and the community background of employees. However, Table 7.6 below looks at the responses of organisations in relation to perceived community background of staff.

**Table 7.6 Community background of workforce**

	Full-time	Part-time %
Roman Catholic	5,259	47.7
Protestant	4,670	42.4
Other	1,093	9.9
Total	11,022	100

Base: 11,002

What is clear is that the composition of the workforce of the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland is diverse. In the 2001 Census the population composition for

<sup>33</sup> Complying with the key duties under The Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (as amended). Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.



Northern Ireland was 53.1% Protestant and 43.8% Roman Catholic<sup>34</sup>. In 2009 the Equality Commission launched a report *Fair Employment, Monitoring Report No. 20*<sup>35</sup> which found that 54.6% of the Northern Ireland workforce is Protestant and 45.4% Roman Catholic. The results in Table 7.6 show that a slightly higher proportion of Roman Catholics work in the voluntary and community sector than Protestants. What is also interesting is that nearly one in ten of the workforce reported by respondents comes from other backgrounds (9.9%).

### Comparisons with the overall Northern Ireland workforce

As in 2008, the voluntary and community sector remains a significant employer in Northern Ireland, with around 27,733 staff. When compared to the rest of the Northern Ireland workforce, the voluntary and community sector employs more individuals than in the agriculture, forestry and fishing, mining and quarrying, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply, water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (19,800 employee jobs)<sup>36</sup>, (DETI 2010).

The Northern Ireland voluntary and community sector employs 3.6% of the overall UK voluntary and community sector workforce. Latest figures suggest that

765,000 people work in the UK voluntary and community sector (The voluntary sector workforce new almanac, chronicles a decade's growth, *Skills Third Sector, 2011*<sup>37</sup>). NCVO estimates that the workforce in the voluntary and community sector accounts for 2.3% of all UK employees (*UK Civil Society Almanac 2010: Workforce, NCVO*<sup>38</sup>).

As Figure 7.2 indicates, the private sector employs a significant proportion of the workforce in Northern Ireland, with a total of 485,820 employees (65.8%). The public sector employs 225,040 (30.4%) while the voluntary and community sector employs approximately 27,733 staff (3.8%). These results are very similar to those reported in *State of the Sector V* which found that the voluntary and community sector made up 3.7% of the overall workforce in Northern Ireland.

34 This research used 2001 Census data as the 2011 Census data was not yet available.

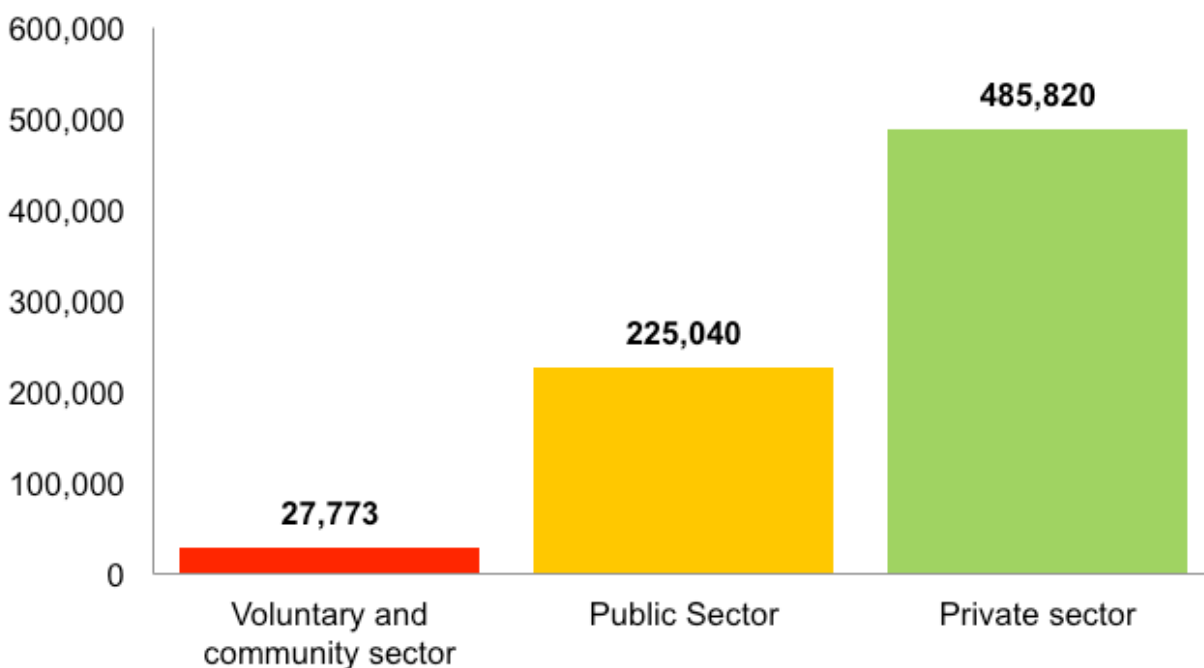
35 [http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/M20ResearchUpdate\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/M20ResearchUpdate_FINAL.pdf)

36 Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency, *Monthly Labour Market Report, September 2011*  
[http://www.detini.gov.uk/lmr\\_september\\_2011.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/lmr_september_2011.pdf)

37 <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/documents/press-releases/voluntary-sector-workforce-new-almanac-chronicles-decade-growth>

38 <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/almanac2010>

**Figure 7.2 The voluntary and community sector workforce in Northern Ireland compared with the public and private sectors<sup>39</sup>**



As was the case in *State of the Sector V*, this report found that females make up a higher proportion of the workforce in the voluntary and community sector (72.3%) compared to any other sector in Northern Ireland. Figure 7.3 illustrates the difference between the voluntary and community workforce composition compared to other sectors. For example 46.4% of private sector workers are female, 25.9% less than the voluntary and community sector. Although to a lesser degree the public sector also employs fewer female staff (1.8%) (DETI, 2010). The proportion of females employed in the voluntary and community sector is significantly higher than the overall figure for Northern Ireland (52.4%).

The higher proportion of female staff working in the voluntary and community sector has implications for the sector's employment policies and practices such as maternity leave, part-time working and flexible working practices.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Employee figures for the public and private sector in June 2011 are taken from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, *Monthly Labour Market Report, September 2011* [http://www.detini.gov.uk/lmr\\_september\\_2011.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/lmr_september_2011.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> UK Civil Society Almanac 2010: Workforce, NCVO.

**Figure 7.3 Female and part time employees in the voluntary and community sector compared with the public and private sectors<sup>41</sup>**

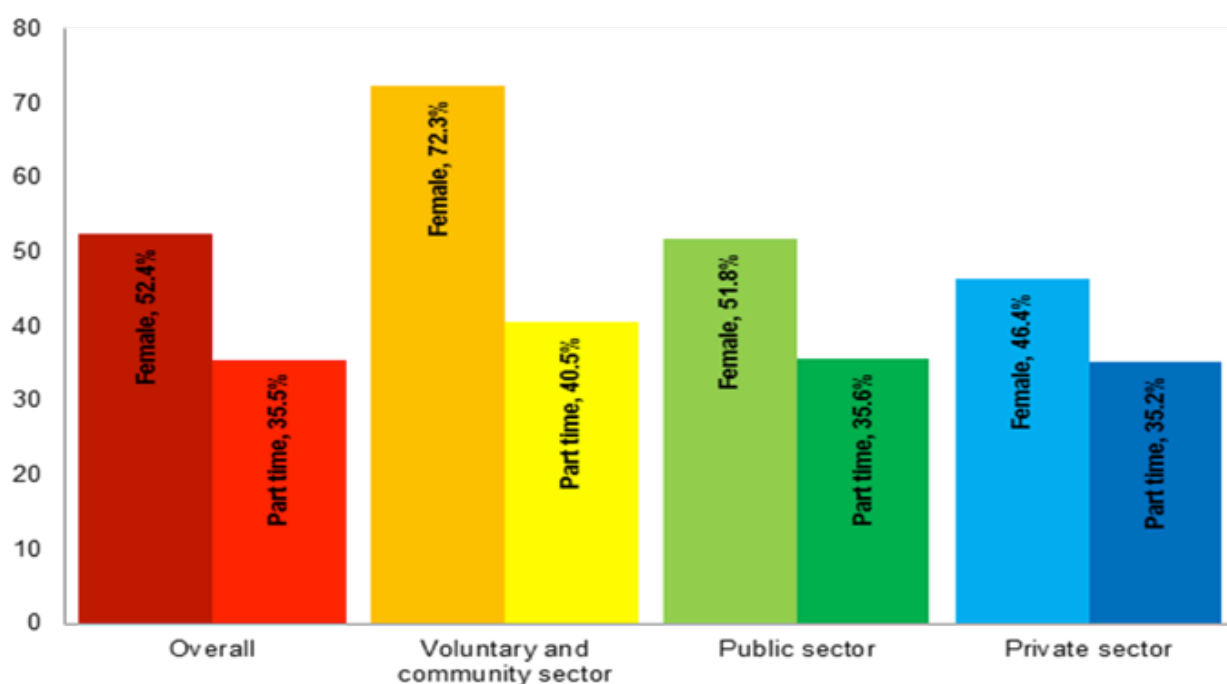


Figure 7.3 also examines each sector in relation to part time staff. 35.5% of the overall workforce works part-time. This is very similar to the public and private sectors where 35.6% and 35.2% of staff work part time respectively. The proportion of staff that works on a part-time basis in the voluntary and community sector is slightly higher at 40.5%.

Looking at the composition of part-time employees for each of the sectors produces some interesting comparisons. For instance, in the overall Northern Ireland workforce 73.7% of part-time employees are female. In the public sector 85.1% of part-time employees are female, while 68.3% of part-time employees in the private sector are female. This research found that 83.9% of part-time posts in the voluntary and community sector are female<sup>42</sup>. This is similar to *State of the Sector V* which reported that 85.3% of part-time posts in the voluntary and community sector in 2007 were female.

<sup>41</sup> Figures for this section are taken from the Northern Ireland Census of Employment September 2009 (December 2010) [http://www.detini.gov.uk/2009\\_coe\\_statistics\\_bulletin.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/2009_coe_statistics_bulletin.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> Figures for this section are taken from the Northern Ireland Census of Employment September 2009 (December 2010) [http://www.detini.gov.uk/2009\\_coe\\_statistics\\_bulletin.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/2009_coe_statistics_bulletin.pdf)

## Challenges facing employers and employees

The information presented in this section relates solely to the challenges voluntary and community organisations have in relation to the recruitment and retention of employees, and the challenges faced in maintaining a skilled and motivated community sector workforce in Northern Ireland. This section expands on the difficulties that arise, especially at a time of economic upheaval.

Figures for this section are taken from the Northern Ireland Census of Employment September 2009 (December 2010) [http://www.detini.gov.uk/2009\\_coe\\_statistics\\_bulletin.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/2009_coe_statistics_bulletin.pdf)

### Recruitment

Voluntary and community organisations face a range of challenges stemming not only from the economic downturn, cuts in public sector funding, reduction in donations, but also its increasing role in public service delivery, increasing demands of competition, tendering, collaboration and coping with late payment for services. Another challenge the sector often has to manage is the recruitment of staff. Based on responses to the *State of the Sector VI* questionnaire, 14% of organisations indicated that they anticipate altering their current staff levels. In total 8.6% of organisations anticipate employing additional staff. This has changed significantly since *State of the Sector V* (2008) which reported that 26.6% of organisations expected to expand their workforce in the following 12 months. This clearly suggests that the sector

is not in a position to expand, most likely the consequence of the current economic environment and the uncertainty of future funding due to public funding cuts.

In 2008, 5.6% of organisations reported that they would decrease their number of staff. A similar result was found in this research with 5.4% of respondents indicating that they will be making staff redundant within the year. Often voluntary and community organisations report that they face challenges in relation to recruiting new staff. Latest figures in the *NICVA Salary Survey 2010* dispel this notion to some extent, as only 13.3% of organisations that provided data reported recruitment difficulties. This has reduced by 13.3% since the 2006 *NICVA Salary Survey*, which documented over one quarter (26.6%) as having recruitment difficulties.<sup>43</sup> The most common difficulties reported in the *NICVA Salary Survey 2010* were the lack of suitability of skilled applicants (55.2%), insufficient number of applications (51.7%) and lack of suitably qualified applicants (48.3%).

The *NICVA Salary Survey 2010* also reported that almost two thirds of respondents believed the recession would, to some or a great extent, impact on recruitment. These figures reveal that the financial environment is creating insecurity and will impose difficulties for many organisations.

<sup>43</sup> NICVA. *Salary Survey, Job roles, salaries and benefits in the voluntary and community sector. 2006.*

## Retention

The *19th Annual Voluntary Sector Salary Survey* (NCVO, 2008) found that there has been a tradition of high staff turnover and a high proportion of organisations reporting problems with staff retention in the UK<sup>44</sup>. The *NICVA Salary Survey 2010* reported that 15.2% of responding organisations had difficulty retaining staff over the past 12 months. This has reduced from the 2006 *Salary Survey* which revealed that almost one quarter of organisations had difficulties retaining staff over the previous 12 months. The *Northern Ireland Salary Survey 2010/11* (Abacus) suggests that some candidates were unwilling to consider alternative opportunities even if it provided a greater level of financial security and job satisfaction, due to a fear of a 'double dip' recession.<sup>45</sup>

NICVA's *Salary Survey 2010* reported that the most commonly cited reasons for poor retention of staff were salary levels within organisations, which were not enough to encourage staff to stay long term (41.2%), and lack of opportunity for career progression, experienced by over a quarter of organisations (26.5%). Issues relating to staff retention appear to be universal across the voluntary and community sector in the UK and Ireland according to research by NCVO<sup>46</sup> and The Wheel<sup>47</sup> who also cited

the same retention problems. Although lack of funding was not one of the top three problems cited in retaining staff in the *NICVA Salary Survey 2010*, more recent research conducted by NICVA, on the impact of the continued economic downturn and the £367million cut from the Northern Ireland budget on the sector, has found an increased number of organisations reporting a reduction of staff levels.<sup>48</sup>

## Other sources of information on workforce issues

NCVO published the UK Civil Society Almanac 2010 in July 2010 and has a wider programme of research which looks into skills and workforce development for paid workers, volunteers and trustees and provides statistics and facts about the sector ([www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)).

NICVA's *Salary Survey 2010*, the third such study carried out in Northern Ireland, has highlighted changing trends in the voluntary and community sector. The research exposes not just the challenges facing the sector in the current economic climate, but also the many positives associated with employment in the sector. (<http://www.nicva.org/publications/salary-survey-2010>).

44 New *salary survey* shows voluntary sector organisations more confident of recruiting and retaining staff, NCVO Press Release <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/press/releases.asp?id=977>

45 *Northern Ireland Salary Survey 2010/11*, Abacus Professional Recruitment. *Northern Ireland Salary Survey 2010/2011*. 2010

46 NCVO. *19th Annual Voluntary Sector Salary Survey*. Inside Research, London: NVCO. 2007.

47 The Wheel. *National Survey on Pay and Benefits in Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations*. 2008

48 CutsWatchNI <http://www.nicva.org/cuts/list>

*State of the Sector VI* is the latest edition in the *State of the Sector* research programme. The previous *State of the Sector* reports have developed the only comprehensive picture of the scale and scope of the economic activities of the Northern Ireland voluntary and community sector. The publication of each *State of the Sector* report represents another step in the evolution of this type of statistical analysis and as such adds to the already broad and in depth knowledge of the sector, by examining many of the key issues currently affecting and shaping it.

*State of the Sector VI* provides high level statistics on the various types of resources available to the sector and the relationship between voluntary and community organisations, government, funders and the general public. *State of the Sector VI* is invaluable to all those who need an up-to-date and reliable source of statistics and commentary on the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. People working in the sector – academics, decision-makers, social science students and journalists – will all find this publication useful.

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