

Poverty in Northern Ireland 2018

This briefing summarises how poverty rates in Northern Ireland are changing. It is part of JRF's monitoring of changes to poverty rates and the underlying drivers of poverty across the UK.

This briefing accompanies UK Poverty 2017, which looked at trends in poverty in the UK as a whole.

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What you need to know

- Poverty in Northern Ireland is slightly lower than in England or Wales, but it is higher than in Scotland.
- Poverty among pensioners has fallen considerably over the last decade. Families with children have seen steady or falling poverty rates, but working-age adults without children are now at higher risk of poverty than 10 years ago.
- Northern Ireland has higher worklessness and lower employment than elsewhere, and the proportion of people in poverty in workless households has increased slightly over time, in contrast with the UK as a whole.
- This suggests that the employment rate continues to be a major factor affecting poverty rates in Northern Ireland, and that raising the employment rate could lead to falls in poverty.
- The gap in educational attainment among richer and poorer children has narrowed slightly but remains very large.
- There are more people with no qualifications and fewer people with higher level qualifications in Northern Ireland than in the rest of the UK.
- One in 10 households in the poorest fifth in Northern Ireland are facing problem debt.
- Nearly two thirds of people in the poorest fifth are not paying into a pension, increasing their risk of future poverty.

