



Did you know that advice organisations employ 3.3% of the total workforce of the non profit sector, and have 1,570 volunteers? Read on for more facts.

## OVERVIEW

There are **120 organisations** in the voluntary and community sector which are involved in advice and information. Total income for 2003/04 is estimated to be **£16.13 million**.

Close to one in three of these organisations are local offices of a larger Northern Ireland wide organisation. This reflects the structured nature of the Citizens Advice Bureau network. However the proportion of stand alone organisations (43.9%) is equally reflective of the independent nature of the advice and information sector.

There are approximately **956 paid employees** working in the information and advice sector with a further **1,570 volunteers** directly involved on a formal basis (management committees etc).

## ROLE

The advice and information sector in Northern Ireland provides a wide range of advice to the public, covering different categories. Advice and information is given on benefits, consumer issues, debt, family, housing, employment and immigration. The advice given is independent, impartial, confidential, and always free of charge.

These organisations also provide training in welfare benefits, consumer, housing and employment legislation. Training is aimed at those who work in the field of advice to provide participants with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the effective delivery of an advice service.

## FUNDING

**Government** sources are the largest funders of the advice and information sector. Just over two thirds (64%) of this sector's income is derived from the public sector. Its biggest funder is central government departments which account for 46% (£4.74 million) of all government funding. Statutory agencies and non-departmental public bodies spend a further £3.50 million on the activities of this sector. District councils contribute an additional £1.93 million (18.7% of total government expenditure). Earned income only represents 1.5% of total income.

**Charitable trusts** also make a significant contribution to the activities of the advice and information sector. In total, charitable trusts spend £2.20 million on the sector which represents 13.6% of total income.

The **Lottery** spends a further £1.78 million on the information and advice sector. Almost half (48%) of all the organisations which receive funding from government sources depend on it for 75% or more of their income. Only 3% of organisations which receive funding from the Lottery are dependent on it for 75% or more of their income.

## **PEOPLE**

The advice and information sector **employs 956 paid individuals.**

Three quarters of these are female which mirrors closely the overall gender profile for the sector.

37% of employees in the information and advice sector are part time which is very similar to the voluntary and community sector overall where part time employees make up 36% of the workforce.

Those individuals employed in the advice and information sector represent **3.3% of the total sector's workforce.**

There are **1,570 volunteers** involved in the advice and information sector.