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Assembly

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Dr Dan Hull

# Examining social inclusion in the arts in Northern Ireland

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This research paper examines the degree of social inclusion in the arts in Northern Ireland, focusing particularly on engagement in areas of high deprivation. Comparisons are made with other jurisdictions, and the evidence for the perceived social benefits of widening engagement with the arts is examined.

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## Key Points

- A previous study has found little ‘hard’ evidence for a direct, causal link between cultural engagement and greater social inclusion. However, it has also concluded that there are a number of reasons why such evidence may not have been available at the time.
- Within this overall picture, there are a number of specific studies which report the success of individual interventions. These include, for example, projects aimed at engaging older people, mental health patients, disaffected young people, and prisoners.
- Figures for overall attendance at an arts event suggest that around 80% of adults go to at least one arts event a year.
- For those aged 65 or older, just 55% had attended an arts event last year, though this figure is an improvement on the previous year.
- People with a disability are also much less likely to attend arts events with 60% having attended, as opposed to 84% of those without a disability.
- Figures for the proportion of ethnic minorities visiting the arts are not available.
- In terms of attendance by those from deprived areas, the evidence is mixed. Recent figures suggest that 77% of people from the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland have attended an arts event in the last year, as opposed to 87% from the least deprived areas.
- The highest attending groups are ‘full time students’ and ‘professional’ (both on 93%), with those adults who have ‘never worked’, or whose occupation is described as ‘unskilled manual’, attending around a third less (both on 60%).
- Data from ticket sales at 28 venues across Northern Ireland suggests that while a higher percentage of ticket purchases were made by groups with a relatively high income, 29% of purchases were made by groups with, generally, household incomes of less than £13,500 per year.
- An analysis of the location of ‘dedicated’ arts venues indicates that 12 out of 30 venues were situated in the most deprived areas. Journey time from the most deprived areas is, overall, shorter than the least deprived areas.
- However, this overall picture masks a degree of complexity. Across Northern Ireland there are areas of high deprivation which remain at some distance from a dedicated arts venue. For example, there are areas such as West Tyrone or Crossmaglen which are still a considerable distance away from a venue.
- A closer examination of Belfast reveals that there are areas of that city, for example within north and west Belfast, with areas of high deprivation greater than two miles away from dedicated arts venues which are mostly located in the city centre. Indeed, these are areas where car ownership is lower than average.
- In terms of the destination of arts funding, funding programmes from 2007 to 2012 have granted 76% of funding to the 20% most deprived areas.

- Comparing arts attendance across the UK and Ireland, figures for Northern Ireland suggest that it is slightly more socially inclusive than elsewhere, but those differences may not be statistically significant.
- Northern Ireland has also become very slightly more inclusive from 2008 to 2012, with figures suggest a one percentage point rise in attendance by those living in the most deprived areas.

## Executive Summary

This research paper examines the degree of social inclusion in the arts in Northern Ireland, focusing particularly on engagement within areas of high deprivation.

In terms of the effectiveness of the arts in tackling social exclusion, a key study in this regard was submitted to the UK Government in 2002. *Count Me In* examined 14 projects, and found that there was little 'hard' evidence for a direct, causal link between cultural engagement and greater social inclusion. However, it also concluded that there are a number of reasons why such evidence may not have been available at the time.

Within this overall picture, there are a number of more specific studies which report the success of individual interventions, such as projects focused on reducing feelings of loneliness among older people, in diverting young people from anti-social behaviour and towards education, in engaging prisoners in more positive relationships, and particularly in helping to reduce anxiety among mental health patients.

Some commentators have cautioned that there may be drawbacks in pursuing an 'instrumentalist' approach to arts policy. For example, some have complained that a focus on social impact may divert resources away from the 'core business of supporting the creation of the art itself. Doubts have also been expressed that arts institutions do not necessarily have the expertise to tackle specific forms of social exclusion, and that simply 'widening access' is not sufficient.

Figures for overall attendance at an arts event suggest that around 80% of adults go to at least one arts event a year. For those aged 65 or older, just 55% had attended an arts event last year, though this figure is an improvement on the previous year. People with a disability are also much less likely to attend arts events with 60% having attended, as opposed to 84% of those without a disability. There has been little dedicated research undertaken of the degree of arts engagement by minority ethnic groups.

In terms of examining the extent to which those from an area of high deprivation attending the arts, and particularly those on a low income, the evidence is mixed. Recent figures suggest that 77% of people from the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland have attended an arts event in the last year, as opposed to 87% from the least deprived areas.

The highest attending groups are 'full time students' and 'professional' (both on 93%), with those adults who have 'never worked', or whose occupation is described as 'unskilled manual', attending around a third less (both on 60%).

Data from ticket sales at 28 venues across Northern Ireland suggests that while a higher percentage of ticket purchases were made by groups containing older married people, with degrees and household incomes in the higher ranges (either £25,000+ or £50,000+), 29% of purchases were made by groups with, generally, household incomes of less than £13,500 per year.

However, this data from ticket sales also makes it clear that 66% of bookers made just one visit to one of these arts venues during 2011, with single visit bookers more likely to be 'Housing Executive Tenants', 'Poor Seniors & Solos', 'Farming Communities' and 'Small Town Renters'.

An analysis of the location of 'dedicated' arts venues indicates that just 1% of houses in Northern Ireland are situated more than 20 miles away from such a venue. In terms of their placement, 12 out of 30 venues were situated in the most deprived areas. Journey time from the most deprived areas is, overall, shorter than the least deprived areas.

Indeed, an analysis of the number of areas of high deprivation which lie within two miles of each arts venue suggests that some venues, such as the Metropolitan Arts Centre, the Grand Opera House, the Crescent Arts Centre, An Gaelaras Ltd, and the Braid Arts Centre are placed in locations where there are a large number of areas of high deprivation within a two mile range.

However, this overall picture masks a degree of complexity. Across Northern Ireland there are areas of high deprivation which remain at some distance from a dedicated arts venue. For example, there are areas such as West Tyrone or Crossmaglen which are still a considerable distance away from a venue.

A closer examination of Belfast reveals that there are areas of that city, for example within north and west Belfast, with areas of high deprivation greater than two miles away from dedicated arts venues which are mostly located in the city centre. Indeed, these are areas where car ownership is lower than average.

In terms of the destination of arts funding, funding programmes from 2007 to 2012 have granted 76% of funding to the 20% most deprived areas.

The three most commonly cited reasons preventing people from attending the arts are a lack of time, it costs too much, and 'not really interested'. Figures from Audiences NI suggest that the economic downturn has had an effect on attendance, with 7% fewer tickets sold in 2010 than in 2009.

Comparing arts attendance across the UK and Ireland, figures for Northern Ireland suggest that it is slightly more socially inclusive than elsewhere, but those differences may not be statistically significant.

Northern Ireland has also become very slightly more inclusive from 2008 to 2012, with figures suggest a one percentage point rise in attendance by those living in the most deprived areas.

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# 1 Perceived advantages of greater social inclusion in the arts

This section examines, in brief, some of the potential advantages of widening access to both arts events and arts participation, and presents some of the counter-arguments for such access.

## 1.1 What is the evidence that the arts can help with social exclusion?

The notion that the arts should have an explicit social impact, such as alleviating forms of social exclusion, has been developing since at least the 1970s, but has been the subject of more concerted policy work in, for example, England<sup>1</sup>, Scotland<sup>2</sup> and the USA<sup>3</sup> for around fifteen years.

Such policies have been seen in part as methods of tackling the image of the arts as consisting of a set of exclusive institutions, but also have formed part of a wider drive to identify the potentially valuable role which the cultural sector as a whole can play in producing social and economic benefits beyond their 'intrinsic' value.

Efforts to design policy around the arts and social inclusion have been accompanied by a number of research projects designed to examine the efficacy of such policies.

In general terms, research conducted to date has indicated that there is little 'hard' evidence to suggest a direct link between engagement in the arts and social inclusion. A key study in this respect was published in 2002; *Count Me In* was commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and presented to the New Labour government's Social Exclusion Unit. This study examined the evaluations from 14 different projects, but concluded that a causal link was difficult to establish with confidence. However, it did note that a number of potential reasons why such a link may not have been evident:

- Evaluations of the link between the arts and social inclusion may be beyond the resources of many local projects, particularly where the focus of project organisers was likely to have been on the running of the project itself;
- It may take time for wider community benefits to be observed, beyond the lifespan of the project itself. This may be the case particularly where a longitudinal study is the best form of evaluation technique;
- Definitions of 'social inclusion' can sometimes be woolly. For example, if one definition is involvement in the institutions of society and the decision-making

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<sup>1</sup> For example: West, C & Smith, CHF. 2006. "We are not a government poodle" Museums and social inclusion under New Labour'. *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11(3): 275–288.

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Museums Council. 2000. *Museums and Social Justice: How Museums and Galleries Can Work for their Whole Communities*. Edinburgh: Scottish Museums Council.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton-Sperr, P. 1995. 'Prologue', in HC. Hirzy (ed) *Museums in the Life of a City: Strategies for Community Partnerships*. Washington DC: American Association of Museums: 7–8.

associated with them, these aims may be beyond the realistic scope of single interventions alone;

- Difficulties in establishing a set of criteria against which to measure the outcome of an arts project can be exacerbated by differences of language and definition between an organisation and its sponsoring department;
- While advances have been made in the qualitative and quantitative assessment of social outcomes, some may, by their very nature, remain difficult to assess: for example, fun and a contribution to quality of life are inherently difficult to assess.

However, within this overall picture, there continue to be a number of smaller studies and projects which report the success of individual interventions, often at a local level, in promoting greater social inclusion through engagement with the arts. The following paragraphs provide some examples.

## 1.2 Specific forms of social intervention

### *The arts and older people*

There is a growing body of evidence which suggests that both participation in the arts and access to a range of arts opportunities can improve health outcomes and increase wellbeing for older people<sup>4</sup>. Much of this work is targeted at the reduction of loneliness, increasing older people's social capital, improving levels of community cohesion and tackling dementia. For example, an evaluation of a long-running programme of interaction by Dulwich Picture Gallery found that there were positive physical, mental and social outcomes, and that these were not limited to the participant alone, with carers, family, and even gallery staff reporting enrichment of their lives as a result of such programmes<sup>5</sup>. The programme partners the gallery with local doctors' surgeries, GPs and nurses so that older people can be referred to the gallery to take part in workshops. The referral placements are currently over-subscribed.

In Northern Ireland, the Arts Council has had an Arts and Older People Strategy since 2010. In 2012, an interim evaluation of the fund found that while the longer term impact of the programme is difficult to gauge at such an early stage, there was some evidence of positive social impact for older people who are at risk of loneliness<sup>6</sup>. The evaluation recommended that more could be done to publicise this funding in Tyrone, Armagh and Fermanagh, that alternative means of recruiting applicants could be explored such as through GPs and social workers, and that there was a low uptake of the award among older men.

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<sup>4</sup> Hebron, D & Taylor, K. 2013. 'Paying for the positive impact', *Arts Professional*: <http://www.artspromotional.co.uk/magazine/feature/paying-positive-impact>

<sup>5</sup> Weiner, M. 2013. 'Engaging the elderly', *Museums Association*: <http://www.museumsassociation.org/comment/26032013-michelle-weiner-engaging-the-elderly>

<sup>6</sup> Wallace Consulting. 2012. *Evaluation of the Arts and Older People Programme: Interim report*. Arts Council of Northern Ireland & Atlantic Philanthropies: <http://nia1.me/1ow>

### The arts and mental health

A study commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department of Health reviewed the nature of evidence available for participatory arts and mental health projects in England<sup>7</sup>. The study examined two projects in particular, 'Time Being' on the Isle of Wight and 'Arts on Prescription' in Stockport. It was found in these cases that there were significant improvements in patients' mood, self-esteem and ease of talking to people. There were also significant improvements in sleep and in reducing anxiety, with some also reporting increased motivation and a further interest in arts activity. A questionnaire sent to patients six months after the initial survey suggested that for some people benefits could be sustained in the longer term.

Other studies have suggested that participation in artistic activities can help connect mental health patients with employment and education opportunities, and can also have a direct impact on their mental health reducing the use of medication and services<sup>8</sup>. It has also been suggested that such activities can help patients become valued and responsible citizens, particularly through taking part in 'mainstream' activities alongside people who do not need to use mental health services.

### The arts and educational disengagement

Authors Kinder and Harland have used some key findings from the National Foundation for Education Research to examine the effectiveness of using arts education to re-engage young people who have become disaffected and rejected school<sup>9</sup>. They found some evidence that factors such as enjoyment, interpersonal skills and relationship development, as well as increased awareness of cultural and moral issues, could be brought about by increased arts education. A reduction in the 'pull' towards anti-social behaviour was also noted.

### Prison arts

A recent round-up of the work carried out by some museums and galleries in association with prisons has highlighted a number of the specific effects which access to museums and their collections and staff can have on prisoners<sup>10</sup>. For example, by learning the stories associated with artefacts, prisoners can develop empathy skills; participation in projects can be used by prison staff as a means of developing motivation and incentive with prisoners; and learning about interesting and varied subject matter can help prisoners form more meaningful connections with their families.

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<sup>7</sup> Anglia Ruskin/UCLan. 2007. *Mental Health, Social Inclusion and Arts: Developing the evidence base*. Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department of Health and Social Inclusion Unit.

<sup>8</sup> Dunn, S. 1999. *Creating Accepting Communities: Report of the MIND Inquiry into Social Exclusion and Mental Health Problems*. MIND London; APU/UCLAN Research Team. 2005. *Mental Health, Social Inclusion and Arts: Developing the evidence base. Final report from Phase 1: The state of the art in England*.

<sup>9</sup> Kinder, K & Harland, J. 2004. 'The arts and social inclusion: what's the evidence?' *Support for Learning* 19(2): pp52-56.

<sup>10</sup> Various authors. 2013. 'Museums and prisons', *Museum Practice*: <http://nia1.me/1ov>

### 1.3 Perceived drawbacks

#### 'We are not a government poodle'<sup>11</sup>

Some commentators and practitioners have been critical of the use of cultural engagement to achieve prescribed social outcomes, using the term 'instrumentalism' to differentiate such policies from simply support for the arts 'for art's sake'. In particular, two key drawbacks have been identified with instrumentalism: the evidence base for social outcomes is typically weak, and a concentration on outcomes can lead to system failure in cultural input. For example, in the arts, criticisms have been expressed that a focus on social impact can detract from the 'intrinsic' value of artistic expression. It has been argued that too much design of the potential impact of a piece of work on a viewer may inhibit the freedom necessary to create truly impactful pieces of work in the first place. In an influential think-tank publication in 2004, John Holden stated that,

*Artists and institutions do not see themselves as creating outcomes. Cultural experience is the sum of the interaction between an individual and an artefact or an experience, and that interaction is unpredictable and must be open<sup>12</sup>.*

Indeed, one commentator has stated that, '...an emphasis on predefined outcomes and criteria could squeeze out the 'valuable' part of a creative process, undermining the potential for meaningful engagement.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, there appears to have been some recognition within the arts sector that though art has an intrinsic value, the argument of 'art for art's sake' may not be sufficient alone, sounding 'patronising, undemocratic and exclusive'<sup>14</sup>.

#### Does social impact draw resources away from 'core' activities?

John Holden argued in *Capturing Cultural Value* that '...the identifiable measures and 'ancillary benefits' that flow from culture have become more important than the cultural activity itself; the tail is wagging the dog.<sup>15</sup>

West & Smith highlight a perception among museums professionals that social projects can skew time and resources away from 'core' duties (such as caring for collections and managing exhibitions), though they also state that such perceptions do not always match reality<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> 'We are not a government poodle', from Neville McKay, cited in West, C & Smith, CHF. 2006. "We are not a government poodle" Museums and social inclusion under New Labour'. *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11(3): p275.

<sup>12</sup> Holden, J. 2004. *Capturing Cultural Value: How Culture Has Become a Tool of Government Policy*. London: DEMOS: p21. <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/CapturingCulturalValue.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Selwood, S, Hall, R, Hutchison, R, Macnaught, B, O'Neill, M, Pinnock, A, Steele, D and Tait, S. 2005. 'John Holden's Capturing Cultural Value: How culture has become a tool of government policy', *Cultural Trends*. 14(1), 53: 113–128.

<sup>14</sup> Selwood, S. et al. As above, citing Holden 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Holden, J. 2004. *Capturing Cultural Value: How Culture Has Become a Tool of Government Policy*. London: DEMOS: p14. <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/CapturingCulturalValue.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> West, C & Smith, CHF. 2006. "We are not a government poodle" Museums and social inclusion under New Labour'. *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 11(3): p280.

*Are the arts sufficiently resourced and skilled to tackle social exclusion?*

As has been highlighted in the context of the work of arts and cultural bodies with prisoners, a lack of sustainability for outreach work can be a key problem. If funding for a particular social inclusion project is decreased, or if the individuals who carry out such projects leave or move on to other work, the link with the prisons and prisoners concerned is broken which can cause lasting resentment. As one coordinator put it<sup>17</sup>,

*You can't just dip in and then move on. Many prisoners share similar patterns in their lives, including being let down by adults. If museums do that too, then they join their ranks. It's more than just being inconsistent – it actually works negatively against people in prison.*

A further criticism directed towards arts and social inclusion policies is that there has sometimes been confusion between two differing objectives: firstly, the aim of simply widening access to the arts but, secondly, more specific objectives designed to tackle particular social problems and target certain social groups.

## 2 How socially inclusive are the arts?

### 2.1 What is meant by 'the arts'?

A specific list of art forms are included by NISRA in the Continuous Household Survey<sup>18</sup>. Similar categories of art form are used in surveys by the arts councils (or similar) across the UK, though Arts Council Northern Ireland includes museums in its categories of arts attendance in contrast to the other jurisdictions, and inclusion of circus events also varies.

The following is a very brief summary of the evidence available for arts engagement in Northern Ireland, particularly by disadvantaged groups. A wide range of groups could be considered disadvantaged; this paper considers specifically those living in a deprived area or from a lower income group, those with disabilities, and ethnic minority communities.

### 2.2 Overall attendance patterns

In 2012, NISRA conducted a general population survey which included a specific question module on adult engagement with the arts in Northern Ireland provided by the

<sup>17</sup> Quotation from John Vincent, coordinator of The Network, an information initiative for museums, libraries, archives and heritage sites tackling social exclusion; from Atkinson, R. 15.4.13. 'Inside out: Museums and prisons', *Museum Practice* <http://nia1.me/1ms>

<sup>18</sup> This list includes: film at a cinema or other venue; exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture; craft exhibition (not a crafts market); event connected with books or writing (such as poetry reading or storytelling); circus; carnival; an arts festival; a community festival; play or drama; other theatre performance (such as a musical or pantomime); opera / operetta; classical music performance; rock or pop music performance; jazz performance; folk, or traditional or world music performance; other live music event; ballet; an Irish dance performance; other dance event; a museum.

Arts Council<sup>19</sup>. This survey found that 82% of adults had attended at least one arts event within the last 12 months.

More recently, DCAL published the results of the Continuous Household Survey for 2012/13 which indicates that 78% of people had attended an arts event in the last 12 months. In terms of participation, 30% of adults had taken part in at least one artistic activity within the last 12 months.

### **2.3 Older people and the arts**

Both of these surveys highlighted that older age groups are currently less likely to attend arts events than any other adult age category. However, the 2012/13 findings from the Continuous Household Survey did note an increase, in that 55% of people aged 65 years or over attended an arts event in 2012/13 compared with 50% for the previous year.

### **2.4 People with a disability**

It is also clear that substantially fewer people with disabilities attended the arts in 2012 compared with those without a disability. The NISRA/Arts Council survey found that only 59% of disabled people reported attending an arts event in the last year compared with 87% of people without a disability. The latest Continuous Household Survey reports similar results, with a 60%/84% split.

### **2.5 Ethnic minorities**

Neither the NISRA/Arts Council survey nor the Continuous Household Survey report the proportion of arts attendance among ethnic minority groups, and indeed little dedicated research has been conducted in this area.

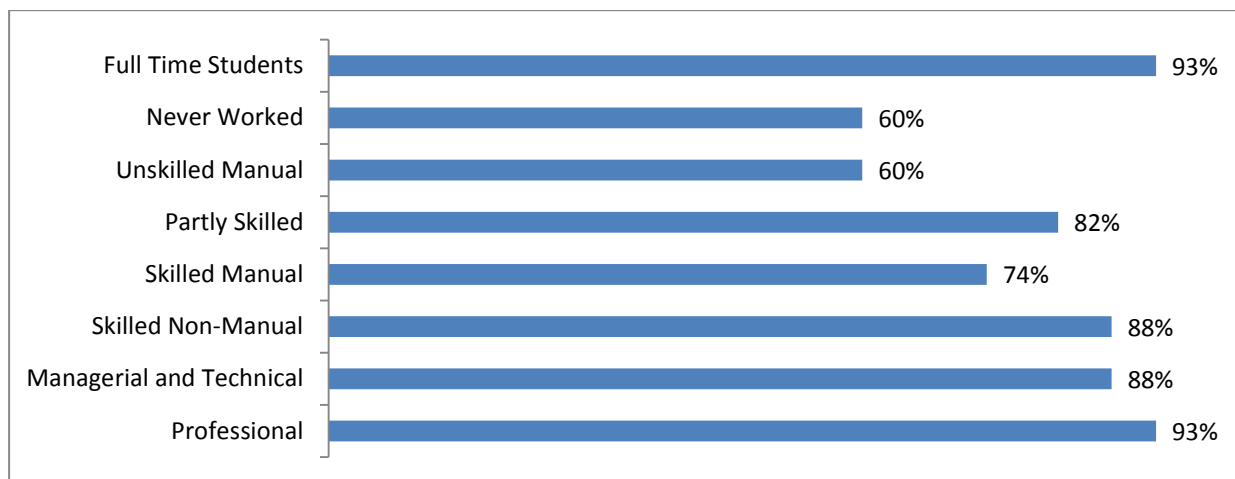
### **2.6 Areas of high deprivation and low income groups**

In terms of analysing the extent to which those from a disadvantaged background attend or participate in the arts, there are various ways of approaching this issue. One approach is to use the Multiple Deprivation Index, and in particular the income domain. The NISRA/Arts Council survey examined arts attendance and participation by survey respondents from the most deprived quintile (or 20%), and from the least deprived quintile. Results indicated that 87% of people from the least deprived areas had attended an arts event, as opposed to 77% from the most deprived areas.

Looking at this issue in more detail, the NISRA/Arts Council study breaks down results for arts attendance into a number of different socio-economic groups.

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<sup>19</sup> Strategic Development Department. 2012. *Arts and Culture in Northern 2012: A summary of key findings from the General Population Survey examining behaviour and attitudes towards the arts.*

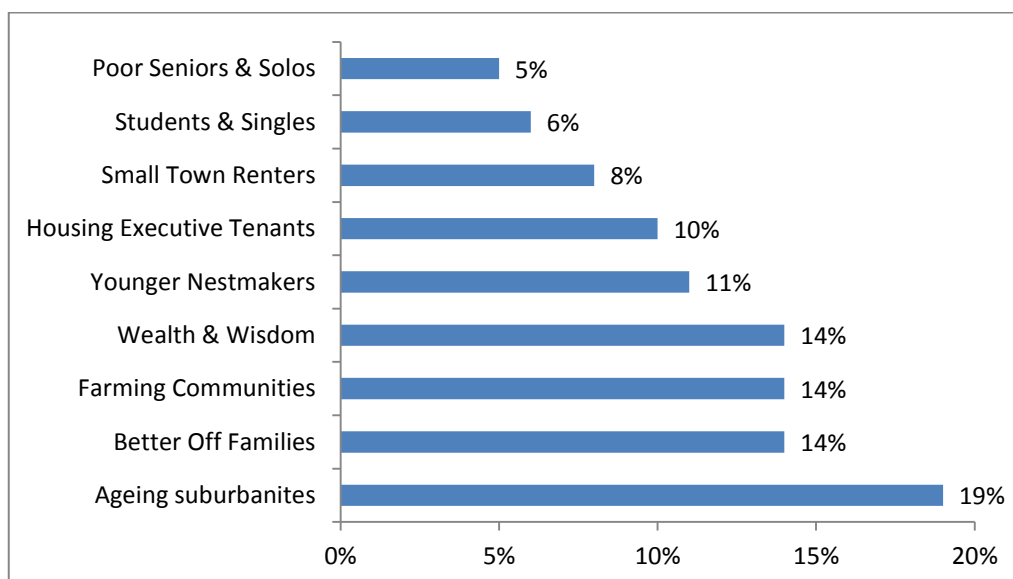


**Figure 1: Attendance at arts events by socio-economic group in Northern Ireland**

It can be seen from this that the highest attending groups are ‘full time students’ and ‘professional’, with ‘never worked’ and ‘unskilled manual’ attending around a third less.

The organisation Audiences Northern Ireland collates and analyses data from ticket sales across 28 arts organisations.

Data published as part of their *Audience Review 2012* suggests a relatively broad social spread among ticket buyers for the year. The household of those who had booked tickets during 2011 was demographically profiled using the Mosaic NI classification system, which segments consumers into nine demographic groups, based on the postcode attached to the customer record. At least 20% of households in Northern Ireland visited the arts during 2011.



**Figure 2: Demographic analysis of ticket purchasers for arts events in 2011**

It can be seen from this segmentation that no one social category dominated ticket purchases in 2011. While the largest group are ‘Ageing Suburbanites’, 10% of ticket sales were made by Housing Executive tenants. Overall, a higher percentage of ticket

purchases were made by groups containing older married people, with degrees and household incomes in the higher ranges (either £25,000+ or £50,000+). However, 29% of purchases were made by Mosaic NI groups with, generally, household incomes of less than £13,500 per year.

There is some regional variation; while 'Ageing Suburbanites' are the largest group of arts attenders overall, arts organisations in Belfast are most likely to also have audiences from the 'Better Off Families' and 'Wealth & Wisdom' demographic categories, while those in Derry/Londonderry are most likely to also have attenders from groups such as 'Farming Communities', 'Housing Executive Tenants' and 'Younger Nestmakers'.

However, this analysis also makes it clear that 66% of bookers made just one visit to one of these arts venues during 2011, with single visit bookers more likely to be Housing Executive Tenants, Poor Seniors & Solos, Farming Communities and Small Town Renters.

Put simply, while the *Audience Review 2012* indicates a fairly broad social spread of households attending arts events, those with a higher income tend to go to such events more often, and also to a wider variety of events.

There are two further questions which may be of relevance when examining this issue: how has arts attendance changed through time, and how does Northern Ireland compare with the rest of the UK and with the Republic of Ireland?

## **2.7 Attendance and venue location**

The Arts Council Northern Ireland and DCAL have conducted a joint project which examined the distribution of government funded arts venues, activities and festivals throughout Northern Ireland.

Firstly, the project calculated the percentage of households within 20 miles of a dedicated arts venue. In total, 30 such venues were plotted, each of which had been funded through the ACNI capital build programme since 1994. For the purposes of this analysis, only large scale arts venues with general public access, dedicated performance space and seating capacity have been included in the analysis.

The results indicate that 1.1% of buildings in Northern Ireland were more than 20 miles from an arts venue (0.85% or 6,782 were households); in other words, around 99% of households were within 20 miles of an arts venue.

The arts venues were also plotted against the most and least deprived areas within the income deprivation domain of the Multiple Deprivation Measures. The results of this analysis indicate that 12 out of 30 venues were situated in the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland.



The Assembly Research and Information Service (RaISe) carried out the same distributional analysis (arts venues in relation to the most deprived areas by income domain), but also conducted a network analysis to ascertain which areas lie at a relatively great distance from an arts venue via the road network. The results of this study indicate that those living in the most income deprived quintile have a shorter journey time and distance to the nearest dedicated arts venue than those living in the least deprived quintile.

	Small Area centroids which lie in the most income deprived quintile in Northern Ireland	Small Area centroids which lie in the least income deprived quintile in Northern Ireland
Average distance to nearest art centre (miles)	3.2	4.4
Average walk time to nearest art centre (minutes)	76	105
Average drive time to nearest art centre (minutes)	6	9

**Table 1: Journey time analysis for dedicated arts venues**

However, while journey time from the most deprived areas may be shorter, this result may not be a true measure of ease of access given that car ownership in areas of high deprivation are lower than areas of low deprivation: indeed, 44.6% of households in the most income deprived quintile have no access to a car or van according to the 2011 Census, compared with 9.4% of households living in the least income deprived quintile.

Another way of analysing the location of arts venues is to examine how many areas of high deprivation lie within two miles of each venue:

Local Government District	Arts venue	Number of high MDM areas within 2 miles of venue
Belfast	The Metropolitan Arts Centre	116
Belfast	The Grand Opera House	86
Derry/Londonderry	An Gaelaras Ltd	50
Belfast	Crescent Arts Centre	26
Ballymena	The Braid Arts Centre	26
Newry and Mourne	Sean Hollywood Arts Centre	22
Derry/Londonderry	The Playhouse	19
Larne	Larne Museum and Arts Centre	17
Ards	Ards Arts Centre	16
Strabane	Alley Arts Centre	13
Coleraine	Riverside Theatre	13
Lisburn	Island Arts Centre	12
Limavady	Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre	9
Derry/Londonderry	Verbal Arts Centre	9

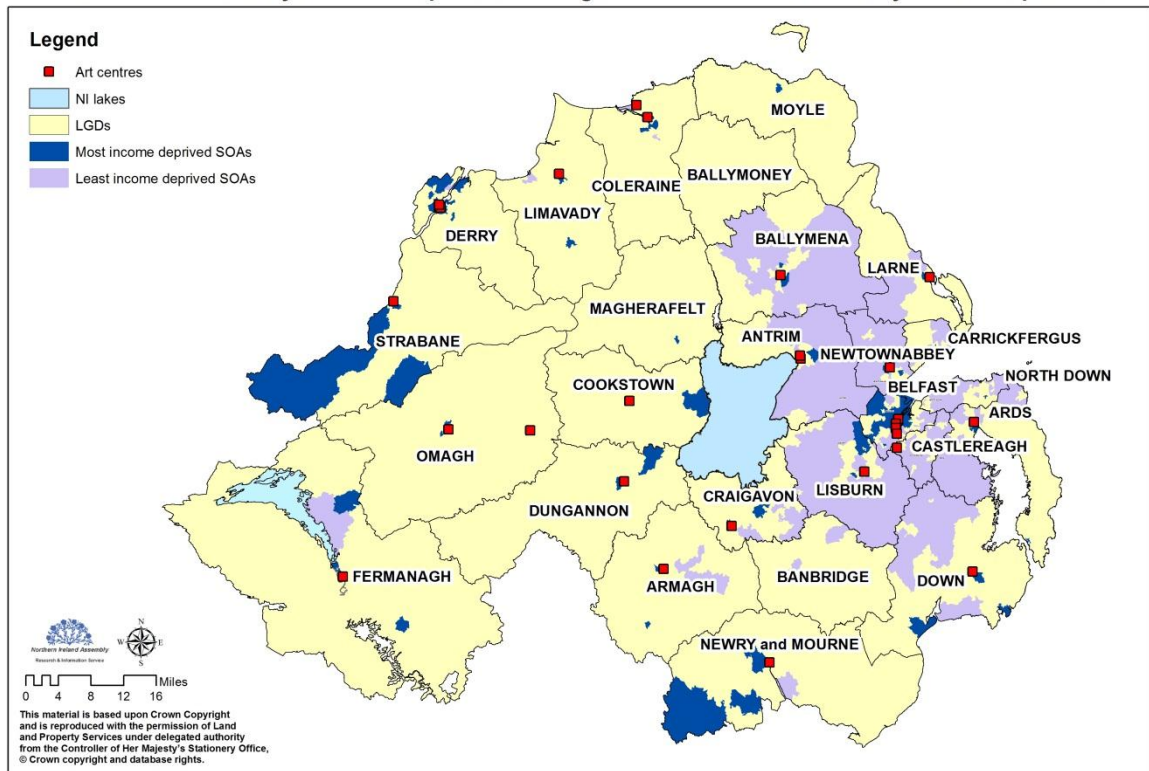
Newtownabbey	Theatre at the Mill	8
Down	Down Arts Centre	7
Fermanagh	Ardhowen Theatre	6
Dungannon	Ranfurlly House	6
Omagh	Strule Arts Centre	4
Armagh	Market Place Theatre	3
Craigavon	Millennium Court Arts Centre	3
Derry/Londonderry	The Nerve Centre	1
Antrim	The Old Courthouse Antrim	1
Cookstown	Burnavon Arts and Cultural Centre	0
Antrim	Clotworthy Arts Centre	0

**Table 2: Number of high MDM areas within 2 miles of an arts venue**

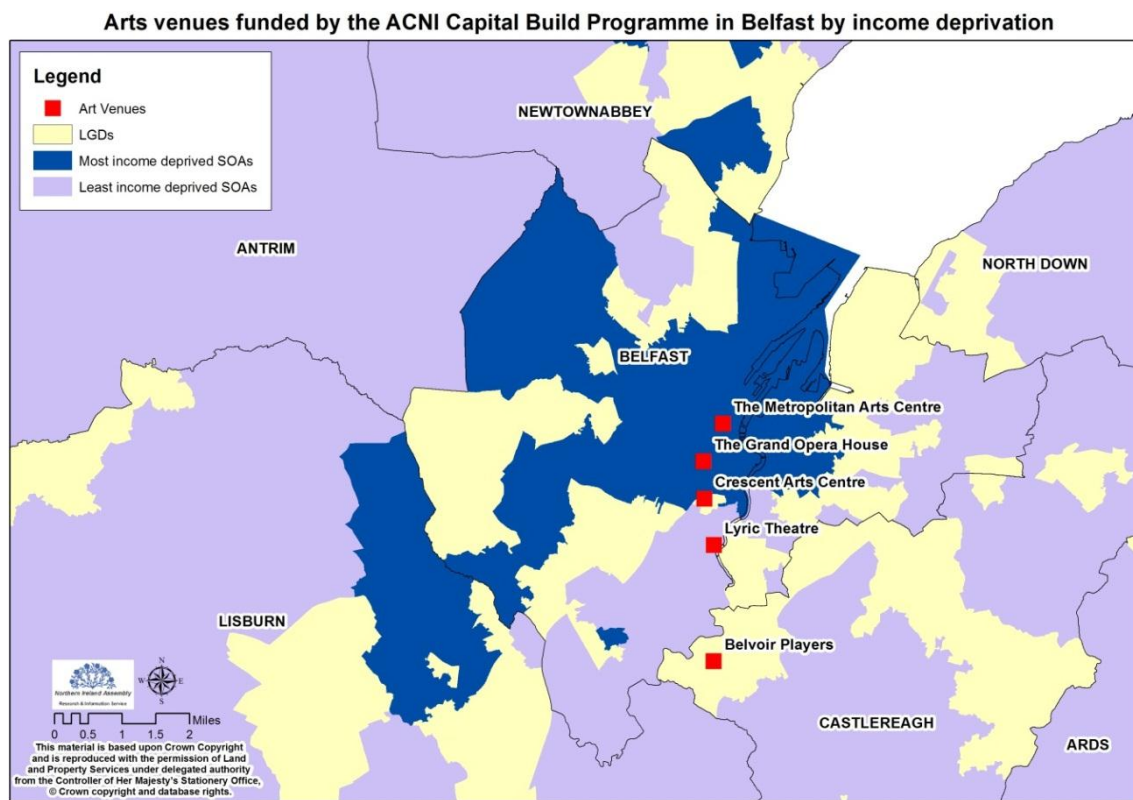
It can be seen from this that the venues which are within two miles of the highest number of separate areas of high deprivation are the MAC, Grand Opera House and Crescent Arts Centre in Belfast, An Gaelaras Ltd in Derry/Londonderry, and the Braid Arts Centre in Ballymena.

However, while these figures indicate that, on the whole, the publically funded arts infrastructure is relatively well placed to attract attenders from across the income spectrum, this overall picture can mask the fact that across Northern Ireland there are areas of high deprivation which remain at some distance from a dedicated arts venue. For example, the following map indicates that areas such as West Tyrone or Crossmaglen are still some distance away from a venue.

**Arts venues funded by the ACNI Capital Build Programme in Northern Ireland by income deprivation**



Furthermore, a closer examination of Belfast reveals that there are areas of that city, for example within north and west Belfast, with areas of high deprivation greater than two miles away from dedicated arts venues within the city centre.



## 2.8 What is the destination of arts funding?

The aforementioned ACNI/DCAL project also examined the destination of Arts Council funding. Specifically, events funded by ACNI through the Annual Support for Organisations Programme were mapped against the 20% most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. In these areas, 72% of funded exhibitions, 45% of participation activities and 76% of performance activities took place. Combining these three categories, 58% of funded activities took place in a deprived area with 8% of activities taking place in the least deprived areas.

A broader study has been conducted of three ACNI funding programmes from 2007 to 2012, including the Annual Support for Organisations Programme, Support for Individual Artists Programme, and Lottery. This indicates that 76% of funding went to applicants from the 20% most deprived areas:

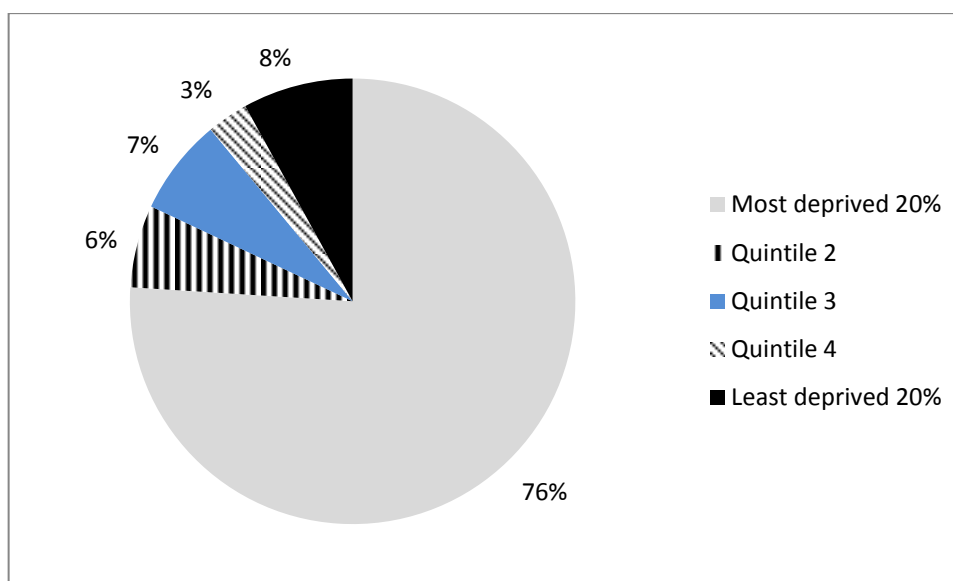


Figure 3: Analysis of the destination of Arts Council funding: 2007–2012

## 2.9 Rural/urban funding split

Examining the same ASOP-funded activities in terms of rural/urban split, the ACNI/DCAL analysis indicates that less than one in ten arts activities (7%) took place in a rural area, including 6% of exhibitions, 9% of participation activities and 3% of performance activities taking place in rural areas. This compares with an approximate population split of 64% (urban) to 35% (rural) for the population of Northern Ireland as a whole<sup>20</sup>.

Using the broader study of ACNI funding programmes from 2007 to 2012, the disparity in funding between rural and urban areas is even more marked, with 96% of grants awarded to urban areas as opposed to 4% for rural.

However, these two figures contrast with the destination of DCAL Community Festivals Fund, where just over half (52%) of the community festivals in 2010/11 took place in rural areas, with 48% taking place in urban areas.

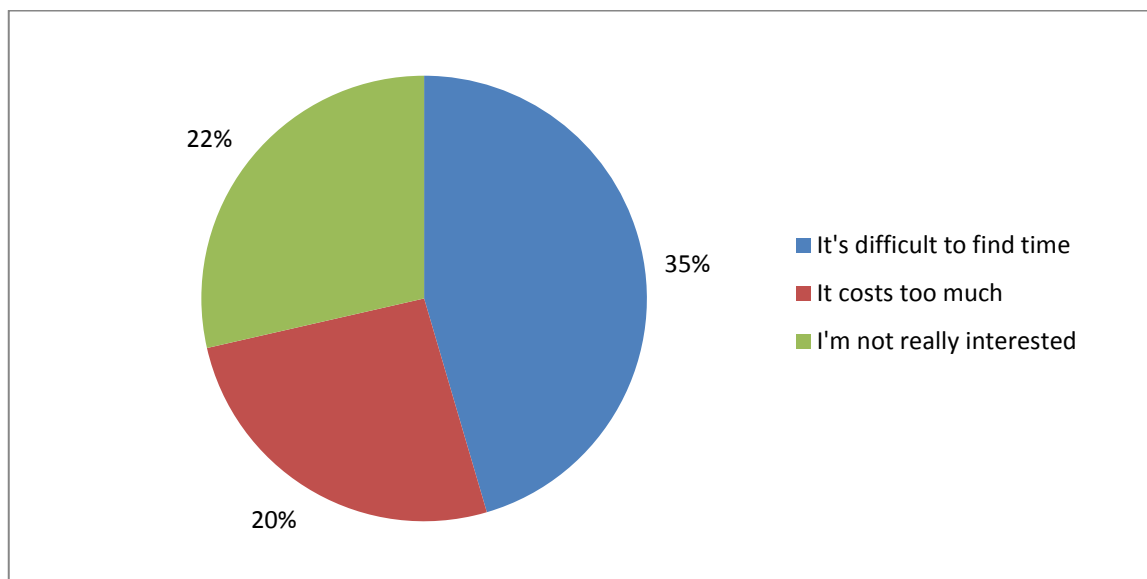
## 2.10 Potential barriers to greater participation in the arts

The general population survey conducted by NISRA/ACNI in 2012 examined the issues of barriers to engagement. The report notes the complexity of such barriers:

*It is widely recognised that the barriers preventing engagement with the arts are often multi-dimensional and include a range of financial, social, cultural and psychological factors.*

<sup>20</sup> Pateman, T. 2011. 'Rural and urban areas: Comparing lives using rural/urban classifications'. *Regional Trends* 43. Office for National Statistics: p19 <http://nia1.me/1o4>

The survey asked respondents to report what constraints they experienced in engaging with the arts.



**Table 3: Most frequently cited barriers to arts in 2012**

It can be seen from this chart that the most commonly cited barrier to engagement is difficulty in finding the time; it is conceivable that the location of arts venues is an element here in that a greater travel time may increase reluctance to attend.

With regard to the third most commonly cited reason, that it costs too much to engage with the arts, Audiences NI data suggests that the cost of attending arts events did indeed deter some households as the economic downturn began to take effect, with 7% fewer tickets sold in 2010 than in 2009. However, more recent data indicates that this decline has been arrested with a 1% rise in ticket sales in 2011.

In 2005, the Arts Council published a study entitled, *Research into the Actual and Perceived Barriers to Publicly Funded Arts in Northern Ireland*. This study reported a wider range of perceived barriers to interaction with the arts, including the following: lack of time; lack of money/cost; location; lack of transport; lack of information/awareness of availability; language – events and staff; social barriers; feeling out of place; irrelevance to own culture; and not interactive enough<sup>21</sup>.

## 2.11 Changes through time

An examination of the various Continuous Household Surveys from 2008 to 2013 provides some indication of change in attendance of the arts by those from deprived backgrounds.

<sup>21</sup> Arts Council of Northern Ireland. 2005. *Research into the Actual and Perceived Barriers to Publicly Funded Arts in Northern Ireland: Final Report*. Belfast: <http://nia1.me/1pz>

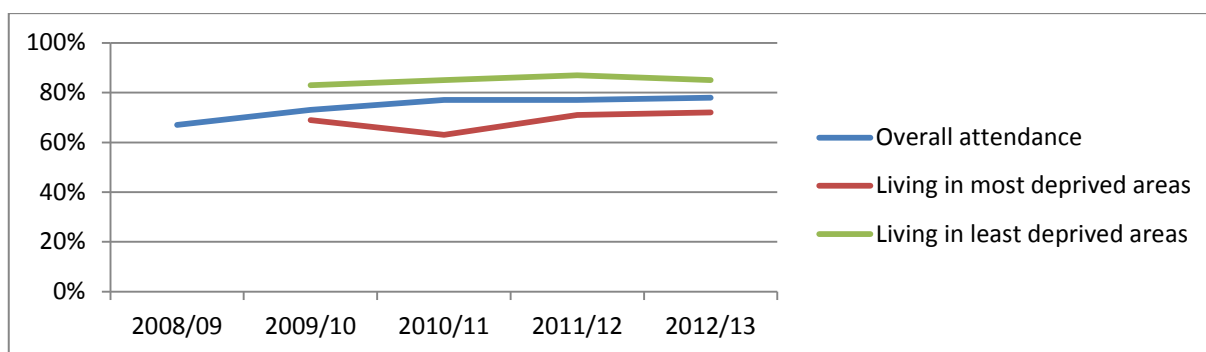


Figure 4: Attendance at the arts in Northern Ireland through time<sup>22</sup>

It can be seen from this line graph that overall attendance at the arts has increased slightly over the four years compared, including rises in attendance by those living in both the least and the most deprived areas. The gap between those attending from the least and the most deprived areas has narrowed very slightly over this period, from 14 percentage points in 2008/09 to 13 percentage points in 2012/13.

**2.12 What is the situation elsewhere?**

Similar surveys of arts attendance have been conducted by each of the arts councils (or analogous organisations) around the UK. Each of these surveys uses a broadly similar methodology, using art form definitions (categories of arts and entertainment which are included) that are also broadly similar.

	Most deprived	Least deprived
Northern Ireland <sup>23</sup>	71%	87%
Scotland <sup>24</sup>	70%	88%
England <sup>25</sup>	69%	84%

Table 4: Survey results for attendance at an arts event within the last 12 months

<sup>22</sup> These figures should be treated with some caution as figures from 2008/09 to 2010/11 are not weighted, but figures from in 2011/12 and 2012/13 are weighted.

<sup>23</sup> Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. *Continuous Household Survey 2011/12*: [http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/quick-links/research\\_and\\_statistics-3/statistical\\_publication/arts\\_publications/arts\\_chs\\_adults\\_201112.htm](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/quick-links/research_and_statistics-3/statistical_publication/arts_publications/arts_chs_adults_201112.htm)

<sup>24</sup> Scottish Government. *Scottish Household Survey 2012*: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/08/6973/downloads>

<sup>25</sup> Department for Culture, Media and Sport. *Taking Part 2011/12: Art Engagement*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taking-part-the-national-survey-of-culture-leisure-and-sport-adult-and-child-report-2011-12>

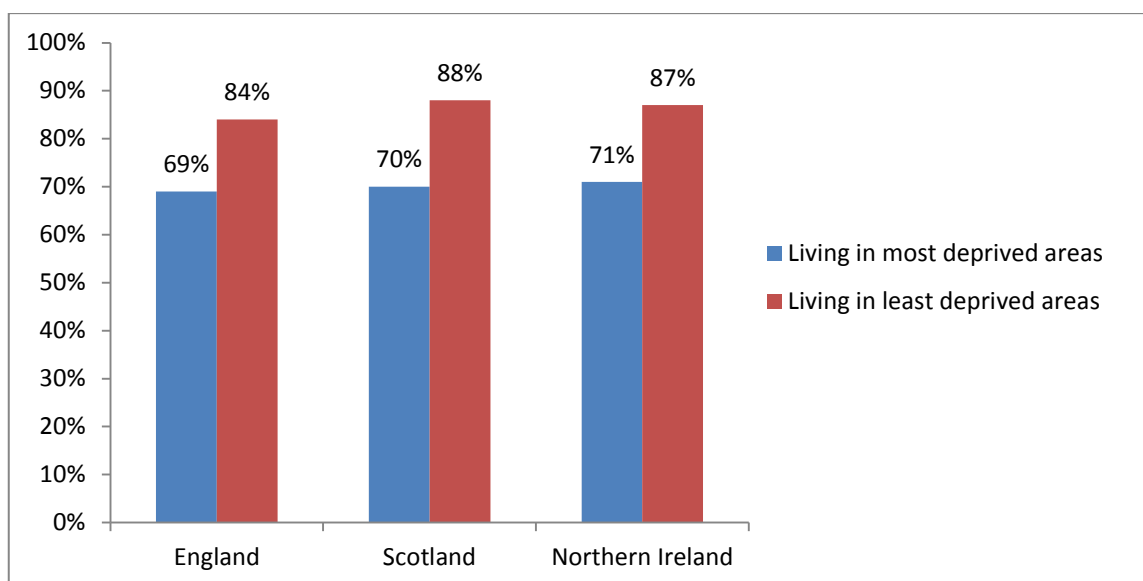


Figure 5: Survey results for attendance at an arts event within the last 12 months

The Arts Council of Wales does not present its survey results in quite the same way as Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales in that it does not provide result by ‘least deprived’ and ‘most deprived’. Instead, it uses National Readership Survey social categories A to E. The following shows the proportion of people within the two main groupings which have attended an arts event over the last 12 months:

	Groups C2, D & E	Groups A, B & C1
Wales <sup>26</sup>	67%	83%

Table 5: Survey results for attendance at an arts event within the last 12 months

In the Republic of Ireland, there are no comparable Multiple Deprivation Measures. The organisation Theatre Forum collects and analyses audience data, but subjects examined include the number and frequency of bookings, and methods of sale, with apparently no comparable studies of theatre attendees from specific demographic groups.

The Arts Council-funded project Arts Audiences seeks to analyse audiences across the Republic of Ireland. Similar to the Arts Council of Wales, the 2012 report *Arts Attendance in Ireland*<sup>27</sup> uses National Readership Survey social grades A to E to classify audiences by social class<sup>28</sup>. Rather than presenting results for the proportion of people within each social category attending the arts, it instead presents the proportion of audiences within each art form who belong to the ‘upper’ social groupings of A, B & C1.

<sup>26</sup> Arts Council of Wales. 2011 Omnibus Survey Report: <http://www.artscouncilofwales.org/36615.file.dld>

<sup>27</sup> Arts Audiences. 2012. *Arts Attendance in Ireland 2012: Target Group Index 2012*. Dublin: <http://nia1.me/1on>

<sup>28</sup> NRS social grades are usually described as follows: A: Higher managerial, administrative or professional; B: Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional; C1: Supervisory or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional; C2: Skilled manual workers; D: Semi and unskilled manual workers; E: Casual or lowest grade workers, pensioners, and others who depend on the welfare state for their income.

	% of ABC1s in 2012	% of ABC1s in 2011
Population as a whole	40	40
Folk concerts	47	51
Plays	51	54
Any performance in a theatre	49	55
Ballet	50	56
Contemporary dance	40	60
Jazz	49	60
Art galleries & exhibitions	54	63
Classical music	57	63
Opera	54	64

**Table 6: Arts audiences in the Republic of Ireland by social category**

It can be seen from this that the social spread of arts attendees varies somewhat by art form, and that on the whole – much like England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – the Republic of Ireland has a disproportionately high number of arts attendees from the higher income categories.