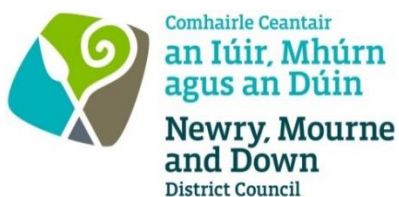


Newry, Mourne and Down

Labour Market Partnership

Action Plan 2022 - 2023



NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN
Labour Market Partnership
Working Together



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1. Introduction

The Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Community Plan to 2030 - 'Living Well Together', supported through its approach to partnership working with the local community, has provided the framework for collaborative working to deliver positive change for the community. The Community Plan has as its vision:

Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high-quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs.

The economy is one of strategic themes included within the Community Plan and includes specific references to a skilled economy. The long-term outcome under a skilled economy is that 'We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy' and that 'We have more people working in better jobs'.

Underpinning the Community Plan is the Council's Economic Development Strategy. In October 2020, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council launched a new Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020 – 2025. This strategy is built around 3 key pillars of investment:

- Supporting Entrepreneurship, Business growth and Innovation
- Improving Employability and Skills
- Investing in Regeneration and Modern Infrastructure

Based on desk top research, consideration of the regional policy context and strategies (reflected on later in this document), consultation with internal and external stakeholders across both public and private sector, and a statistical audit on the local economy and labour market, this strategy sets out a comprehensive Action Plan for each of the above 3 Pillars.

One of the first achievements arising from the Strategy was the establishment of 3 working groups, one of which was a skills and employability working group. This group agreed at their February 2021 meeting to assume the role of the NMD Labour Market Partnership.

NMD Labour Market Partnership Structure

The NMD Labour Market Partnership (LMP), was established in February 2021 and has been developed by using existing structures within the NMD Council area, namely the Employability and Skills working group and the Economic Forum. These established and successful groups combine a wealth of rich and diverse experience and knowledge and have enabled council to respond quickly to the introduction of a local Labour Market Partnership (NMD LMP). The NMD LMP is a dynamic partnership, committed to working together to make a positive difference.

The NMD LMP reflects best practice through extensive engagement with partners at local and regional level. Its aim is to be dynamic, responsive and innovative to achieve excellence.

NMD District Council has a number of other existing structures in place to enable successful delivery of the LMP. The Council engages regularly with external organisations such as its Local Enterprise Agencies, Chambers of Commerce, Invest NI, Intertrade Ireland, Belfast City Region Deal partners, Regional Colleges and schools, training organisations and Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC). The ongoing partnership with these reputable organisations and others, will assist the LMP to make informed and evidence-based decisions and augment forward plans.

The membership of the NMD LMP is:

- Newry Mourne and Down District Council – Lead
- Further Education colleges
- Local Enterprise Agencies
- Chamber of Commerce’s
- Area Learning Co-Ordinators for NMD
- Invest NI
- Jobs and Benefits Office
- Social Economy and Private sector representatives

Engagement

In 2021, the NMD LMP undertook to complete further research and analysis, including a Strategic Assessment of employability and labour market conditions relevant to the Council Area. A statistical analysis on labour market and employability data was undertaken on the Council’s behalf by the Economic Policy Centre, at Ulster University. This exercise was undertaken to identify underlying employability / labour market issues, and to establish priorities that will address the most persistent problems. This is included at section 3 of this document.

Engagement at a local level took place over June & July 2021, and again in March 2022. Engagement in 2021 was informing an Action Plan for 2021/2022.

Engagement in March 2022 was to review the 2021/2022 actions and agree an Action Plan for 2022/2023. As an LMP Letter of Offer for 2021/2022 was only in place for Q4 2021/2022, ability to deliver was limited and many of the previously agreed actions were carried forward for 2022/2023.

The Council had individual meetings / engagement sessions with a number of the LMP partners, which concluded with facilitated engagement sessions with all partners of the LMP.

The aim of the engagement process was to

- identify the key themes / issues in relation to the local labour market within Newry Mourne and Down District Council
- identify what the NMD LMP wanted to change at a local level
- identify a range of initiatives from both supply side and demand side, which could help local people move closer to work and / or into work

- identify initiatives that are currently available, but that an LMP would be able to support and enhance the delivery of

The engagement process also considered the findings of the statistical analysis, and considered in particular:

- Is the statistical analysis reflective of local issues?
- Are there any gaps or amendments required?

The output of the process is the agreed themes, aims, activities and indicators as outlined within the NMD Action Plan

Action Plan – 2022/ 2023

The Action Plan set out within this document is based on the assumption of an LMP dedicated resource in place, a budget in place as outlined in section 5, and operational budget available for the full 2022/23 period. Any variance to these components will impact the level of activity and performance measures achieved.

A Turning the Curve Exercise was undertaken in relation to the LMP Action Plan Themes and projects and considered the programmes of work in relation to the outcomes they delivered.

As a result of the LMP Planning exercise, it has been agreed to drive progress in 3 core strategic and cross cutting themes which focus on outcomes which improve employability and labour market conditions across the NMD area:

- Theme 1: Access to work
- Theme 2: Skills for work
- Theme 3: A Place to work

A Summary of actions outlined in section 4		Outputs
Development		
1.1 Research - Labour Market Supply Intelligence	Research will: 1) Scope the employability and skills requirements of NMD employers; 2) define and identify NMD disadvantaged groups within the unemployed and economically inactive population.	1 x Research Report
Access to work		
2.1 Work Start: pre-employment support	Work Start is a personalised work preparation, job search and career guidance service	110 participants supported / engaged
2.2 High Skill Pathway: Recruitment Pilot	A pilot to test with NMD employers how hard-to-recruit vacancies can be filled through new pathways for graduates and others. The initiative will be co-designed with NMD employers	20 hard to recruit vacancies filled 5 employers engaged

2.3 Self-Employment: Business Start Development Programme	Specialised, mentoring and business support between 'Go for It' participation (the creation of a business plan) and establishing a trading company which offers either PT or FT self-employment for the business owner	30 entrepreneurs supported
Skills for Work		
2.54 Upskilling for Growth	Employee Upskilling: Meeting employer needs & supporting career progression: Support employers to upskill staff to enable career progression for those in employment and open up opportunities for those entering the labour market	10 employers supported 50 employees upskilled
2.56 Employability Academies	To implement Academies for skill interventions in sectors and occupations where opportunities for employment are identified with employers	86 participants engaged 6 employers directly engaged (indirectly +)
A Place to work		
2.6 Engagement Campaign and Digital employability & skills platform	Promoting improved information on employers and their vacancies for people who are looking for work. Collate and communicate local employability and skills opportunities. Promote NMD as a good place to work with opportunities for progression	1 Digital Platform live 1 Communication campaign developed & live
2.7 Employment Pathway Events	Support delivery of Jobs and Career fairs and events, including sectoral focused events where scope and opportunity exists. Opportunity to showcase key sectors, and career opportunities	2 Events delivered 40 employers engaged 1000 participants

The LMP will report against the Action Plan as required on a quarterly basis, using the Quarterly Project and Thematic Report Card returns.

The document should be considered as a living document, one that is to be reviewed and updated in response to emerging opportunities and changes within the employment and skills landscape.

2. Policy Context

Policy Content at a Regional level

This section outlines the overarching policy context that the Labour Market Partnership Action Plan sits within. It summarises the regional priorities and commitments, how this is played out in strategy formulation and reviews the main policy and strategy development at the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council level.

Northern Ireland Programme for Government – Draft Outcomes Framework 2021

This Framework is an outworking of the 'New Decade, New Approach' deal brokered to restore the NI Assembly in January 2020. This included a number of commitments including:

1. A top priority of the Executive will be to develop a regionally balanced economy with opportunities for all
2. The Executive will make it a priority to realise the economic potential offered by the City Deals for the Belfast Region and Derry/Londonderry
3. In support of both economic and educational objectives, the Executive will develop an enhanced approach to careers advice, curriculum, training and apprenticeships to enhance employability and support economic growth.

The current relevant outcomes to the LMP identified within the Programme for Government are:

- Outcome 3: 'We have a more equal society'
- Outcome 6: 'We have more people working in better jobs'
- Outcome 8: 'We care for others and help those in need'

Northern Ireland Draft Industrial Strategy

This strategy has a specific focus on 'Education, Skills & Employability' pillar which focuses on three areas:

- Improving educational outcomes from an early age
- Supporting those furthest from the workforce;
- Ensuring we have the necessary skills pipeline to meet business needs now and in the future.

Northern Ireland Economic Recovery Plan - Rebuilding a Stronger Economy Rebuilding a Stronger Economy 2021 seeks to deliver interventions which will contribute to:

- Building a higher skilled and agile workforce
- Pursuing and securing better jobs; and
- Producing a more regionally balanced economy

The Action Plan is supported by an additional £290m allocation for 2021-22 across: R&D and Innovation, £20m; Highly Skilled & Agile Workforce, £50m; Greener Economy, £20m; and Investment, Trade & Exports, £200m.

OECD Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland

This skills strategy identifies four priority areas for improving skills performance including:

- Reducing skills imbalances
- Creating a culture of lifelong learning
- Transforming workplaces to make better use of skills
- Strengthening the governance of skills policies

The Department for the Economy (DfE) is currently developing a new skills strategy which build on the themes identified above.

Employability Northern Ireland

The Department of Communities (DfC), Employability Northern Ireland proposals include a new gateway service for clients to access government services, new commissioning approach provided through a dynamic purchasing programme and a menu of choices available for voluntary clients including:

- Careers Advice & Job Search;
- Skills;
- Enterprise;
- Community; and
- Health.

Employability NI will be managed through new governance arrangements at a regional level and local authority level with the establishment of Labour Market Partnerships.

Other Strategies relating to Skills and Employability

There exists a plethora of other relevant policies which align to the work of the Labour Market Partnership, which creates its own challenges and opportunities with respect to strategic direction and coordination. Some relevant developments include:

'Preparing for Success, the NI careers strategy, a joint Department for Education (DE) and Department for the Economy policy delivered through 5 key policy commitments. The strategy is currently being revised.

New proposals for apprenticeships and youth training contained within **Securing our Success & Generating our Success** have been delivered including a focus on Higher Level Apprenticeships and greater alignment with target growth sectors.

The DfE is currently procuring new apprenticeship contracts Level 2 & Level 3 (Apps 21) and **Skills for Life and Work** which is set to replace Training for Success offering a mix of training, work placement and personal and essential skills training for young people aged 16-18 years old. In addition, a new Traineeship at Level 2 is to be introduced in September 2021 through the FE Colleges targeted at particular sectors across the regional economy.

Funding considerations for Skills and Employability

Finally, European funds have played a significant role in delivering employability and skills services across the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. **European Social Fund (ESF)** programmes are currently delivered across NMD and the future loss of this funding could have a severe impact on local service provision. The replacement UK programme, the **Shared Prosperity Fund** is still being worked on and the **Community Renewal Fund** which covers the period 2021-2022 has an allocation of £11m for NI, with Newry Mourne and Down District seeking to secure funding for the District through a partnership approach with the FE Colleges in the area. The new **Peace Plus** programme has an allocation of €110m under the theme of Empowering and Investing in Young People.

In summary there is no shortage of policies which support employability and skills provision, there is however, a distinct lack of coordination which is the opportunity accorded to the Labour Market Partnership (LMP).

Policy Context at a Local Level: Newry, Mourne and Down

Newry, Mourne and Down (NMD) area has put in place a range of innovative structures to ensure it has become a stronger, more dynamic and unified unit, providing its citizens with outstanding public services, while unlocking the full potential of the region.

The policies in place by Newry Mourne and Down District Council via its Community Plan, Corporate Plan and the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy is to understand that supporting unemployed and workless people on their journey into work matters; not only does it help to increase the employment rate and economic activity levels in the economy, which will have a positive effect on growth, it also mitigates the deterioration of skills, confidence and health that can occur with prolonged periods of worklessness.

The Newry Mourne and Down District Community Plan to 2030 – ‘Living Well Together’

The Community Plan to 2030 - ‘Living Well Together’, supported through its approach to partnership working with the local community, has provided the framework for collaborative working to deliver positive change for the community. The Community Plan has as its vision:

Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high-quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs.

The economy is one of the strategic themes included within the Community Plan and includes specific references to a skilled economy. The long-term outcome under skilled economy is that, *'We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy'* and that *'We have more people working in better jobs'*.

Based on an Outcomes Based Accountability model it establishes the following indicators:

- Level of economically inactive
- Level of Gross Value added (GVA) per head
- Shift in Sectoral spread of business
- Level of Skills development across population

It states, *'Both the availability of jobs and the earnings people receive are relevant for well-being. Not only do they increase people's command over resources, but they also provide people with a chance to fulfil their own ambitions, to develop skills and abilities, to feel useful in society and to build self-esteem'*.

Newry Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021 -2023

With its broadened remit following Local Government Reform, NMD is a Council which is fully equipped to lead the development agenda. Through its vision, aims and values NMD'S Corporate Plan focuses its efforts and resources firmly on Accountable, Collaborative and Transparent working with others, with tailored priorities to support business development and growth, developing workforce and employment skills, progressing regeneration plans and enhancing the health and wellbeing of its residents thus improving their quality of life.

Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020 – 2025

In November 2020, Newry Mourne and Down District Council launched its Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy 2020 – 2025. The strategy was completed through desk-based research, thematic workshops, survey of business needs and stakeholder consultations. The Council, committed to prioritising local business needs, interviewed or surveyed businesses from across key sectors as part of the strategy development process. This ensured a large body of opinion and ideas for identifying employability and skills needs and opportunities within the Council area.

This strategy specifically priorities actions which will support local people to get closer to work and into work as part of the Council's commitment to short-term recovery and long-term inclusive economic growth

3. Strategic Assessment: Key Findings

This section of the report will provide an overview of current structure of the labour market and will drill down into a number of potential areas of work (and target groups) against the immediate background of recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic and the longer-term employability and skills challenges for the LMP to address. The general picture, before 2020, was of a tight local labour market with a rising employment rates, falling numbers of both the unemployed and inactive, and difficulties in recruiting staff for some positions.

The areas of work for the LMP will naturally cover various residents of the Council area who will be more detached from the labour market (in the case of the long-term unemployed or inactive) as well as those who are either entering the labour market (as school-leavers and graduates) or who are looking to improve their position within it (including apprentices, self-employed and those keen to reskill). Although there is limited data at the Council level for many of these potential areas of work, they regularly arise in any assessment of local labour markets. They are also intended for discussion in wider consultation as to their current level of priority for the work of the LMP.

A Summary of Key Findings of this study is below

Source: Labour Market Partnership baseline assessment for Newry Mourne and Down District Council, July 2021

Key Finding 1:

Before COVID-19 struck the employment rate in NMD was higher than the NI average.

- The employment rate for residents in NMD has been rising steadily over the past decade to stand at an historic high by the end of 2019. This recovery has been driven by growth in sectors such as Retail, Manufacturing, Accommodation, Healthcare and, to a lesser extent in terms of numbers of jobs, ICT and Professional Services.
- Estimate that 77% of NMD residents in employment work *within* the Council area with the other 23% commuting to Belfast and neighbouring Council areas including Louth, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (ABC) and Lisburn & Castlereagh. Several thousand employees also commute into NMD to work every day, largely from surrounding Council areas.

Key Finding 2:

The unemployment rate in NMD was falling steadily until Spring 2020.

- The International Labour Organisation (ILO) unemployment rate for residents in NMD has fallen significantly over the past decade to now stand equal to the NI average and far below the 7.4% back in 2009.

- The youth unemployment figures for NMD were relatively low pre Covid 19 pandemic. However, the rate of youth employment in the NMDDC soared from 3.10% of the working population in 2018 to 8.10% of the working population by 2020. (Source: NISRA - Claimant Count Annual Averages: 18-24 years. <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/PivotGrid.aspx?ds=10278&lh=73&yn=2005-2020&sk=18&sn=Labour%20Market&yearfilter=>)

Key Finding 3:

Labour market inactivity remains a key issue for residents in NMD and needs further exploration as to its patterns

- The inactivity rate for residents in NMD has fallen over time but remains stubbornly high and the Council area has had the 5th highest rate for more than a decade.
- The patterns and causes of inactivity within the Council area are less clear but likely to be similar to those in NI more generally where the numbers inactive for illness reasons are high and have increased over time while those for reasons of early retirement and caring duties have fallen. The numbers of those inactive as students (ie: without part-time work) has remained steady, though this has soared in 2020 due to pandemic effects.

Key Finding 4:

Lower than average qualifications levels with a slight but growing mismatch at higher levels.

- The levels of qualifications have improved significantly over the past decade in NMD but also elsewhere as the proportion of the population without formal qualifications has fallen. The area has a high level of skilled trades which is crucial for the local economy.
- Forecasts for the future labour force in NMD point to an increasing demand for Degree level and above skills so ensuring this improvement continues and accelerates is important.

Key Finding 5:

COVID-19 has already had a significant effect on the NMD labour market but the lasting impacts remain to be seen.

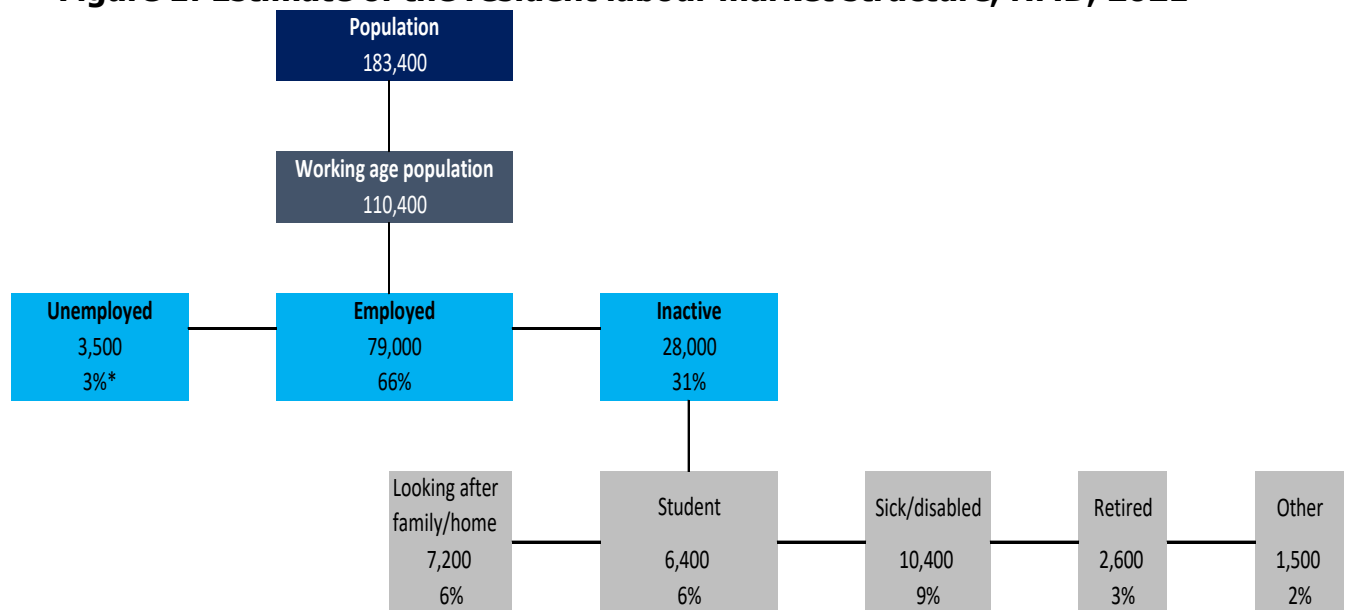
- The numbers on the Claimant Count has doubled to 5,500 since Feb 2020 with most of this rise before May 2020. A larger rise seen among women and in some wards (Murlough, Ballymote, Bessbrook and parts of Newry: St Patrick's and Daisy Hill).

- The rates of jobs in NMD on furlough and SEISS¹ has consistently been slightly higher than the NI average with similar concentrations as elsewhere in the Retail and Accommodation sectors. Slightly higher numbers were furloughed in Manufacturing and Construction in NMD. As we emerge from the pandemic concentrated efforts needs to be developed in these key sectors.

Strategic Assessment: Insights into the Newry Mourne and Down District Local Labour Market Structure, outlook to 2025 and possible areas of work for the Labour Market Partnership

The last available Labour Force Survey data at Council level is the annual averages for 2019, released in October 2020. For this paper we have used NI-level data from the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC) Labour Market Intelligence database, 2017 Multiple Deprivation data and the monthly Claimant Count and redundancies data. Figure 1 provides a rough estimate of the overall structure of the labour market in NMD in 2021 taken from the UUEPC local model, and shows the recent rise in unemployment and inactivity (approximately 25,000 residents, excluding students) and a fall in employment numbers to less than 80,000 people.

Figure 1: Estimate of the resident labour market structure, NMD, 2021



Source: NISRA LFS and UUEPC Local Model

¹ SEISS = Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.

The employment rate of residents has been improving in recent years

	NMDDC	NI	NMDDC ranking	Latest Data
Employment rate (% of WAP ² employed)	74.8%	70.9%	2 nd	2020

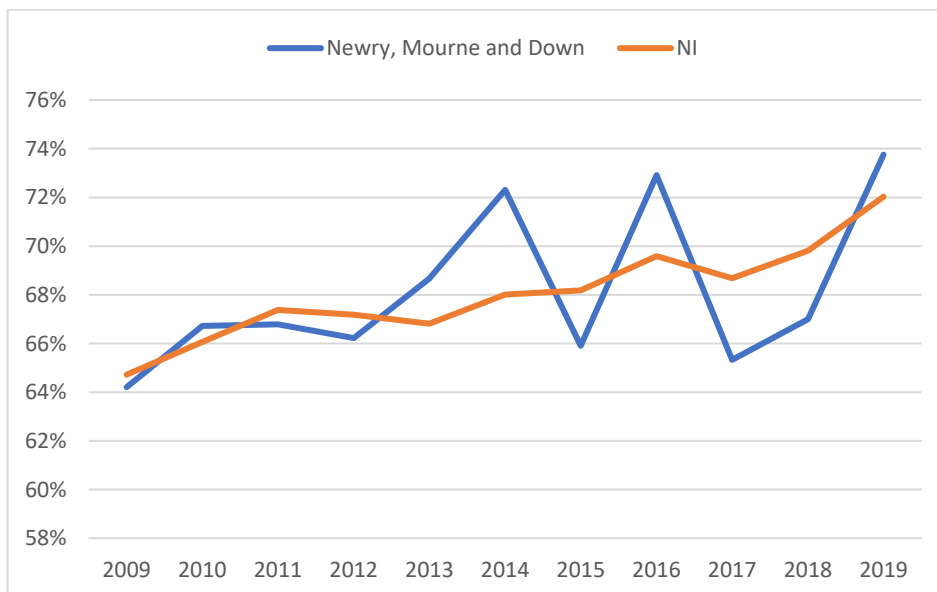
Source: NISRA LFS

Employment rates have been improving across NI for much of the past decade, from 69.1% in 2017 to 70.9% in 2020.

The same trend of rising employment rates occurred in NMD, rising from 66% in 2017 to 74.8% in 2020. The Council area has actually seen stronger employment growth over the period than in NI more generally. This has meant NMD ranked 2nd highest in 2020, up from 7th in 2017, similar to ABC (73.9%) and Ards & North Down (72.9%). Figure 1 shows how the employment rate in NMD was ahead of that in NI for much of the period since 2012.

The resident employment rate is a result not only of the growth in employee jobs (see next section) but also the numbers of residents (as high as 23% of those in employment) who commute either to Belfast, ABC or Lisburn & Castlereagh or, alternatively, across the border into Louth and Dublin City in particular. This share has not altered much since 2011.

Figure 2: Resident employment rate, NMD and NI, 2009-2019



² WAP = Working Age Population (16-64 year olds).

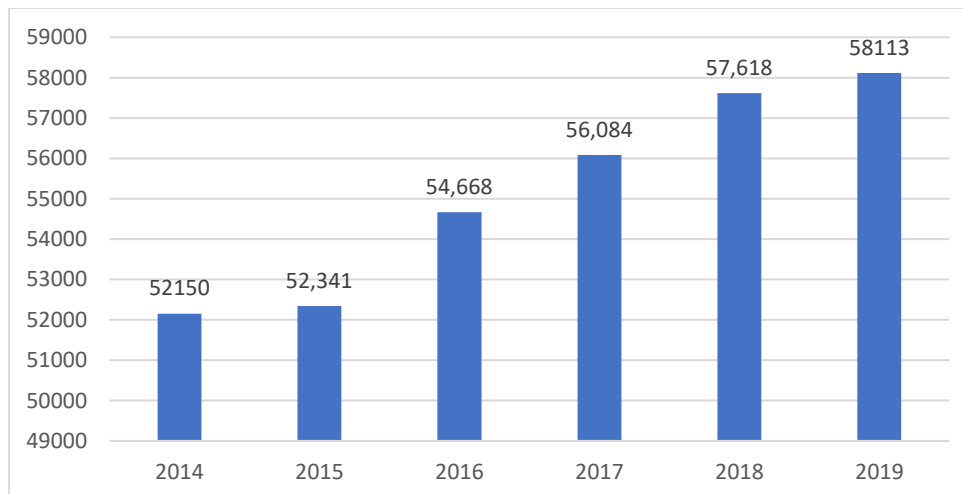
NMD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Employment rate (% of Working Age Population (WAP) employed)	66%	73%	66%	67%	74%	74.8%
Resident employment numbers	72,400	80,300	72,100	73,900	81,400	85,000

Source: NISRA LFS and UUEPC Local Model

The number of employee jobs rose sharply to 2019, across many sectors

Higher resident employment rates are partly a result of local employers based in NMD hiring increasing numbers of people during the 2014-2019 recovery.³ **Almost 6,000 more jobs were created in NMD between 2014 and 2019, an increase of 11.4%**, which compares favourably to the 10.4% increase in NI employee jobs over the same time period. The significant scars from the last recession can be seen in the return to the previous peak (2008) coming only in 2017.

Figure 3: Employee jobs, NMD, 2014-2019



Source: NISRA BRES

The bulk of the additional employee jobs have been created in the Services sectors, in particular in Healthcare, Accommodation (Tourism) and Retail & Wholesale. There has been significant percentage increase but smaller numbers of jobs in newer sectors for NMD, such as ICT and Professional Services. Manufacturing firms have also added

³ Commuting to other areas for work – including Louth, ABC and Belfast – also contributes to the rising employment rate.

on new jobs – food manufacturing has been especially strong – and Construction has made up some, not all, of the ground lost after 2008.

Importantly, for the LMP, the jobs created over this period have ranged across the skills levels with entry to the labour market open to those with either school leaving or graduate qualifications. However, the growth in opportunities in ICT, Professional Services and some parts of Manufacturing and Construction are often geared to those entering either on the Modern Apprentice route or at degree level.

Unemployment rates had been falling up to 2019 - but long-term unemployed remain an issue

	NMDDC	NI	NMDDC ranking	Latest Data
ILO Unemployment rate (% of Labour Force)	2.8%	2.8%	5 th	2019

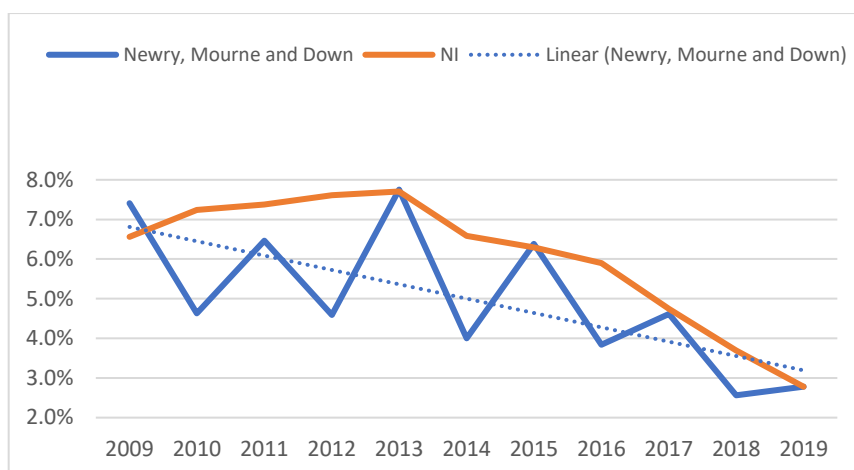
Source: NISRA LFS

ILO unemployment rates⁴ stood at 2.8% of the total labour force in NMD in 2019, a new low for unemployment in the district in advance of the pandemic. Unemployment rates have been falling in the district for a decade, from a peak of more than 7% in 2009. The last peak was in 2013 (>7% in that year) and marked a combination of high levels of unemployment in sectors such as Construction and lay-offs due to austerity measures impacting public sector jobs.

Figure 4 shows both the annual fluctuations in the unemployment rates - which arise from sample size - and the downward trend line. In the past decade the unemployment rate in NMD has been consistently lower than the NI average, a reversal of the position in previous decades. The unemployment rate is forecast to rise this year and next before reversing over the following three years (2023-2025) to get closer to the 3% level again.

Figure 4: ILO unemployment rate, NMD and NI, 2009-2019

⁴ ILO rates refer to individuals who are out of work, actively seeking work in the past month and available to work within 2 weeks.



NMD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ILO unemployment rate	6.3%	3.8%	4.6%	2.6%	2.8%
Numbers of unemployed	4,800	3,400	3,600	2,000	2,200

Source: NISRA LFS and UUEPC Local Model

Figures for youth (16-24 year olds) has increased to 1,170 in 2020. This is directly related to the difficulties many school-leavers face when trying to enter the labour market for the first time, something which becomes even more challenging when the economy enters a recession as in 2020. The NI rates of youth unemployment rose sharply from 6.5% in 2.15 to 7.10% in 2020. With 1,170 16-24-year olds in the Council area unemployed in 2020, this represents 10% of the NI Youth unemployment rate.

NMD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Youth Unemployment (18-24 year olds)	6%	4.70%	3.6%	3.1%	3.7%	8.10%
Numbers of unemployed	920	705	535	450	530	1,170
NI Youth unemployment %	6.5%	5.4%	4.2%	3.75	3.7%	7.10%

The long-term unemployed (out of work for more than a year) are a group of particular interest for the LMP. They are also quite a large group of people in the NI labour market, currently accounting for 32% of the unemployed which is a similar rate to recent years. Past data from the Claimant Count (most recently available in 2017) about the long-term unemployed in NMD was that the rate was generally 2-3% lower than in NI as a whole. **If this continues to hold at the Council level, the estimated number for NMD in 2022 would be 1,020-1,120 people.**

One thing that previous experience for NI as a whole suggests (and probably also for NMD) is that both youth and long-term unemployed rates surge quickly in any recession and subsequently fall slowly in a recovery. Given the expected rise in unemployment in both 2021 and 2022 these figures will be ones for the LMP to closely monitor.

Economic inactivity rates remain high but have been falling

	NMDDC	NI	NMDDC ranking	Latest Data
Inactivity rate (% of 16-64 year olds)	22.9.%	27.0%	2 nd	2020

Source: NISRA LFS

Economic inactivity will be a long-term challenge for any employability strategy as NI and many Council areas have among the highest rates in the UK and Ireland. Although we do not have the data at Council level to explain local patterns and causes of inactivity a few key NI trends may bear further consideration:

- Inactivity rates among the sick and disabled have remained at a similar level since the 1990s. One reason for this is that less than 1 in 5 of this category say they are definitely/likely to work again – making this a harder to reach category.
- Inactivity rates among students fluctuate from year to year and depend on the level of part-time jobs that are available and therefore the economic health of sectors such as Retail and Accommodation & Hospitality.
- Inactivity among those with caring duties has tended to fall since the 2000s and this is mirrored by a fall in the female inactivity rates.
- However, lone parents are a group that have consistently higher than average inactivity rates suggesting a suite of childcare supports being necessary in activation efforts.

Approximately 40% of the economically inactive in NI are a combination of the long-term sick, disabled persons and those who have become 'discouraged' in seeking work.

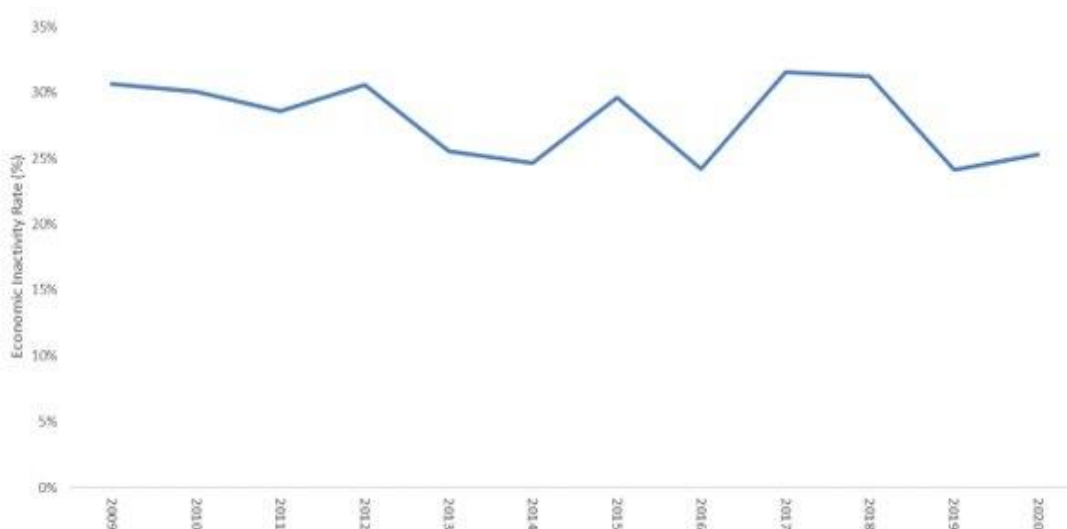
Another 35% are people who are inactive for reasons of family caring duties or retired and tend to cite as barriers work opportunities, childcare and other caring responsibilities.

The final 25% of the inactive are students unable to find part-time work and unwilling to due to studying responsibilities. If we exclude students we find that **generally in**

NI, close to a third of the inactive would like to work, including 23% of those registered as sick/disabled.

In NMD the inactivity rate for residents has fallen significantly since 2009 – from more than a third of those aged 16-64, to closer to a quarter. In numerical terms this suggests between **26,000 and 30,000** people in the Council area are inactive for one of the reasons provided above with perhaps a quarter of these for reasons of studying.

Figure 5: Economic inactivity rates, NMD 2009 - 2020



NMD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Economic inactivity rate	29.6%	24.2%	31.5%	31.2%	24.1%	22.9%
Est. numbers of inactive	32,500	26,600	34,800	34,400	26,600	26,000

Source: NISRA LFS and UUEPC Local Model

The patterns of inactivity suggest two things to consider in any intervention:

- The need to carefully target the groups who are furthest from the labour market and most needing support, which would certainly mean excluding students and **focussing on those who show consistently high rates of inactivity (e.g.: lone parents, disabled, etc.)**.
- The distance from the labour market is often related to not only the time spent outside it but also the extent of other non-work barriers to overcome, suggesting a **need to have activation measures which seek to bring people closer to the labour market as a first step**.

Levels of qualifications are improving and generally in line with the current jobs available in NMD

Qualifications Levels	NMDDC	NI	NMDDC ranking	Latest Data
Above degree level (% of WAP)	41.3%	38.4%	4 th	2020
Below Degree level	47.6%	48.9%	8 th	2020
No qualifications	11.1%	12.7%	7 th	2020

Source: NISRA LFS

The economic impact of formal qualifications can be seen in the facts that qualification levels are crucial for both the point at which people enter employment, and also their potential earning power over their working lifetime.

Qualification attainment levels have been improving in NMD in recent decades, partly due to more people staying on longer in education and training, but also as some of those people with no formal qualifications retire from the labour force. Forecasts for future skills demand in NMD (and elsewhere across NI) point to an increasing demand for qualifications at Degree level and above, so that past improvement will need to continue and probably accelerate. Source: UUEPC, Economic Forecasts.

In 2019 more than half of those aged 16-64 in NMD had qualifications below degree level. This share has remained consistent over time and, if it follows the NI trends, this would mean that a shift has taken place in NMD whereby greater numbers are achieving up to A-Level or foundation degree/HND as opposed to solely having GCSEs. As will be noted below we are also seeing a growing range of qualifications, including the Modern Apprenticeship, pointing to more demand for skills in the workplace.

The improvement in the levels of qualifications held by residents in NMD means that the percentage of the 16-64 year olds with no qualifications has fallen from 24% in 2009 to 13% a decade later with much of the difference being taken up by those with degree level and above. The ranking for NMD has risen by one place over the same period, suggesting more of an absolute improvement than a relative one. However, this suggests that **approximately 14,000 of the working age population in NMD have no formal qualifications.**

A second challenge, in terms of employability, is to match qualifications levels to the needs of the local economy. The skills barometer research from 2019 suggests that the current qualifications required by workplace jobs in NMD and neighbouring ABC were below that of the population. However, this can hide situations where individual

employers struggle to fill positions with specific skills requirements, something which is often mentioned in any consultations.

Graduate unemployment and over-qualification

Data at the UK and NI level for 2019 suggests that graduate unemployment rates were at their lowest since the 1970s and were much improved on the difficult years of 2013-2017. The general trend has been for graduate unemployment to be 0.5% lower than the NI average, suggesting it was 2.5% in 2019. There is no graduate employment figures for NMD but the evidence would suggest that this picture will not be very different.

However, **students graduating in 2021 or 2022 will find a more difficult recruiting labour market than in 2019 and graduate unemployment is likely to rise in line with the general trends.** This is also likely to see an increase in numbers working in jobs – the Retail and Administration Services sectors tend to see large pools – for which they are over-qualified.

This issue of over-qualification has been an issue in NMD as it is in many local labour markets. **The skills barometer research from 2019 suggests that the current qualifications required by workplace jobs in NMD and neighbouring ABC can often be below that of the population.** This is changing and future skills demand forecasts for the district (as elsewhere across NI) point to an increasing demand for qualifications at Degree level and above, which may deal with the over-qualification issue over time.

The improvement in the levels of qualifications held by residents in NMD means there is an increasing number of graduates entering the labour market. Two points suggest themselves:

- **Short-term issues arising from COVID-related problems may need addressing through supports for firms willing to take on graduates;** and
- Tackling of over-qualification issue needs to take into account the positive and necessary experience gained from first employment for many and therefore the **need to improve on 'job skills' – may point to greater promotion of 'placement' opportunities in local firms during the Higher Education (HE) course.**

School-leavers at risk of unemployment

There is no data available at the district level for youth unemployment (18-24 year olds). However, as noted above, the NI-level evidence suggests that youth unemployment tends to be nearly 3 times greater than the average rate. In Q1 2021

NI unemployment rate is 3.2% and youth unemployment 9.1%, up from 6% in Q2 2020.

Typically for school-leavers the vast majority will enter further/higher education, training or employment and not become part of the Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEETs) group. The latest data for NMD (2019/20) is that an average of **4.1% of school-leavers become NEETs**, slightly below the NI average (4.7%).

This equates to **less than 100 school-leavers out of more than 2,200, with many leaving school with less than 5 GCSEs (A*-C) which points to the need for further qualifications but not within a formal education setting.**

The 2017 deprivation data for NMD would suggest that NEETs tend to be highly concentrated in some Super Output Areas (SOAs) with 23 SOAs out of 84 having a higher than average share.

Apprenticeships

The Higher Level or Modern Apprenticeships have proved an increasingly popular route for school-leavers. In NMD the numbers participating reached 766 in October 2020, the highest level of participation reached yet. Apprenticeships have become a more popular pathway over time as the numbers of opportunities and diversity of these has improved. Between 2013 and 2020 the average number of participants has been 690.

However, there remains room for improvement. NMD has a strong percentage of school-leavers entering apprenticeships but has tended to be lower than in other Council areas, in particular those with strong manufacturing bases (ABC and Mid Ulster).

Promotion of apprenticeships – perhaps with further support for businesses – and Training for Success (where NMD has a slightly above-average share of school-leavers) is worth consideration.

Labour market impacts of COVID-19: rises in redundancies, claimant count and numbers furloughed

	<i>NMDDC</i>	<i>NI</i>	<i>NMDDC ranking</i>	<i>Latest Data</i>
Claimant Count rate (% of WAP)	4.2%	4.3%	=8 th	June 2021
Rate furloughed (% of eligible jobs)	9.5%	7.9%	1 st	June 2021

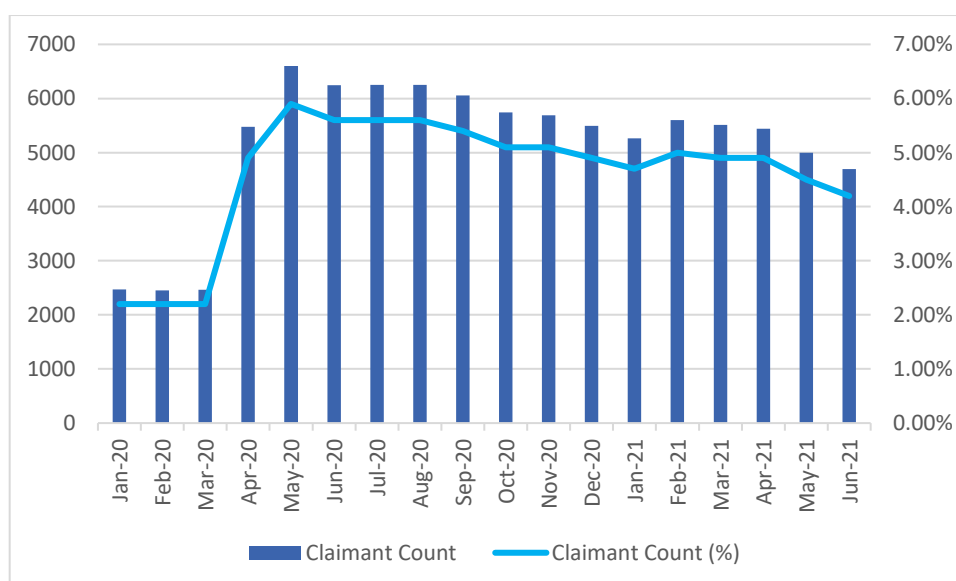
NMD	June 2017	June 2018	June 2019	June 2020	June 2021
Claimant Count rate (% of WAP)	2.1	1.9	2.2	5.6	4.1
Claimant Count #	2345	2170	2495	6245	4585

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 has been significant. The initial economic cost has seen the output of the NI economy contract by 10.5% in 2020, with a forecast that this output will return to pre-COVID levels in mid-2023.

The impacts on the labour market have been slower than usual to emerge, not least because of government furlough Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and self-employed (SEISS) schemes. Since March 2020 the COVID labour market impacts can be seen at the NI level by reductions in the number of self-employed and in total numbers of hours worked (with the exception of some sectors such as Health & Social Care). The furlough scheme certainly acted as a buffer against widespread lay-offs in the labour market. Despite this, there have been significant redundancies in the district.

New applicants for Universal Credit record the first responses to drops in income. **In the Council area the numbers on the Claimant Count almost doubled since the beginning of 2020 (as shown in Figure 6), to stand at 4,700 in June 2021, with much of this increase occurring by May 2020.**

Figure 6: Claimant Count numbers and rate (%), NMD, Jan. 2020-June 2021



Source: NINIS Experimental Claimant Count and UUEPC analysis

The CC data provides a local picture of the pandemic's impacts, **with larger rises among women** and in both wards with traditionally high levels, but also some new areas. **The rise for women may reflect the types of jobs and sectors in which the labour market impacts were sharpest, notably Retail and Hospitality.** Some of the wards in the Council area with the highest rates of the working age population on the Claimant Count (for example Ballybot, Daisy Hill and St Patrick's in Newry and Crossmaglen) have long had higher-than average rates. However, they have been joined by other wards, including Murlough and Bessbrook, where large increases in rates and numbers of people have been seen in 2020.

The government furlough and self-employed schemes were another signal of COVID-19's impacts locally. The numbers of jobs furloughed in NMD and the numbers of self-employed persons claiming SEISS had been consistently been slightly higher than the NI average since the supports began in April 2020. At the peak in July 2020 NMD had more than 24,000 people furloughed (34% of the eligible number) and a further 11,000 self-employed claiming SEISS.

The furlough scheme has now ended. The difference between the NI and NMD furloughing rates cannot be explained by variance in sectors such as Retail and Hospitality, but in higher-than-average numbers furloughed in the Manufacturing and Construction sectors. This may reflect the presence of some larger firms associated with the travel and aviation sectors which have been severely affected.

The uneven economic impacts from the COVID-19 crisis could be seen in who had been furloughed. Those working in face-to-face professions have been less able to work remotely than professional workers. **Redundancies and furlough impacted younger workers and lower-earners most pointing to the need for attention to be paid to youth unemployment in any interventions.** This reflects the sectoral mix where Hospitality, the Arts & Entertainment and (parts of) Retail have been worst impacted. Retail has only been sheltered by the fact that essential (typically food) retail had been allowed to continue trading and performed well.

The sectoral impacts of COVID-19 will have to be monitored to see whether these impacts are passing or not. The Retail sector faces intensified questions about its future and this is critical because of the numbers employed there and the fact that the sector is an entry point for many with lower qualification levels. Retail will continue to be a large employer but not quite as large and this raises questions about reallocating people to other jobs.

The assumption that the Hospitality sector will continue to grow as tourist numbers increase has been shaken by COVID-19. However, we expect employment to recover and pass the 2019 peak and recruitment issues are already appearing in this industry

(for chefs and other skilled staff). Manufacturing is likely to emerge on a similar path of employment numbers recovering quickly and issues arising in particular skills areas.

This suggests that any intervention should meet two needs:

- **Prevention of short-term job losses in particular sectors becoming longer-term issues – by use of the full range of mentoring, coaching and job-matching services;** and
- **Facing up to any structural changes – in Retail in particular as well as parts of Manufacturing – by reskilling of some staff for new jobs and re-allocation of skilled staff into other parts of the same sector**

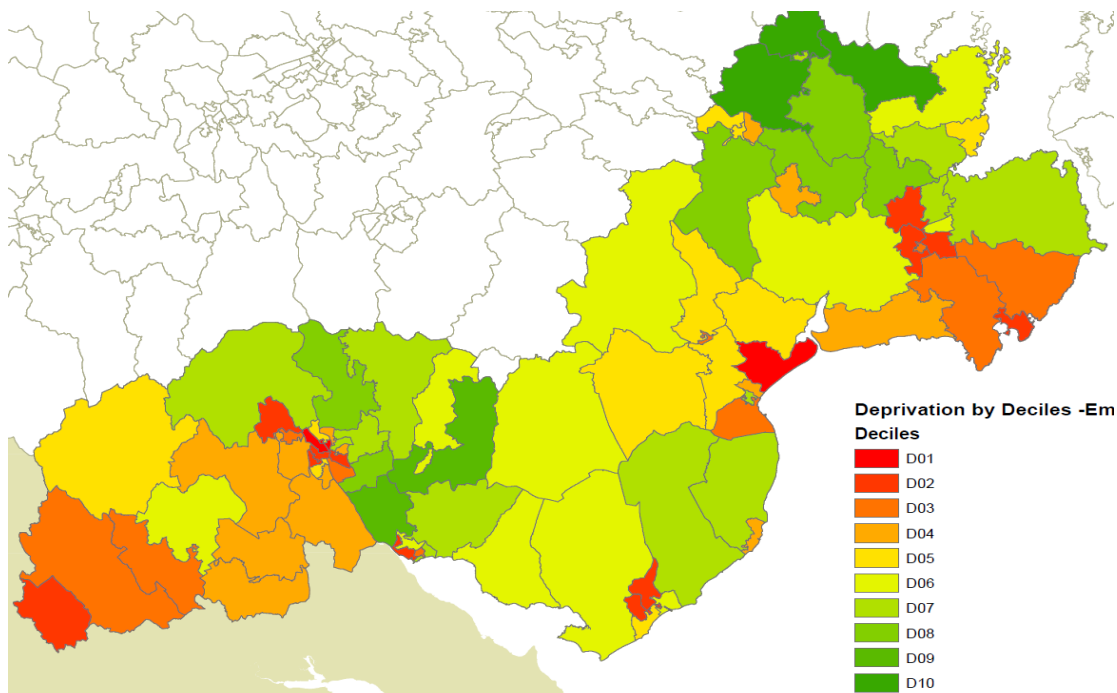
Geographical patterns in the Council area for levels of employment deprivation and no/low qualifications

In any assessment of the local structures of the labour market in NMD it is important to note that there are distinct variations across the Council area. The data from the 2017 NI Multiple Deprivation Measures (released in April 2018) offers some insight into these patterns at the Super Output Area (SOA) level.

Maps available from the NMDDC Data Hub of measures of labour market deprivation (those in receipt of benefits or without income from work) highlight the variations by SOAs in the district. The highest levels of employment deprivation (where 30% of the population are in receipt of benefits or without income from work) can be found in urban SOAs in Newry, Downpatrick and Crossmaglen, as well as rural areas including Murlough (near Newcastle) and Ardglass.

Unsurprisingly, any map of deprivation by qualifications (those who have no or low levels) follows a similar pattern of SOAs to that of economic deprivation. However, across the district fewer SOAs fall into the bottom deciles, reflecting a lower level of qualifications deprivation generally in NMD when compared to other parts of NI.

Figure 6: Employment deprivation, NMD, 2017



Source: NISRA and NMDDC Data Hub - Key: The deciles refer to which 10% band the Super Output Areas are found in ranging from the Bottom 10% (dark red) to the Top 10% (dark green).

These maps offer some insights into the spatial patterns of employability challenges across the Council area – the issue that employment deprivation is usually correlated with urban cores but also that some rural areas will have particular issues around qualifications and income deprivation – the latter being critical to people accessing labour market opportunities that lie beyond a certain distance.

Labour Market Upskilling

There is no data at district level on skills levels and there is room for improvement here. At NI level in Q1 2021 there is a 32% difference in employment rates between high and low skilled workers, the largest gap across Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. If anything the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to widen this gap still further given the pressure on some sectors and the acceleration of trends such as digitisation, which require time and training for workers to adapt.

The recently published OECD Skills Strategy for NI offers a range of recommendations for locally-tailored courses and financial incentives which should be considered further by the LMP.

Quality Employment

Job or work quality has recently come to the fore, not least due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the debate over essential work. This is now an element of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) questionnaire and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

(ASHE) at NI level which will allow better analysis of this issue, which is critical not least for retention of employees and attraction of new staff.

To assist with this work by the LMPs there is new research from NISRA⁵ which has identified eight different indicators of work quality including:

- Flexibility (eg: flexitime contract);
- Involvement in decision making by employees;
- Belief that the job offers opportunities for career progression;
- Secure (permanent) employment,
- Working adequate hours (neither over nor underemployed);
- Earnings above the Real Living Wage;
- Job satisfaction; and
- Belief that he/she carries out meaningful work.

Much of the data is taken from the LFS so, again, there are difficulties in making this available at local government district (LGD) level and a compromise of annual percentages at a sub-regional level of 'batched' Council areas might be best. However, **there is scope for a work programme for research and analysis on an ongoing basis on work quality to see how this changes over time.**

In terms of earnings there is data available for NMD on an annual basis from ASHE, the latest data for 2020. This shows that NMD has the second highest level of median weekly wage for jobs located in the Council area (£428 per week), trailing Belfast by 14%. This has risen from £347 in 2015, a rise of 23% which is well ahead of the NI increase (+13%).

When it comes to wages of employees who live in the Council area the median weekly wage in 2020 was slightly higher at £431 but the fifth ranking district. This too had risen 13% from 2015. **This suggests that average weekly wages earned by residents of the Council area are very slightly higher (£3 per week gross) than the wages paid by jobs located there.**

However, with reference to quality work, there were approximately 20,000 employee jobs in NMD paid below the National Living Wage in 2019, 29% of the total number. The positive story is that this share has been falling over time (down from 31% in 2017), a sign of one element of work quality that is improving.

Self-Employment

The profile of the self-employed in NI in 2019 was typically male, >40 years old, works in Construction, Agriculture and Other Services (inc finance), and works for themselves

⁵ NISRA, *Work Quality in Northern Ireland* (February 2021).

rather than employing anyone.⁶ This is unlikely to have changed greatly, though we do know that 80% of the employee jobs lost in 2020 were self-employed people as COVID-19 made it difficult to continue this work.

There has not been any data since 2017 at Council level for self-employed but UUEPC analysis has found that the three Council areas with the highest rates of self-employment were Fermanagh & Omagh, Mid Ulster and NMD. At that stage men were three times more likely to be self-employed in NMD and fewer than a quarter (23%) employed anyone.

What is the outlook for the labour market in NMD?

The local forecast for NMD is similar to the NI picture, though with an expectation that the labour market may recover at a slightly faster pace.

Both unemployment and inactivity are expected to remain high and perhaps peak in 2022 before beginning to decline later in 2022 into 2023. Source: UUEPC, Economic Forecasts

Forecasts to 2025 in NMDDC	Numbers	Rate	Nos change from 2020	Rate change from 2020
Employment	75,600	74%	+1,120	+1%
Unemployment	2,900	3.3%	+150	+0.2%
Inactive	26,400	24.3%	-1,500	-1.7%

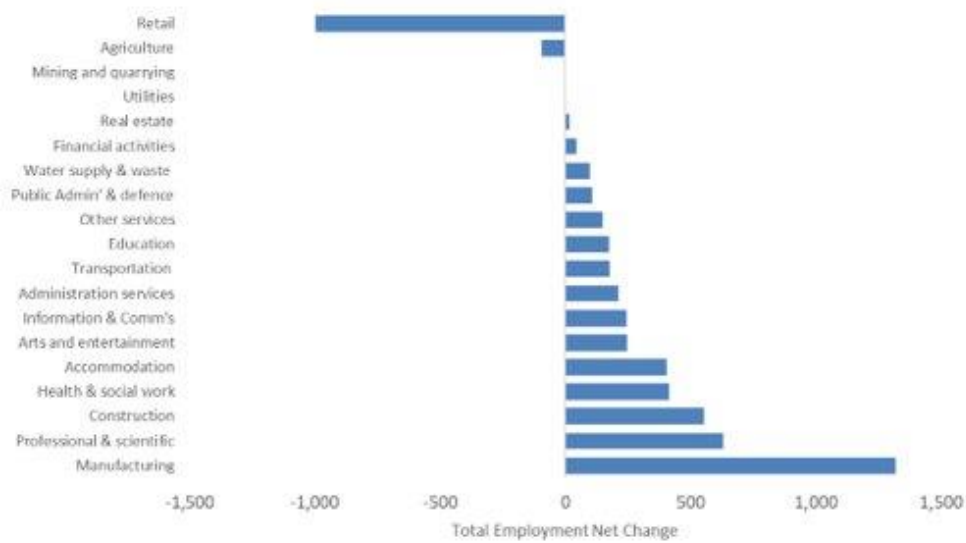
Over the decade 2020-2030 the UUEPC forecast total employment growth in NMD of 3,700 new jobs, with almost 2,000 of the additional jobs in two sectors: Manufacturing and Professional & Scientific Services. Retail could see almost 1,000 job losses locally over the decade with much of this concentrated in the first few years and little growth thereafter. Losses in Accommodation or Hospitality are forecast to be recouped by 2025, with 400 new jobs added in the second half of the decade.

The outlook for the labour market is a positive one in the medium term so that the work of the LMP should not only focus on providing employability supports to those far away from employment but also in-work and close-to-work upskilling as new jobs may need refreshed or new skills. It will be possible to say more on the skills later in the year as the NI and sub-regional skills barometers are completed. In the meantime, the general picture of higher demand

⁶ NISRA, *Self-Employment in Northern Ireland in 2019* (May 2020).

for intermediate and higher skills in new job opportunities – and the sectors which will see growth as noted in Figure 5 – holds true.

Figure 5: Changes in employee jobs by sector, NMD, 2020-2030



Source: UUEPC Local Model

Conclusions

The overview of the local labour market structure provided in an earlier section and the ideas for some areas of work both highlight the lack of annual data for later than 2019 in some cases and the lack of any data at all below the NI level for other indicators (long-term unemployed, graduate unemployment etc. **The need for better local data – more timely and at a sub-regional (if not LGD) level – is clear for the future success of the LMPs.** See the Appendix for more detail on data availability.

This assessment is designed to provide a basis for the LMP in NMD to develop its own local input which goes beyond the sometimes dated statistics, especially given the COVID impacts. The assessment is intended to be a starting point for a wider set of consultations and engagements with those involved in the labour market – both on the demand side as employers but also those shaping the supply of potential employees in schools, colleges and training/job-search organisations.

To assist in this consultation process we would suggest asking the following questions to identify some of the factors behind local conditions which might shape an Action Plan:

- Is the statistical analysis reflective of the local issues - in particular in terms of unemployment, economic inactivity and the impacts of COVID-19 on youth and long-term unemployment?
- What gaps in information exist that need to be addressed?
- Are there particular skills mismatches experienced by employers in NMD and how might these be dealt with in future?
- Are there particular impacts that COVID has highlighted with regard to in-work skills?

Appendix: Scope of the paper and data availability

Employability NI is the new approach to helping the unemployed and economically inactive to get back into work. The cross-governmental approach is led by the Department for Communities and has been designed to deliver a reduction in NI rates of economic inactivity and long-term unemployment closer to UK rates and to provide increased support for those further from the labour market such as those with health conditions (esp. mental health) and disabilities. Employability NI is also being designed to create a mechanism for government to collaborate with Councils and other Departments to offer local solutions.

The governance of Employability NI includes 11 Labour Market Partnerships (LMPs) – one in each Council area. These LMPs will be responsible for:

- Providing leadership and leading on the integration of services;
- Developing local area plans including setting targets for performance;
- Managing devolved funding and its delivery; and
- Managing arrangements for the evaluation of local interventions.

As part of planning for the new LMP strategies and action planning the Councils must provide a strategic assessment which combines:

- A statistical audit which addresses the question of how are we doing on certain population labour market measures – inactivity, qualifications, etc; and
- A consultation with key stakeholders which asks what are the quality-of-life conditions we want and what would these look like and be measured.

The Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC) was asked by Newry, Mourne & Down District Council to provide a paper to address the audit's need for "*accurate and reliable data from as many different partners as possible*" and "*a detailed review of the evidence base in order to provide a clear understanding and explanation of key issues and causes of concern within an area*".

This paper provides this statistical overview by way of an input into the wider strategic assessment. The paper was prepared by Eoin Magennis and Anastasia Desmond, from the UUEPC with assistance from Catherine Hughes and Alan Beggs of NMDDC's Data Hub.

Data availability

	NMDDC Data	NI Data	Latest NMD Data
Employment rate (% of 16-64 year olds employed)	Y	Y	2020
ILO unemployment rate	Y	Y	2019
Economic inactivity rate	Y	Y	2020
Employee jobs	Y	Y	2019
Qualifications	Y	Y	2020
Claimant Count	Y	Y	Monthly
Furloughed job numbers	Y	Y	Monthly
Long-term unemployed (>12 months)	N	Y	N.A.
Long-term claimant count (>12 months on JSA)	Y	Y	2017
Youth unemployment	N	Y	N.A.
Graduate un/employment	N	Y	N.A.
Apprenticeships	Y	Y	2019
Training for Success	Y	Y	2019/20
Self-employment	N	Y	2017

Source: NISRA Labour Force Survey, Claimant Count; HMRC CJRS.

4. Baseline Information

Below sets out the Strategic priorities for the NMD LMP, the indicators the NMD LMP will impact on and the associated baseline indicator.

Strategic Priority 1: To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership	
Indicators to which Local LMP contribute (Source)	2021/22 Baseline
% of LMP members with increased awareness of local employability and labour market issues	No Current Baseline. Relevant baselines will be established in 2022/23 for future measurement. Target 100% of LMP members with increased awareness of local employability and labour market issues
Labour Market Supply Intelligence	No Current Baseline. Relevant baselines will be established in 2022/23 for future measurement. 1 report will be produced providing analysis and on labour market supply/demand.

Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally	
Indicators to which Local LMP contribute (Source)	2021/22 Baseline
Theme 1: Access to Work	
Claimant count in NMD (NINIS LGD2014).	Claimant Count rate of 3.2% as at Feb 2022 for NMDDC LGD. (baseline below)
Theme 2: Skills for Work	
Labour Force Survey: NMD population with no qualification	Qualification levels - % with no qualification is 11.1% in 2020 (NISRA LFS) (baseline below)
Theme 3: A Place to Work	
Resident Employment Rate / working age population (NISRA LFS).	Resident Employment rate of 74.8% of the Working Age Population as of 2020 in NMDDC LGD. Resident Employment Numbers 2020 = 85,000 (baseline below)

Strategic Priority 3:

To support delivery of Employability NI

Indicators to which Local LMP contribute (Source)	2021/22 Baseline
# of participants engaged on Regional Colleges apprenticeship programme.	LMP Baseline Data is not available. Relevant baselines will be established in 2022/23 for future measurement.
# of Employers offering apprenticeship opportunities in NMD region.	LMP Baseline Data is not available. Relevant baselines will be established in 2022/23 for future measurement.

5 Year Baseline data

NMD	Feb 2017	Feb 2018	Feb 2019	Feb 2020	Feb 2021	Feb 2022
Claimant Count rate (% of WAP)	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.2	5.0	3.2
Claimant Count #	2522	2350	2470	2490	5600	3,625
NI Claimant Count	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	4.9	3.4

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/claimant-count-tables>

<https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=18&themeName=Labour%20Market>

NMD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
NMD - Qualification levels - % with no qualification	Not available	Not available	22.1%	17.9%	13%	11.1
NMD - Qualification levels - # with no qualification	Not available	Not available	25,000	19,000	14,000	12,000

NI - Qualification levels - % with no qualification	Not available	Not available	16.5%	14.7%	13.8%	12.7%
https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-annual-report-historical https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/annual-report-tables-2019 https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-annual-tables-2020						

NMD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Employment rate (% of WAP employed)	66%	73%	66%	67%	73.6%	74.8%
Resident employment numbers	72,400	80,300	72,100	73,900	81,000	85,000
NI Employment rate (% of WAP employed)	Not available	Not available	69.1	70.0	71.9	70.9
https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=18&themeName=Labour%20Market https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-annual-tables-2020						

5. Turning the Curve Methodology

At the heart of the NMD Labour Market Partnership is the need to ensure that a quality skills provision is driven by demand for skills in the local economy, leading to reduced unemployment at a local level. This approach has been consistently adopted by the NMD LMP with a concerted effort to move the Partnership from thinking about timely and outcomes-based interventions, to taking action that can be used to design and monitor Employability and Skills programmes in the future. Given this and as a result of the Policy Context, the Strategic Assessment and the Baseline indicators mentioned above, the NMD LMP has undertaken a '**Turning the Curve**' exercise which focuses in on Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) across 3 core themes.

1. Access to Work Interventions
2. Skills for Work Interventions
3. Pathways to Work Interventions

Turning the Curve – Access to Work Interventions

Today, as we move beyond a global pandemic, the labour market is particularly difficult. The LMP has taken into account that it needs to do as much that it can to prevent Long Term unemployment in the District and that there are joint efforts on several fronts to address the current labour market concerns. The relationships between work/unemployment, poverty and health are well scripted. People with a disability are more likely to be not working and not actively looking for work than people without disabilities, consequently, they are much less likely to be in employment than people without disabilities.

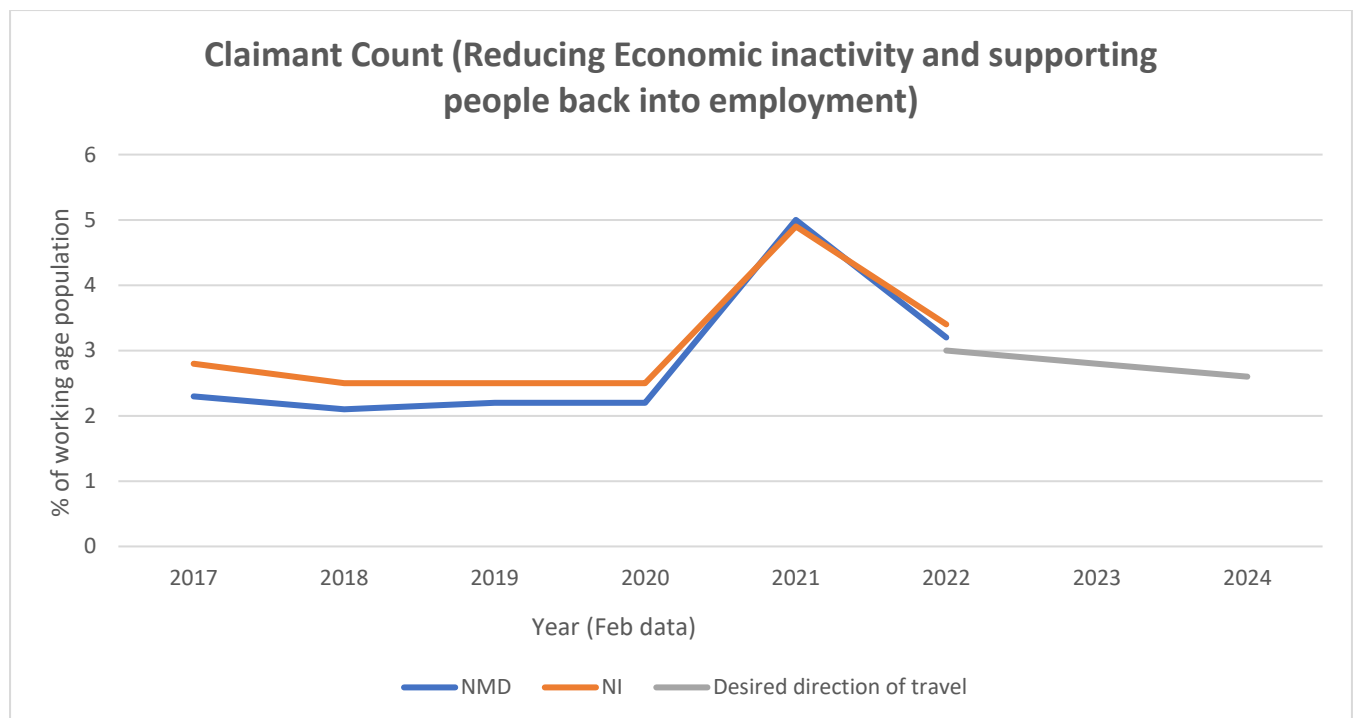
- In 2020 the employment rate for people with disabilities was 38.1%, the employment rate for people without disabilities was 80.3%. The disability employment rate gap was 42.2 percentage points (pps).
- The disability employment gap for males and females in 2020 were 49.2pps and 35.5pps respectively.
- The disability employment gap for NI in 2020 was 42.2pps, compared to 27.9pps for the whole of the UK. Since 2014, the disability employment gap has consistently been higher in Northern Ireland than the rest of the UK.
- The disability employment gap was lowest for those aged 16 to 24 (when compared with other age groups) in 2020, at 18.0pps. This is consistent with trends since 2014 and is due to lower employment rates for those aged 16 to 24 without disabilities.

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/news/disability-employment-gap-northern-ireland-2020>
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/disability-employment-gap-NI-2020>

People with disabilities face barriers such as access to transport, the physical environment and limited support in employment, all of which can impact on their ability to participate in employment. The Turning the Curve exercise by the partnership aims to lower the Claimant Count of the District, reduce economic inactivity and support people into employment.

The Turning the Curve approach on Claimant Count, Reducing Economic Inactivity and supporting people back into Employment is shown below. The most common reasons for inactivity are being in full-time education, looking after family, retirement, or being long-term sick. The labour market barriers faced by these groups are varied and complex, ranging from a lack of skills and qualifications to low levels of self-confidence and motivation and negative perceptions of, and attitudes towards, work.

The NMD LMP will seek to address these Access to Work issues by recognising the diverse nature of these groups (including Women/Disabled/those impact by Covid 19 labour market redundancies) and ensuring that interventions proposed in our Action Plan are designed to help them towards the labour market and will be person-focused and based upon voluntary participation.



- <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=18&themeName=Labour%20Market>

Turning the Curve – Skills for Work

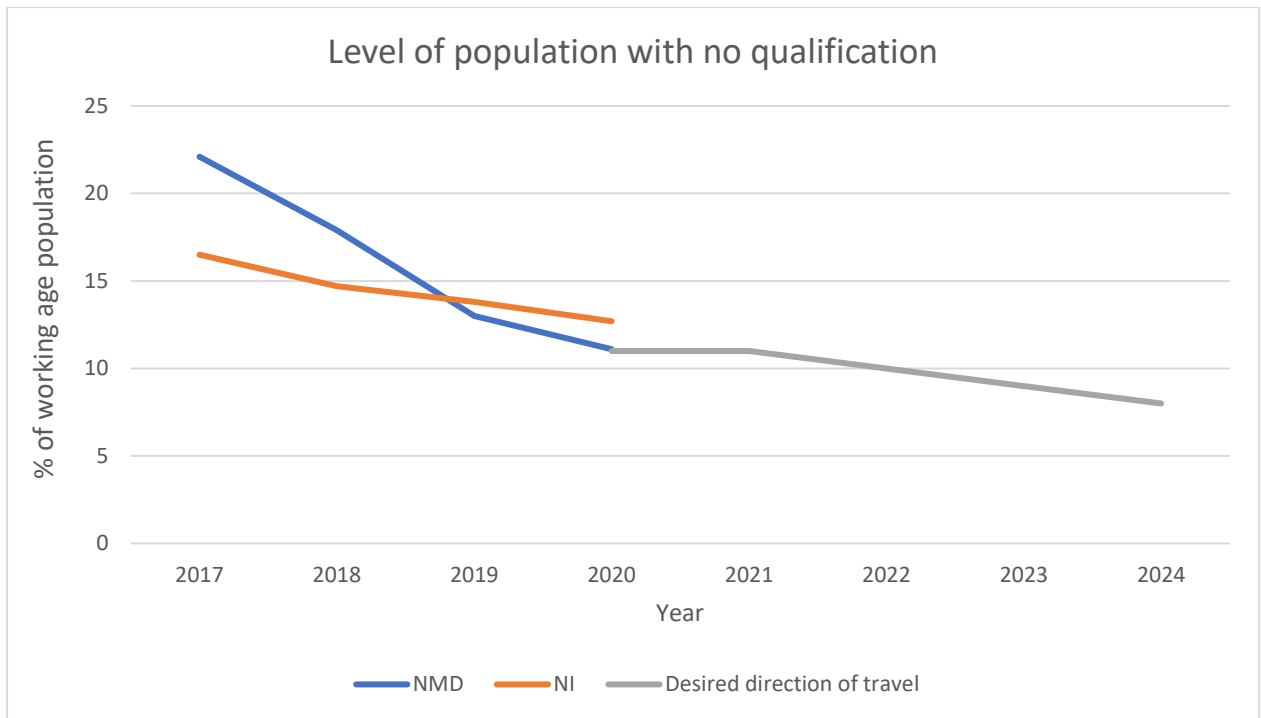
Having the right skills is a key driver of productivity and is important to individuals, businesses and the macro economy. Skills benefit individuals through increased probability of being in employment and higher wages; individuals with higher levels of qualifications tend to earn more. Businesses and employers benefit from having a more highly skilled workforce which in turn increases output and labour productivity.

For vocational and practical qualifications to support the drive towards a higher skilled workforce it is important for qualification design and delivery to focus on how to promote productivity in the longer term – people with qualifications and highly developed skill-sets are more likely to have stable work backgrounds.

With this information in mind the LMP understands the importance of offering the correct level of qualifications both vocational and practical and putting in place a system of care to ensure that each participant feels supported and encouraged to reach their full potential.

The LMP wishes to ensure that the correct methods of delivery and the implementation of differentiated learning techniques are provided. The partnership also desires to ensure that the right programmes of study and support are correctly matched to meet the needs of the outlined themes identified as high priority across the District.

The combination of a pandemic and a recession will pose great difficulties for the economy and residents of NMD. Most notably, Covid-19 has had disproportionate impact on young people + graduates getting into work, over 50's and women, as jobs in sectors where women are overrepresented (e.g. retail and accommodation) have been heavily impacted. As a result, the Turning the Curve exercise as depicted below for 'Skills for Work' will direct specific interventions to reskill in areas where demand exceeds supply. Particular focus will be on hospitality (chefs, kitchen staff and front of house), health and social care and HGV Licenses for lorry drivers which through local knowledge and employer engagement the LMP are aware of acute skills gaps. The Action Plan is also proposing additional research into local skill demand v's supply in order to identify and inform current and future employability and skills interventions.



- <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-annual-report-historical>
- <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/annual-report-tables-2019>
- <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-annual-tables-2020>

Turning the Curve - Access to Work Interventions

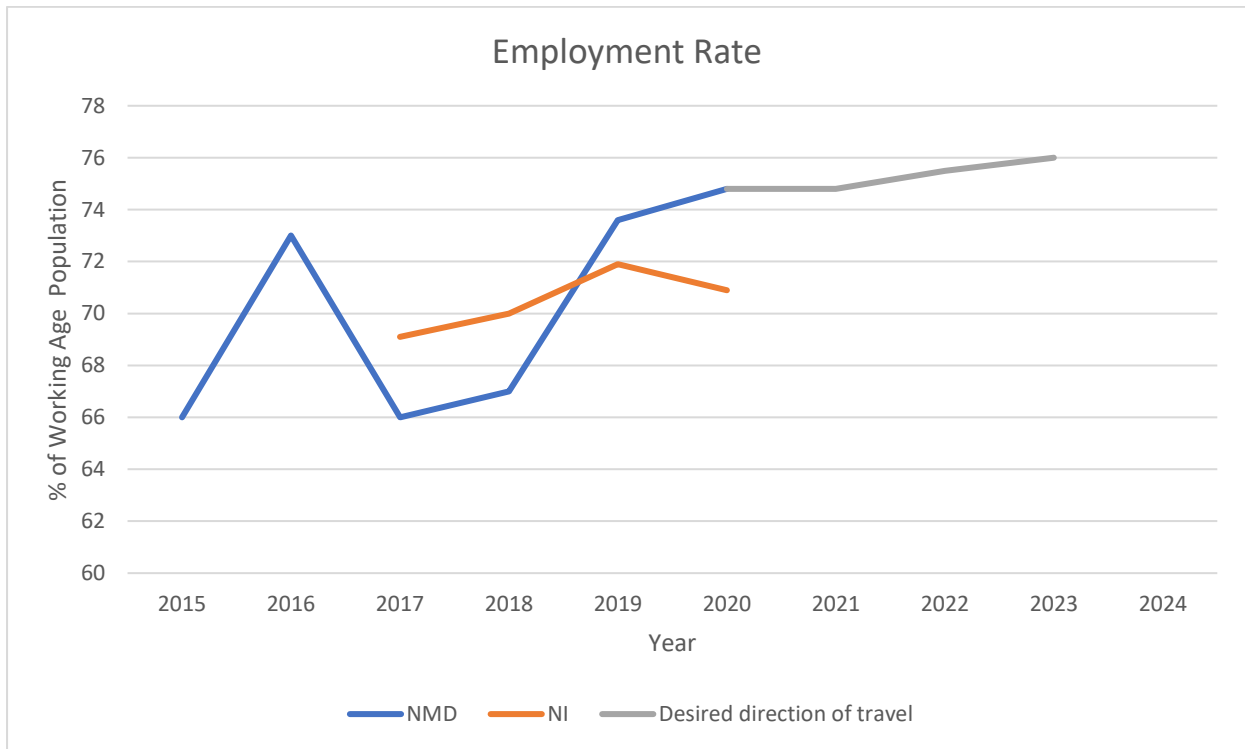
The NMD LMP has agreed to focus on understanding what the specific needs are from an employer and participant standpoint to ensure that any interventions are designed to improve employability and skills levels and which are focused on the areas which reduce unemployment and increase qualification levels in the District.

The activities identified by the LMP as a means of addressing this theme are: -

- A Promotional Campaign targeted at creating opportunities for employers to showcase their current and future skills needs to help secure future capacity and capability. This element will be promoted across all themes and target groups & include raising awareness of regional employability programmes and opportunities such as Apprenticeships and graduate employment with the District. A further aim is to create opportunities for young people, parents and schools to be better informed, speak to employers, explore options and be better equipped to secure employment locally.
- The NMD LMP takes account that it needs to do as much as it can to prevent long term unemployment within the District. It recognises there is no single

silver bullet or 'programme', instead we need a joint effort on several fronts to cope with potentially the highest level of long-term unemployment in decades. Working in partnership with strategic partners to deliver on Job and Career Events, provide career guidance and stimulate self-employment are all initiatives proposed in the NMD Action Plan.

Through tailored programmes of promotion of opportunity and a support system via the Partnership, the aim of the above is to break the cycle of Economic Inactivity and to help those most at risk of disengaging from the Labour Market, as well as to showcase the skills gaps available through our Local Employers by encouraging Apprenticeships and sectoral focused programmes, it is hoped that the NMD LMP can turn the curve on Long Term Unemployment and bringing those furthest from the labour Market back into work.



- <https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=18&themeName=Labour%20Market>
- <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/labour-force-survey-annual-tables-2020>

In summary, the LMP for NMD is committed to working with its strategic partners in the local community and with our local businesses to deliver on the initiatives within the Action Plan below.

4. Action Plan 2022 / 2023

Below sets out an annual Action Plan for 2022 / 2023 for the NMD LMP. This Action Plan is based on the assumption of an LMP dedicated resource in place, a budget in place as outlined in section 5, and operational budget available for the full 2022/23 period. Any variance to these components will impact the level of activity and performance measures achieved.

Strategic Priority 1: To form and successfully deliver the functions of the local Labour Market Partnership for the area					
Indicators	% LMP members with increased awareness of local employability and labour market issues				
Theme 1: LMP Administration & Development					
Aims & Description	Key Activities	Start Date	End Date	Performance Measures	Reporting Quarter
1.1 Effective delivery of the LMP through the appropriate resource, governance and delivery structures.	<p>Administration of LMP & Action Plan</p> <p>Ensure the delivery of the 2022/2023 Action Plan; keep the NMD strategic assessment under review; respond to new challenges in the labour market.</p> <p>Facilitate meetings of the NMD LMP, and engagement with other key stakeholders as required.</p> <p>Establish external delivery contracts to ensure effective delivery against the LMP Action Plan.</p>	01 Apr 22	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 x LMP meetings <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% attendance rate at meetings <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of LMP partners who attended feel they have increased their awareness of local employability and labour market issues 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	Management of programmes, including quality assurance. This will inform the forward planning for 2023/24 Action Plan, along with planned research (see 1.1).				
LMP Development	<p>Support LMP members in their role through, for example, training and case study visits, guest speakers, attendance at events and awareness raising of LMP activity. The role of the LMP will be promoted to users, stakeholders and the general public.</p> <p>Technical assistance will be commissioned for the development, procurement and implementation of LMP programmes / initiatives.</p> <p>An evaluation of the effectiveness of the LMP and the views of stakeholders will be commissioned.</p>	01 Apr 22	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x LMP member training opportunity <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of LMP members attended training <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of LMP partners feel they have benefited from training and are better equipped in their role 100% Successful commissioning that will maximize positive outcomes 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports
1.1 Research: NMD Labour Market Analysis	<p>Labour Market Supply Intelligence:</p> <p>Research will: 1) Scope the employability and skills requirements of NMD employers; 2) define and identify NMD disadvantaged groups within the unemployed and economically inactive population.</p>	01 Apr 22	31 Dec 22	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x Research report completed 2x Stakeholder engagement events <p>How well did we do it?</p>	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	<p>The research will undertake a sectoral analysis to identify and inform current and future employability and skills supply. It will aid in the scoping of interventions to meet skill gaps, vacancy and recruitment challenges.</p> <p>It will identify 'what works' to address the needs and support of those who wish to access employment. The research will inform the design of future initiatives which can be included in future LMP Action Plans. It will identify opportunities for new sectoral Academies.</p> <p>The research will be agreed with Colleges to create a common approach to local labour market intelligence and improvement of employability outcomes in NMD.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x High quality report providing a strong evidence base of Actions • 80% of Stakeholders invited attended the engagement events <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% more informed LMP members on labour market supply and demand requirements 	
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Strategic Priority 2: To improve employability outcomes and/or labour market conditions locally

<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Theme 1: Access to work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % reduction in the Claimant council in NMD (NINIS LGD2014) <p>Theme 2: Skills for work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % reduction in the % of NMD population with no qualification
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<p>Theme 3: NMD: A Place to work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase Resident Employment Rate / working age population (NISRA LFS). 					
Theme 1: Access to Work					
Aims & Description	Key Activities	Start Date	End Date	Performance Measures	Reporting Quarter
<p>2.1</p> <p>Work Start: pre-employment support</p>	<p>Work Start is a personalised work preparation, job search and career guidance service targeted at: economically inactive people; unemployed 18-24 year olds; 25+ long-term unemployed; those claiming UC and seeking to increase hours; and those at risk of losing their job.</p> <p>Target participants: 18-24 year olds who are unemployed for over 9 months; 25+ long-term (12 months) unemployed; those claiming ESA/UC with health problems and want to return to work; those on UC and seeking to increase hours; other economically inactive people.</p> <p>Participants will be offered active support for up to 9 months. Participants who have a job outcome will receive support for 3 months post-employment in order to support job</p>	<p>01 Apr 22</p>	<p>31 Mar 23</p>	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 110 participants engaged on programme <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88/80% participants completed the programme <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70/80% of participants engaged have positive outcomes (training and/or jobs); • 70/80% of participants engaged feel they have improved employability and more confident about 	<p>Q1-4: quarterly progress reports</p>

	<p>retention. The programme will be a 12-month programme including design, procurement and launch.</p> <p>The focus will be to support participants into employment, education or training, or other opportunities which will improve their employability.</p> <p>Work Start will provide an individualised plan for support in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going one to one mentoring from an advisor – level of support to be tailored to the individual needs. • Job search and CV development • Placement and work experience opportunities with employers • Transferable skills for industry pathways • Access/signposting to training and reskilling opportunities • Interview support and interview skills • Employability support/soft skills. <p>Signposting and referrals will include DfE Career Service, DfC Work Coaches, health service initiatives and other community services.</p>			<p>applying for employment or training opportunities</p>	
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	<p>Employers will be engaged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify suitable job vacancies for participants • create placements opportunities (unpaid) • ongoing post-employment support to employer and employee. <p>Placements will be in skill areas where opportunities for employment progression have been identified and supported by employers. Placements will be linked to the guarantee of either a job interview or apprenticeship interview.</p> <p>Support 110 people in 2022/23.</p> <p>The programme will be a 12-month programme including design, procurement and launch.</p> <p><i>Work Start will be a priority to develop. April to September: design, ITT specification, and procure.</i></p> <p><i>3rd October target date for launch of programme.</i></p>				
2.2	A pilot to test with NMD employers how hard-to-recruit vacancies can be filled through new	01 Apr 22	31 Mar 23	How much did we do?	Q1-4: quarterly

<p>High Skill Pathway: Recruitment Pilot</p>	<p>pathways for graduates and others. The initiative will be co-designed with NMD employers.</p> <p>Working with a small number of employers the pilot will explore: how recruitment support and advice can be offered to employers; how pathways can be created to fill hard-to-recruit vacancies.</p> <p>This is a pilot programme, which will be co-designed with employers. Pathways appropriate to the identified vacancies will be developed for unemployed or underemployed people with at least a Level 4 qualification. Advice will be given to help people align their skills to the hard-to-recruit vacancies.</p> <p>NMD LMP will work with universities, colleges and recruitment agencies to deliver the initiative. This pilot will link with NMD 'A Place to Work' (see 2.6) promoting the opportunities for high skilled people to work and/or live in NMD.</p> <p>The pilot will aim to work with around 5 employers and aim to fill 20 hard-to-recruit vacancies with suitable candidates from target groups. The feasibility of an employer financial contribution will be tested.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 hard-to-recruit vacancies are filled with eligible people • 5 employers engaging on programme <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% (16) participants reported that the programme was good or excellent <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 employers have met a skill gap in their business due to hard to recruit vacancies being filled • At least (16) 80% of recruits remain in employment for three months 	<p>progress reports</p>
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	<p>State aid / subsidy control will be managed if applicable.</p> <p>The programme will be a 12-month programme including design, procurement and launch.</p>				
<p>2.3</p> <p>Self-Employment: Business Start Development Programme</p>	<p>Specialised, mentoring and business support between 'Go for It' participation (the creation of a business plan) and establishing a trading company which offers either PT or FT self-employment for the business owner.</p> <p>A programme of mentoring support will be offered for up to 3 months with access to ad hoc support for a further 6 months for those higher growth potential clients.</p> <p>Eligible people will be unemployed, or economically inactive, claimants. Or those working PT, less than 16 hrs.</p> <p>Mentoring support available for 30 businesses/entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Up to 5 days one to one / one to many mentoring days per participant – blended approach</p> <p><u>Business Challenge Fund.</u></p>	01 Apr 22	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 entrepreneurs enrolled onto business start development programme <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24/80% of participants complete programme and are supported to launch & grow a business 6/20% participants signposted to other provision <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24/80% participants will commence business start-up and scale trading 19/80% participants remain trading for 6 months 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	To operate a challenge fund which provides support towards business startup costs. A set of eligibility and selection criteria to be agreed. A budget of up to £20,000 to be allocated – supporting at least 20 businesses to commence and scale trading.				
Theme 2: Skills for Work					
Aims & Description	Key Activities	Start Date	End Date	Performance Measures	Reporting Quarter
2.4 HGV Sectoral Academy (2021/2022)	<p>HGV Sectoral Academy – Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 participants • 1 Academy <p>To implement a HGV Sectoral Academy aligned to local employment opportunities</p> <p>Sectoral Academy to be quick, short intervention, a steppingstone into entry level employment position</p> <p>Haulage Employment Academy is £1,648pp (Category C Licence).</p> <p>Small budget allocated for marketing</p>	01/12/22	31/03/22	<p>How much did we do?</p> <p>1 Sectoral Academy</p> <p>15 participants</p> <p>How well did we do it?</p> <p>100% Activity delivered on time</p> <p>80% attendance at training</p> <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <p>On completion of the intervention 80% (min 9) participants feel more confident about securing PT or FT employment, or accessing further training opportunities</p>	Q1 2022/2023

	<p>Eligibility criteria to be developed with Delivery Agent however will likely include recruitment interview and driving assessment</p> <p>Delivery agent also responsible for participant recruitment and employer engagement / recruitment</p>				
<p>2.5</p> <p>Upskilling for Growth</p>	<p>Employee Upskilling: Meeting employer needs & supporting career progression</p> <p>Support employers to upskill staff with low qualification, to enable career progression for those in employment and open up opportunities for those entering the labour market.</p> <p>Engagement</p> <p>Engage with local employers to identify progression opportunities for existing staff. Support the upskilling of employees which enables job and career progression.</p>	01 April 22	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 employers engaged • 50 employees participating <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/80% Employers positive about their engagement in the programme • 40/80% of employees participating gain a new qualification <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/80% employers' benefit from employees with improved skills 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	<p>Scope with employers their upskilling requirements and address their skills shortages e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for the integration of new digital technologies • Skilling for moving to zero carbon waste/green technology. <p>Employers, in partnership with Colleges, will be able to apply for financial assistance from the LMP via an Expression of Interest application process. The payments will be made to the College in respect of the agreed training. Employers will be asked for the number of vacancies that will be realised. Maximum grants will be fixed by size of company.</p> <p>The LMP will also consider a sectoral approach by employers consider e.g. an initiative covering tourism and hospitality employers.</p> <p>Support for around 10 employers to upskill 50 employees and to create 25 entry level vacancies</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40/80% participants with improved employability & confident about gaining a promotion as a result of the training, creating a vacancy for those entering the labour market • 20% participants signposted to other provision • 25 entry level vacancies created by Q4 2022/2023 	
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	<i>This programme is an LMP priority to launch.</i>				
2.6 Employability Academies: Development Plan	<p>1: Development phase – To identify Academies for skill interventions in sectors and occupations where opportunities for employment is identified with employers. The employer labour market research (see 1.1) will inform the development of these Academies + staff resource. Opportunities to investigate: Health and Social Care academies, tourism and hospitality, financial services etc.</p> <p>2: Implementation phase: To implement Academies for skill interventions in sectors and occupations where opportunities for employment are identified with employers. For example, Transport/logistics, engineering, health and social care, tourism, retail, hospitality, health and social care, creative & digital, renewable energies, agri. food sector.</p> <p>The length of the academies will vary, however will generally last between 1-6 months.</p> <p>Target groups will be: unemployed; economically inactive; underemployed and working PT; at risk of redundancy.</p>	01 Apr 22	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86 participants engaged in an employment academy • 6 employers directly engaged in an academy <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 69/80% of participants successful complete the academy • 69/80% participants will receive employer recognized employability and skills developed <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41/60% of participants secure a job within 4 months • 80% of employers involved report to have had access to a candidate pool that matches skill requirement • 80% of participants have improved career prospects and 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	<p>Mentoring support and guidance to be available to participants to support their engagement throughout their participation on the academy and follow on support to create a stepping stone into employment or further training.</p> <p>Target to support 86 participants</p>			<p>feel more confident about applying for employment</p>	
Theme 3: NMD a Place to Work					
<p>2.7</p> <p>A Place to Work: Job & Skill Matching</p> <p>Engagement Campaign and Digital employability & skills platform</p>	<p>Promoting improved information on employers and their vacancies for people who are looking for work. Collate and communicate local employability and skills opportunities. Promote NMD as a good place to work with opportunities for progression.</p> <p>Develop a website to provide an interactive platform that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to NMD employers • Inform about key sectors • Signpost to employer vacancies • Showcase video content of businesses, including testimonials from employers and employees • Signpost to Job Centre Online 	01 Apr 2022	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1x digital platform live promoting employment opportunities across the District • 1 x A 'Place to Work' communication campaign developed and launched targeting job seekers <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 employers linking employment opportunities on the platform site • 10 employer case studies linked on the platform • 1 campaign live showing local employment opportunities 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	<p>The platform will also link with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleges: reskilling, upskilling & apprenticeship opportunities • Employability and training providers • Community and voluntary organisations. <p>‘A Place to work’ Campaign</p> <p>Establish and build a ‘Place to Work’ brand. To create awareness of the range of career opportunities available locally and the pathways to access jobs.</p> <p>Particularly targeting job seekers, economically inactive, students, and graduates. Promote employers and showcase local employment opportunities across NMD. Following market research the campaign may focus on a sectoral basis e.g. tourism and hospitality sector to assist as they re-establish following the end of covid-19 restrictions on business.</p> <p>Together the campaign and website will promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMD key sectors and industries 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1800 visits to the digital platform per month <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of Employers feel they have increased opportunity to reaching job seekers 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of employment opportunities within local industries • skill requirements within companies and sectors • Career pathways • Quality of life. <p>Campaign may include engagement events, digital communications, print communications, outdoor communications etc.</p>				
<p>2.8</p> <p>Employment Pathway Events</p>	<p>Support delivery of Jobs and Career fairs and events, including sectoral focused events where scope and opportunity exists.</p> <p>Opportunity to showcase key sectors, and career opportunities.</p> <p>Enhanced Career Guidance aligned to local opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4C UR Future – skills awareness • One Jobs Fair – NMD-wide employment opportunities 	01 Apr 2022	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 events delivered • 40 employers engaged • 1000 participants attending events <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 800/80% of participants reporting that the events were good or excellent • 32/80% of employers reported the events good platform to showcase their key sector 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two sectoral career opportunity events in: careers in health and social care; and tourism and hospitality. • One event for career teachers and schools 			Is anyone better off? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500/50% of participants in attendance signposted to employment opportunities • 32/80% employers reported that the event would assist in filling vacancies 	
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Strategic Priority 3: To support delivery of Employability NI					
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. # participants engaged in traineeship and Apprenticeship opportunities at Colleges 2. # employers offering traineeships and/or Apprenticeships 3. Increased awareness of DfC Regional Programmes 				
Aims & Description	Key Activities	Start Date	End Date	Performance Measures	Reporting Quarter
3.1 Increased awareness of employability and skills programmes	Support awareness among job seekers of the range of support available through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new digital platform (see 2.6) • Programme launches targeting participants and employers • Develop a social media profile • Work with JBOs. 	01 Apr 22	31 Mar 2023	How much did we do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 referrals into DfC regional programmes • 10 referrals onto Colleges programmes How well did we do it?	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	<p>We will increase awareness of current and future DFC Employability Programmes To help promote co-ordination and co-operation we will provide regular briefings to JBO Work Coaches, Colleges, providers, and voluntary organisations.</p> <p>We will use the Councils contacts with employers to promote how they can benefit from employability and skills programmes.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16/80% referrals accessing support <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13/80% people referred feel supported to access ongoing support 	
<p>3.2</p> <p>Promoting apprenticeships, traineeships and placements as pathways to employment</p>	<p>The LMP will work with DfC, DfE and Colleges, to increase the number of employers offering placement, traineeships and apprenticeship opportunities.</p> <p>We will promote to employers the benefits of recruiting through opportunity pathways, such as Apprenticeships, traineeships, and work experience placements.</p> <p>We will aim to increase the number of school leavers considering apprenticeships as a pathway to employment. The campaign will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bust myths • Target parents, schools • SRC Big Apprenticeship event • Promote value of employer engagement. 	01 Apr 2022	31 Mar 23	<p>How much did we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x new social media/digital campaign developed and implemented • 500 employers and students attending 2 promotion events <p>How well did we do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of attendees at events report that the event was informative <p>Is anyone better off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of participants are more informed about the benefits of a range of career pathways 	Q1-4: quarterly progress reports

	<p>A Working Group will be established by the LMP to co-design and deliver the campaign. It will help ensure opportunities match the skills required by employers, and identify new pathways, including higher-level and public-sector apprenticeships.</p> <p>We will use a wide range of communication channels including events, social media, print, and digital platforms.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% Increase in the take-up of Apprenticeships and traineeships 	
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For further Information on NMD Labour Market Partnership:

Email: business@nmandd.org

Social Media Platforms:

- www.facebook.com/nmdbusiness
- www.twitter.com/nmdbusiness
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/nmd-business/>
- <http://nmdbusiness.org/nmd-business-e-zine-sign-up1/>