

The Coaching Workforce Survey 2010

BASELINE REPORT

isport
Northern Ireland

The lead public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland



Department of
**Culture, Arts
and Leisure**

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On behalf of Sport Northern Ireland, I am delighted to introduce The Coaching Workforce Survey 2010.

I firmly believe that coaching plays an essential role in the development of sport and physical recreation. Too often the unsung heroes, good quality coaches provide the backbone for developing, sustaining and increasing participation in sport and play a paramount role in enhancing health and quality of life in individuals, communities and the nation.

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games present exciting challenges for sport. Coaches will have to play a pivotal role in UK and home country success and beyond, if we are to create a real lasting legacy.

Sport Matters: the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009 -19 recognises that a strong coaching workforce has a central role to play in delivering many of the participation and performance targets. The strategy also identifies the need to establish baseline data on coaches and coaching in order that the workforce and structures may be described and understood much more comprehensively than previous information allowed.

Sport Northern Ireland has worked with a number of key partners to plan and conduct this research and ensure that vital information on the profile of coaches, their roles within sport, the people to whom they deliver coaching, their experience, qualifications and the challenges and opportunities they face have been captured and represented.

I wish to express my thanks and gratitude to the organisations and coaching workforce who took the time to complete the survey. Without your contribution the survey would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the research team at Sports Industry Research Centre (Sheffield Hallam University) for their dedication and professionalism - Professor Peter Taylor, David Barrett and Richard Moore.

I would recommend this research to all partners involved in the development of coaching within Northern Ireland and encourage you to utilise the findings as a reference point to inform future planning.

Dominic Walsh

Chair

Sport Northern Ireland



- 1.** This report provides information for Sport Northern Ireland on the characteristics of sports coaching in Northern Ireland and the issues and opportunities that coaches face.
- 2.** A sample of sports coaches responded to an online questionnaire promoted through governing bodies of sport. 1,679 coaches provided responses to the survey, of whom 1,467 were resident in Northern Ireland.
- 3.** The dominance of three sports in terms of participation is reflected in the survey. Coaches in football (176), Gaelic football (211) and rugby union (229) accounted for 42% of responses to the survey. Hockey coaches (143) accounted for a further 10%.
- 4.** As London 2012 approaches, the timing of the survey in 2010 allows an impression to be gained of coaches. On the one hand, the coaching workforce is young, well educated and well qualified. Furthermore, coaches are keen to develop their coaching skills. On the other hand, the majority of coaching is done on a voluntary basis by people who are married and hold down full-time jobs, generating conflicting demands.
- 5.** Survey responses confirm the importance of clubs in providing facilities and coaching opportunities for adults and juniors - 84% of coaches deliver sessions in a club setting.
- 6.** Sports coaching in Northern Ireland is very reliant on volunteers, particularly in the club context. The relatively small numbers of paid staff in the workforce are employed mainly by governing bodies and local authorities
- 7.** Most coaches responding to the survey possess a valid coaching qualification and, of these, 39% are qualified at Level 2 or above. There is a clear desire expressed by a significant number of coaches to develop as coaches and achieve higher level qualifications in the process. Coaches frequently cite time and cost as the most significant barriers to their progress through the system.
- 8.** Coaches in Northern Ireland are well educated and well motivated, with most expressing a desire to develop as a coach. The overwhelming majority aim to continue coaching for the foreseeable future. They frequently identify and implement innovative solutions to the challenges of coaching, and exhibit a high degree of commitment to their roles.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This survey provides information on the state of the sports coaching workforce in Northern Ireland in terms of the profile of the coaches themselves, their roles within sport, the people to whom they deliver coaching, their experience, qualifications and the challenges and opportunities they face.
- 1.2** Sport Northern Ireland has, in conjunction with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, Coaching Ireland, SkillsActive and Volunteer Now (previously the Volunteer Development Agency), commissioned research into the sports coaching workforce in Northern Ireland. The initial phase of research conducted by SkillsActive focused on employers and attention is now focused on phase 2, which comprises a baseline audit of coaches and coaching. Among the key issues are the following:
- The need for accurate and up-to-date information on the size of the coaching workforce, its skills, capacity and the extent to which supply meets demand (on both a sport-by-sport and a geographical basis);
 - The lack of an over arching and strategic means of collecting, storing and disseminating data on the coaching workforce for use by national and regional governing bodies, local authorities and other interested parties; and
 - The predicted increase in participation as a result of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the pressure that this is likely to generate in terms of demand for coaches and coaching hours.
- 1.3** Research into sports coaching in the UK has previously been conducted on a whole country basis, though no basic count figures are available for Northern Ireland. MORI (2004) estimated that there were 40,000 coaches in Northern Ireland, while Townend and North (2007, p1) put the number at 36,000. Neither of these reports attempts to profile the coaching workforce at the Northern Ireland level however, preferring to analyse the demographic characteristics, experience, expertise and qualifications of coaches for the UK as a whole. Similarly, Larkin, Duffy and O'Leary (2007) surveyed 129 coaches on the National Coaching Development Programme, but this work was carried out on an All-Ireland basis and results were not reported separately for Northern Ireland.
- 1.4** Other research (such as population and general workforce surveys and the Sport Northern Ireland report into the Economic Importance of Sport in Northern Ireland) is too generalised to be able to select the evidence which is specific to coaches. There is therefore a clear need for a primary data collection exercise as part of a baseline audit of the coaching workforce in Northern Ireland.
- 1.5** The geographic scope of the research is Northern Ireland but may include coaches resident in the Republic of Ireland who deliver in sports which operate on an all-Ireland basis (eg, boxing, GAA and rugby union). The results are presented in a form which allows analysis by sport and by area (depending on sample size), as well as by coaching capacity (voluntary, part-time and full-time).

2.0 METHODS

2.0 The aim of this research project is to develop an information resource relating to the sports coaching workforce in Northern Ireland through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, ie, a mixed methods approach consisting of four elements, each of which is briefly outlined in turn below:

2.1 REVIEW OF SKILLSACTIVE REPORT

2.1.1 The Active Leisure Workforce in Northern Ireland, SkillsActive, 2009 report was reviewed for content relevant to the current research. It was used to formulate specific research questions and as a primer for themes, which were expected to emerge from the survey and focus groups. The report is summarised in section 3.1.

2.2 DELIVERERS' AUDIT

2.2.1 The SkillsActive database was used to distribute a short online survey to governing bodies of sport, district councils (26) and other stakeholders in Northern Ireland. Respondents were asked to state what kind of information they held, how it was stored, how frequently it was updated, and who was responsible for this task. The results of the survey are presented in section 3.1.2.

2.3 ONLINE SURVEY

2.3.1 The sample of sports coaches was collected by response to an online and postal questionnaire. Governing bodies of sport facilitated this by either alerting coaches directly to the questionnaire, or by a general promotion of it on the governing body website. In addition, sports development officers employed by district councils and by governing bodies of sport were contacted directly to promote the survey to their members. The results of the survey form the bulk of this report and are presented in section 3.3 onwards.

2.3.2 By 1 July 2010, 1,679 coaches had responded to the survey. After de-duplication, 1,467 were found to be usable responses from coaches resident in Northern Ireland, with 42% of these from three sports: football, Gaelic football and rugby union. A number of responses were received from coaches resident overseas, including the UK and beyond. These were excluded from the final analysis, as the majority of these coaches were not operating in Northern Ireland, but taking part in training courses run by the IFA and other governing bodies of sport. Similarly, 54 coaches from the Republic of Ireland were not included in the final analysis, as their demographic profile was not representative of the sample as a whole. They were also concentrated on two sports, namely Gaelic football and rugby union.

2.4 FOCUS GROUPS

2.4.1 Participants for the focus groups were identified from respondents to the coach survey. Seven focus groups were conducted at: Ballymoney, Derry City, Cookstown, Enniskillen and Belfast City (x3). In total, 47 coaches participated, including seven who coached at elite level. Their profiles are consistent with the online survey sample, with 73% male, all white, 2% disabled, 56% having a BA/BSc degree or better, 76% in full-time employment (not necessarily in coaching) and whilst 28% had been coaching for five years or less, 44% had been coaching for more than ten years. The sports represented were: archery, athletics, badminton, basketball, boxing, canoeing, cricket, disability sports, football, Gaelic football, golf, hockey, hurling, karate, multi-skills, netball, outdoor pursuits, rowing, rugby union, sailing, swimming and table tennis.



3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Review of The Active Leisure Workplace in Northern Ireland, SkillsActive, 2009

3.1.1 COACH PROFILE

- 3.1.1.1** SkillsActive's research on the active leisure workforce in Northern Ireland produced a number of findings which informed the baseline data audit. Most notably, the research found that volunteers were more likely to be male (68% of the total), with 71% being aged 35 or more. The workforce was found to be almost exclusively white, while 4% of volunteers stated that they were disabled. For paid staff, the demographic characteristics were significantly different, with 71% aged under 35, and a higher proportion (43%) of females. Only 2% of the paid workforce considered themselves to be disabled.
- 3.1.1.2** The qualification profile of coaches was found to be weighted in favour of Level 1 (26%) and Level 2 coaches (36%), with an identified shortfall in the number of Level 1 coaches in particular. Only 10% of coaches were found to possess a qualification at Level 3 or above.

3.1.2 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 3.1.2.1** SkillsActive's qualitative research identified a number of challenges and opportunities for sports coaching in Northern Ireland. Stakeholders referred in particular to a drop off in participation when children leave school. This is exacerbated by a number of barriers to participation in further and higher education, for example, a lack of timetable provision for sport in the 'traditional' Wednesday afternoon slot. This was offset to some extent by an increase in participation in football, Gaelic football and hurling/camogie among the major 'traditional' sports, and in alternative activities such as inline skating. Much of this appears to have been driven by an increase in participation among young girls.
- 3.1.2.2** In addition, the barrier of distance was identified by focus group participants, with a Belfast-centric focus of provision evident in responses, particularly as athletes progress to higher level competition. Financial constraints on local authorities were anticipated and respondents reported reductions in off-peak swimming pool opening hours as a direct consequence of pressure on leisure services.
- 3.1.2.3** There was some optimism that the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games would act as a spur to sports participation in Northern Ireland, despite the country's distance from the host city. This was frequently associated with new and improved facilities, although there was recognition that there would be a time lag before some of these became available. The collapse of plans to develop a national sports facility at The Maze was noted with some disappointment.

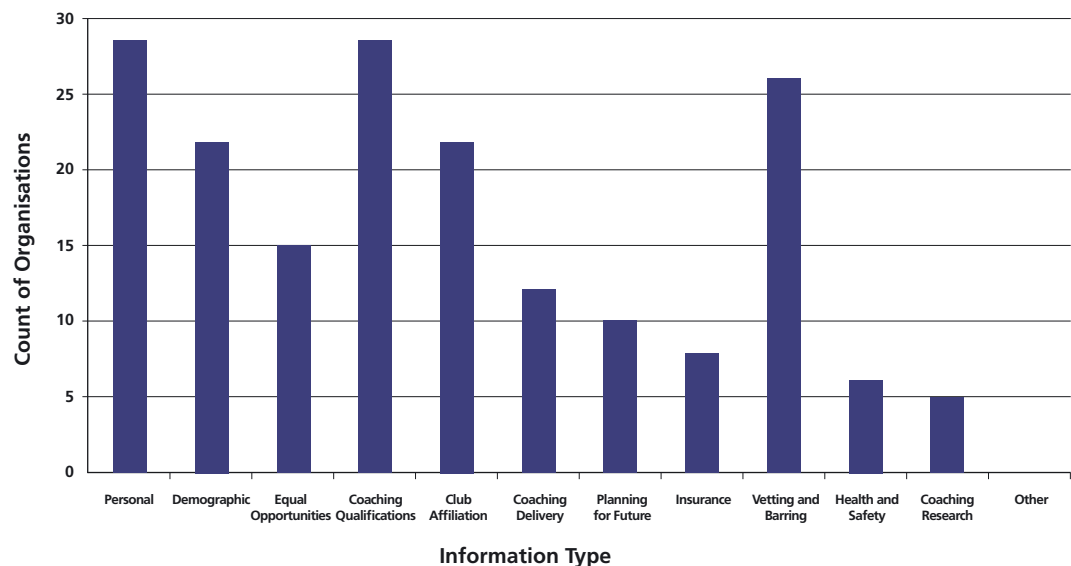
3.2 Audit of Stakeholder Data

3.2.0.1 An audit of existing coach data was completed by 29 organisations overall. This included 12 district councils, 15 governing bodies of sport, one self-employed individual and one coaching organisation. All respondents stated that their organisation collected data in relation to sports coaching.

3.2.1 THE TYPE OF COACH DATA HELD BY ORGANISATIONS

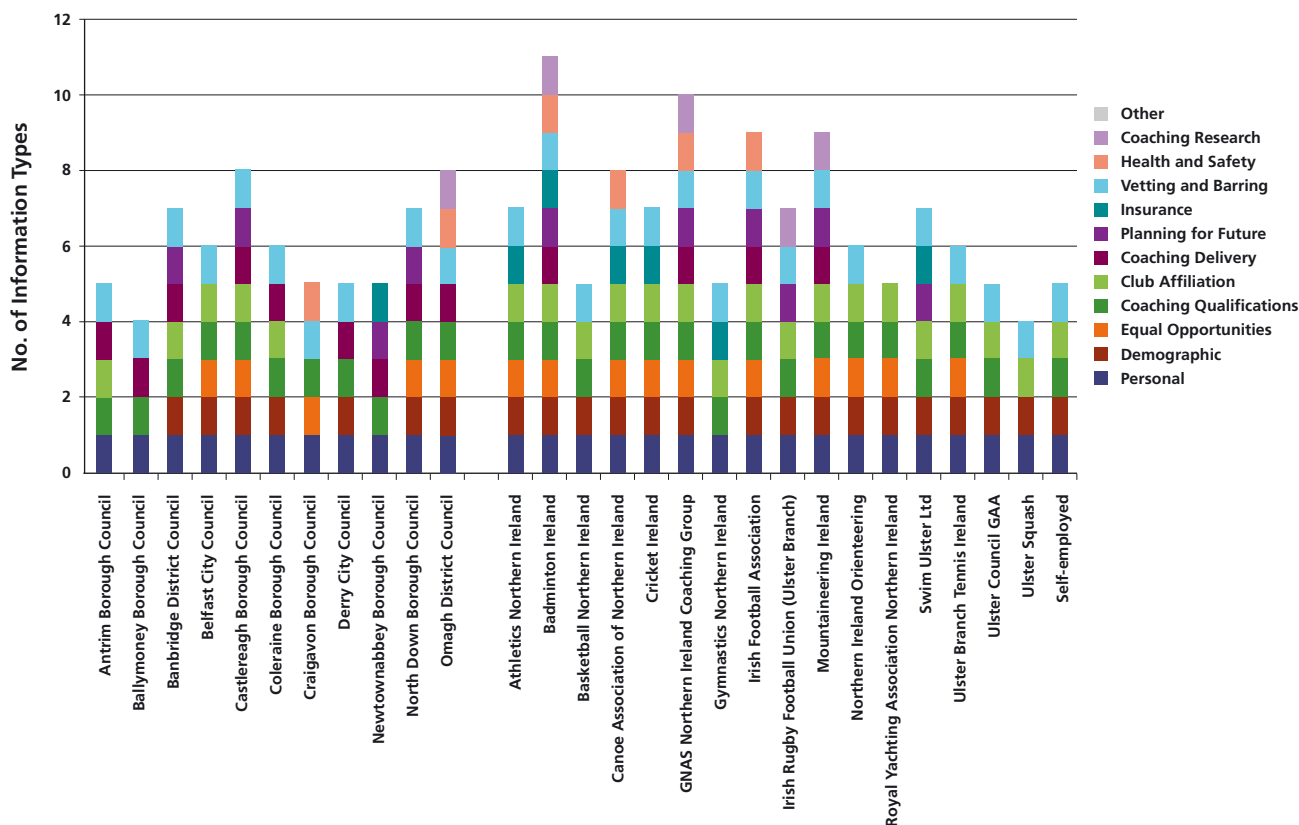
3.2.1.1 Figure 1 illustrates that the majority of organisations collect personal coaching data, coaching qualifications and vetting and barring details; all of which received over 25 responses. Other popular forms of coaching data collection include demographic data and club affiliation which received over 20 responses. It is unsurprising that the aforementioned information types are the most popular, as they represent the fundamental basis with which to identify and utilise the coaching workforce. Other information collected by 15 or fewer organisations includes equal opportunities (14) and coaching delivery (12), which provide these organisations with a greater level of detail about individual coaches (religion, disability, etc) and the nature of their coaching activities.

Figure 1 - Types of Coach Data Collected by Stakeholder Organisations



3.2.1.2 Fewer organisations collect the progressive types of information including coaching research (5) and planning for future delivery (10), which aim to improve the quality of coaches and their coaching activity, but which are not seen as a priority by the majority of organisations. Insurance and health and safety information (risk assessments etc) are collected by the least amount of organisations. Figure 2 displays the type of coaching information collected by each organisation.

Figure 2 - Types of Coaching Data Collected by Individual Organisations



3.2.1.3 Notably, none of the stakeholders collects all of the different types of coaching information categorised for the purpose of the survey. One governing body of sport collects 11 out of 12 types of coaching information, while the lowest, a local authority, does not collect any information relating to coaching. Only four organisations, all of which are governing bodies of sport, collect over eight types of coaching information.

3.2.1.4 The average number of information types collected by organisations is 6.5, ie, over half of the information categories. This mainly includes the fundamental coaching information types described earlier. Generally the results show that governing bodies collect more types of coaching information than district councils.

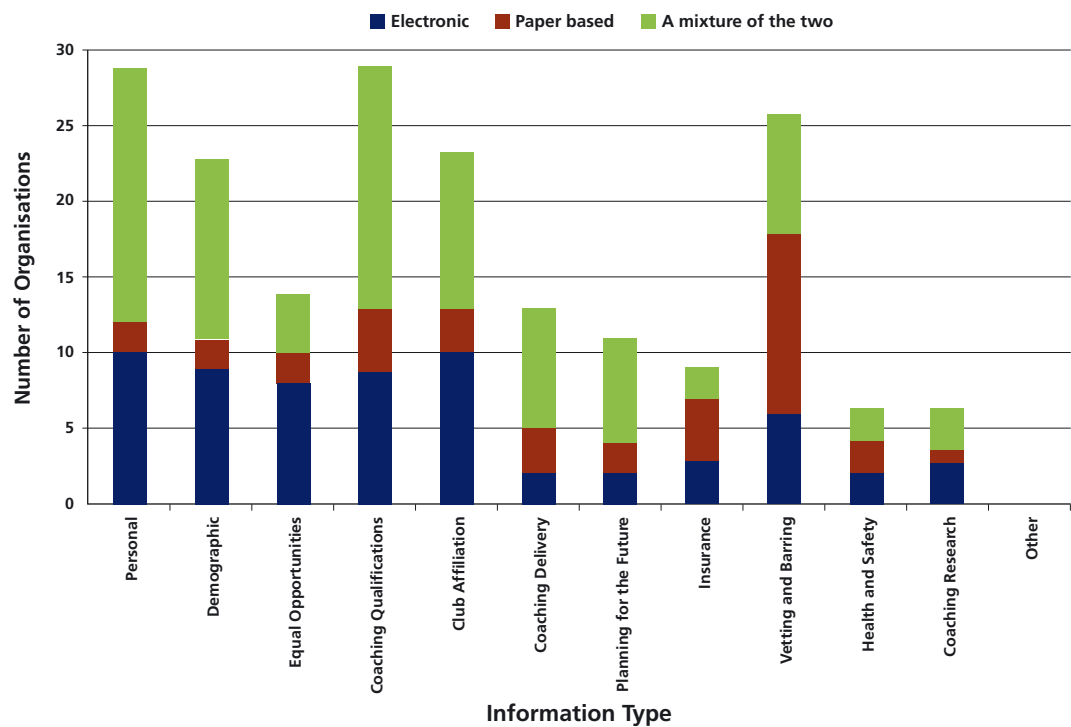
3.2.1.5 Generally coaches accept the need for such data to be collected and some can even see how it might be put to practical use:

“...the intention behind one database they are now setting up is to keep track of how old your qualification is or to perhaps suggest something else that you should do. Maybe your child protection is about to run out? The database lets you know what to try and also keeps track of the coaching in a much better way.”

3.2.2 QUALITY OF DATA

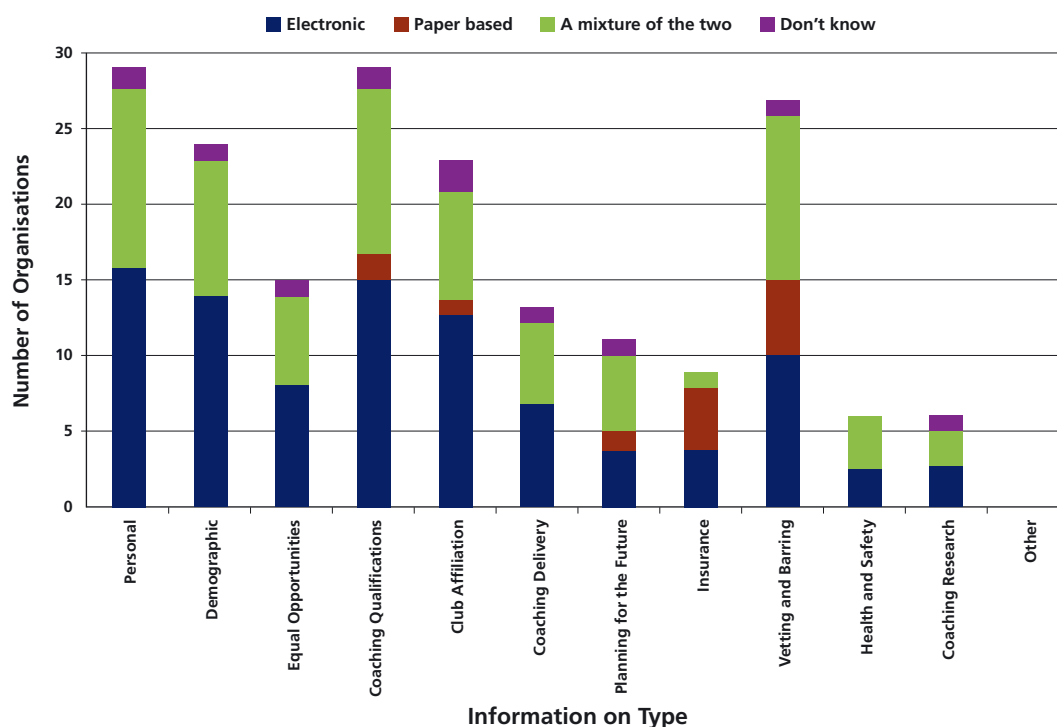
3.2.2.1 Collecting information is the first phase in the process of managing data, but it is also equally important to consider how this data is stored and updated to provide evidence of the quality of data being collected. As a minimum standard, Sportscoach UK recommend that stakeholders collect a range of data fields which have been grouped into nine broad categories. Figure 3 displays which method organisations use to store coaching information.

Figure 3 - Data Storage Methods



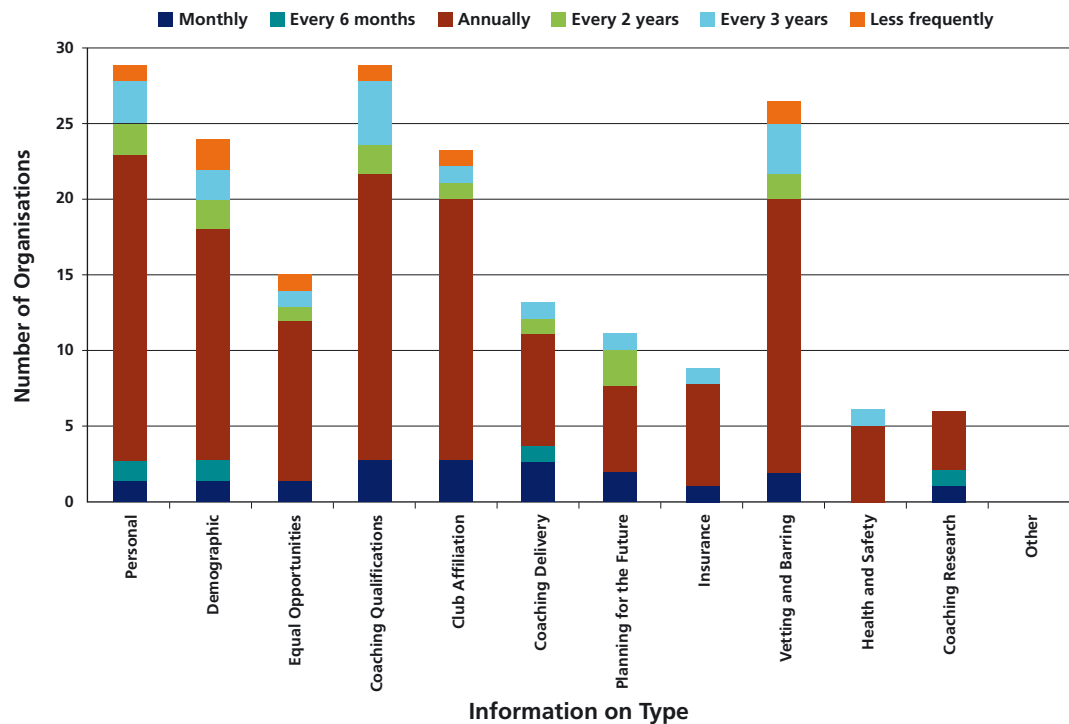
3.2.2.2 The results indicate that most coaching information types are stored either electronically, or both electronically and on paper. The only exceptions include types of information, which are traditionally in paper format, such as vetting and barring certification (Criminal Record Bureau checks) and insurance certificates.

Figure 4 - Preferred Data Storage Methods



3.2.2.3 Figure 4 shows the preferences of respondents in terms of the storage of data. As the figure illustrates, organisations prefer to store coaching data electronically. A minority of organisations would still prefer to store only paper versions of some information, which includes vetting and barring, insurance, planning for future and coaching qualifications. The majority would, however, prefer to store electronically, or with a mixture of both electronic and paper-based information. The management of data may be a key area of discussion for district councils and governing bodies in future. As the transition from paper information to electronic data continues, planners need to take into account how best to manage information, which is stored differently, so that it can be compared efficiently. Figure 5 provides evidence of how often coaching information is updated. The results are relatively consistent across each of the different types of information collected, with the majority of organisations choosing to update each type of coaching data once every year.

Figure 5 - Frequency of Coaching Data Updates



3.2.2.4 Considering other time constraints that impact upon district councils and governing bodies of sport, this timeframe for such updates seems to be adequate for such information to remain up to date and relevant. However, information types, such as health and safety and coaching delivery, may need to be updated more regularly by certain organisations for it to be relevant. Organisations, which update information less frequently than every three years may need to reassess whether the data they collect is accurate, especially when considering the time constraints for information such as vetting and barring information. The need for accurate and up-to-date information about coaches is illustrated by this quote from a focus group participant:

“I think all of them across the board have poor communication with the coaches. I don’t think any of them have cracked it. I came into the office today and sat beside a coach who received an email. He got the email and I didn’t because I’m not on the database.”

3.2.3 SITE STORAGE

3.2.3.1 The following information examines where information is stored by organisations which took part in the survey. Eighteen organisations responded that they hold coaching data in a single resource or database, whereas six hold data in various resources. Moreover, three respondents were unsure of how many resources information is stored in. In terms of the location of data, 23 organisations hold their coaching data in a central location, while four organisations hold it in various locations. The fact that some information seems to be collected both electronically and on paper would suggest that a single storage resource would be impossible.

3.2.4 SECURITY OF DATA

3.2.4.1 One concern for sport coaches and organisations is that although the results indicate that 21 respondents believe that the coaching data they collect is compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998, eight respondents didn't know whether it was or not. Therefore the security of data and the sharing of coach data may not be fully compliant with this act, which could prove to be an issue for certain organisations in future.

3.2.5 SHORTCOMINGS OF EXISTING COACHING DATA

3.2.5.1 The evident disparities between stakeholders with respect to coaching data produce variations in the type of coaching data collected, quantity of data collected and the frequency with which that data is collected and maintained. This has the potential to create 'blindspots' for organisations, which may lead to individuals being excluded from the coaching community.

3.2.5.2 It is clear that there is a duplication of coaching data collected by both governing bodies of sport and district councils. Agreement between governing bodies of sport and district councils to share coaching data would obviously lead to fewer requests for coaches to deal with. Better collaboration may also lead to resource savings and a better understanding of the coaching workforce, as well as providing a more solid basis for planning and delivery.

3.2.5.3 Standardisation across organisations in terms of the type of data collected may help to improve the quality of data. Furthermore, data would need to be updated and stored uniformly for it to be purposeful and comparable for analysis at a national level. A process of harmonisation, whereby organisations agreed to work towards adopting minimum standards of data collection and maintenance, would benefit stakeholders and individual stakeholders. The Sportscoach UK minimum data field recommendations provide a useful model, although it is important to recognise that governing bodies operating across the border may struggle to apply such a framework on an All-Ireland basis.

3.3 Who coaches?

3.3.0.1 In many of the figures that follow, the total results are presented alongside three breakdowns which allow the following comparisons:

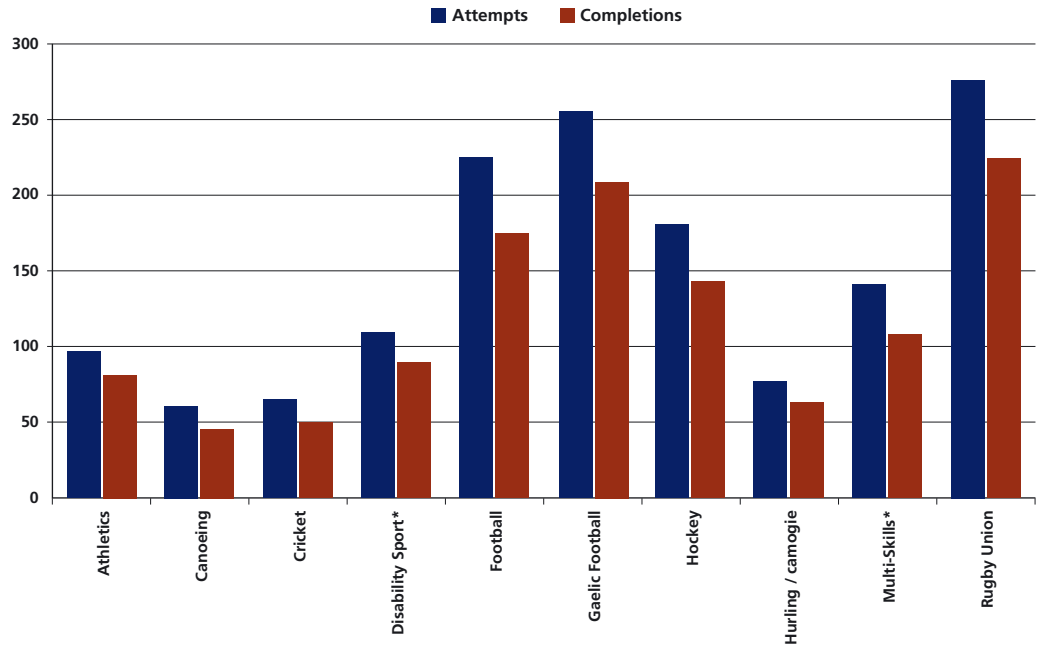
- Primary coaching role – comparators are presented for eight individual sports - athletics, canoeing, cricket, football, Gaelic football, hockey, hurling/camogie and rugby union. In each case, there were more than 50 responses from coaches who said that one of these sports was their primary coaching role. Results are also presented for disability sport and multi-skills, though these include all respondents who coach these disciplines.
- Area – results are presented for the 11 consortia proposed under the review of public administration, and in addition for Derry/Londonderry.
- Coach capacity – Coaches were asked whether they delivered coaching on a voluntary, paid part-time or paid full-time basis. Results are presented for the various permutations of coaching capacity.

3.3.0.2 Table 1 presents the responses of coaches by sport. Football, Gaelic football and rugby union generated the most responses, followed by athletics, hockey and hurling/camogie. This is thought to be broadly reflective of the popularity of these sports within Northern Ireland. Responses by consortia reflect the population distribution of Northern Ireland: 53% of coaches who gave their home postcode live in the Greater Belfast Area, and 66% live in Counties Antrim and Down (i.e. east of the Bann).

Table 1 - Responses by Sport

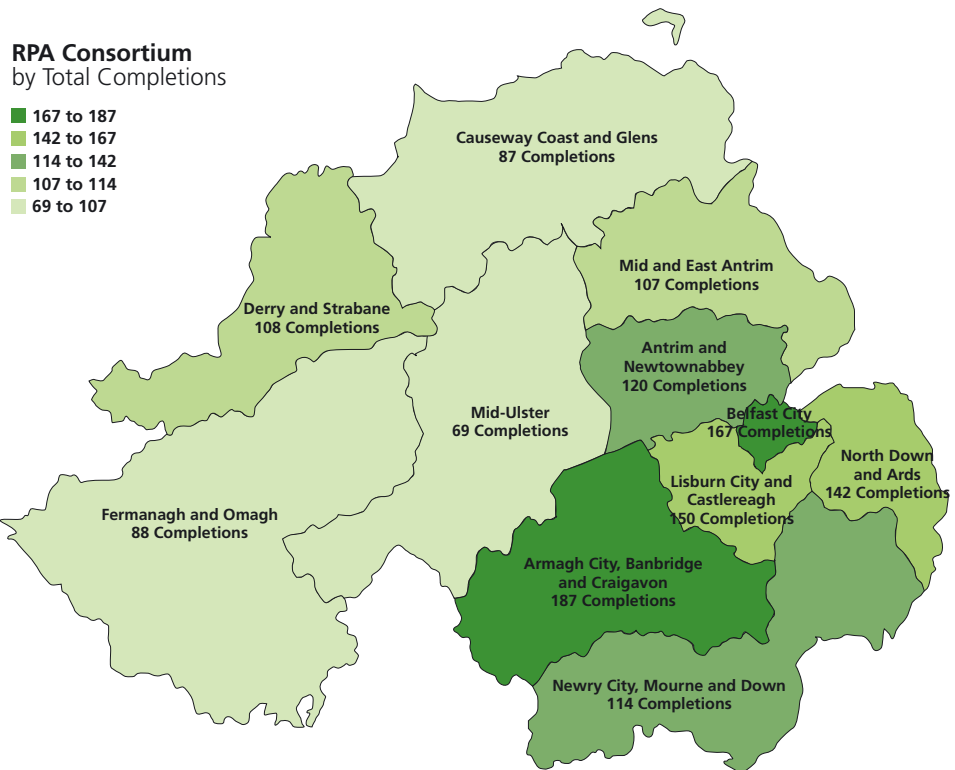
Sport	Primary Role			Any Role		
	Attempts	Complete	%	Attempts	Complete	%
Archery	20	16	80.0%	61	48	78.7%
Athletics	96	81	84.4%	226	178	78.8%
Badminton	22	17	77.3%	91	69	75.8%
Baseball/softball	< 5	-	0.0%	16	9	56.3%
Basketball	39	32	82.1%	127	98	77.2%
Billiards/snooker	-	-	-	< 5	< 5	100.0%
Bowls	< 5	< 5	33.3%	17	12	70.6%
Boxing	7	6	85.7%	27	20	74.1%
Canoeing	58	46	79.3%	97	74	76.3%
Cricket	62	51	82.3%	116	88	75.9%
Cycling	10	8	80.0%	30	25	83.3%
Dance	6	5	83.3%	52	29	55.8%
Disability Sport	20	18	90.0%	110	89	80.9%
Equestrian	< 5	< 5	50.0%	6	< 5	66.7%
Football	228	176	77.2%	381	285	74.8%
Gaelic Football	257	211	82.1%	357	290	81.2%
Golf	< 5	< 5	66.7%	31	25	80.6%
Gymnastics	43	35	81.4%	91	69	75.8%
Handball (GAA)	< 5	< 5	100.0%	20	18	90.0%
Hockey	182	143	78.6%	230	183	79.6%
Hurling/Camogie	79	63	79.7%	142	113	79.6%
Ice Sports	< 5	-	0.0%	< 5	< 5	66.7%
Martial Arts	24	18	75.0%	32	24	75.0%
Multi Skills	28	21	75.0%	142	108	76.1%
Netball	12	11	91.7%	56	33	58.9%
Outdoor Pursuits	40	34	85.0%	105	73	69.5%
Rounders (GAA)	< 5	< 5	50.0%	60	49	81.7%
Rowing	18	15	83.3%	21	18	85.7%
Rugby League	6	5	83.3%	10	7	70.0%
Rugby Union	276	229	83.0%	338	277	82.0%
Sailing/Yachting	45	34	75.6%	66	52	78.8%
Squash	11	7	63.6%	15	10	66.7%
Swimming	50	40	80.0%	107	81	75.7%
Table Tennis	9	8	88.9%	32	18	56.3%
Tennis	9	5	55.6%	56	33	58.9%
Volleyball	6	5	83.3%	58	30	51.7%
Water Polo	< 5	< 5	100.0%	< 5	< 5	66.7%
Weightlifting	6	5	83.3%	58	45	77.6%
Other	29	23	79.3%	96	79	82.3%
None	1,676	92	5.5%	1,674	92	5.5%
All sports	3,391	1,467	43.3%	5,163	2,762	53.5%

Figure 6 - Survey Responses by Sport



* Note: figures for Disability Sport and Multi-Skills include responses from coaches in another role

Figure 7 - Complete Survey Responses by Consortium



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3.3.0.3 Figures 8 and 9 show the breakdown of coaches by area and give an interesting indication of where the traditional strongholds of particular sports lie. For example, the strength of Derry City, Down and Tyrone in Gaelic football is reflected in the high number of coaches living in Derry/Strabane, Fermanagh and Omagh, Mid Ulster and the Newry Mourne and Down areas. Similarly, hurling's popularity in North Antrim is demonstrated by the number of coaches resident in the Causeway Coast and Glens areas. Football, rugby and hockey coaches, though present in all areas to some degree, are more numerous in Antrim and Down. The coaches of the remaining sports are more evenly distributed across the country. The distribution of coaches is reflected in the results of the analysis of coach characteristics by area and reference is made where appropriate to this distribution.

Figure 8 - Survey Completions by Area and Primary Coaching Role

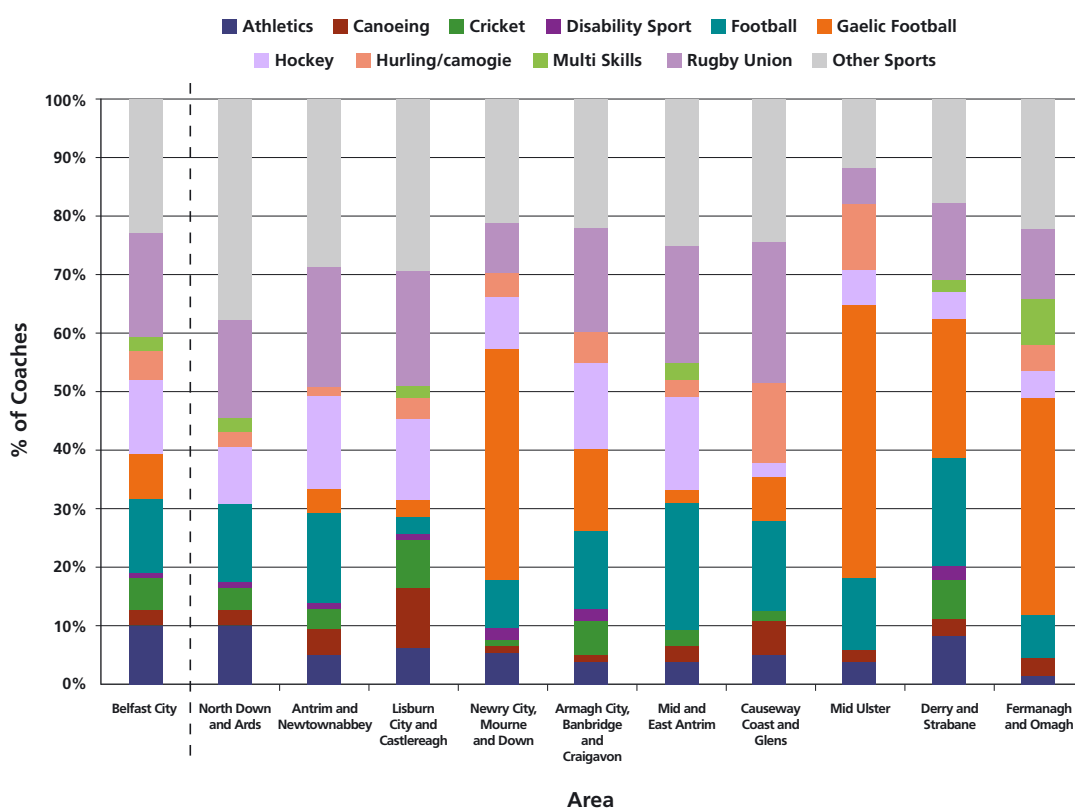
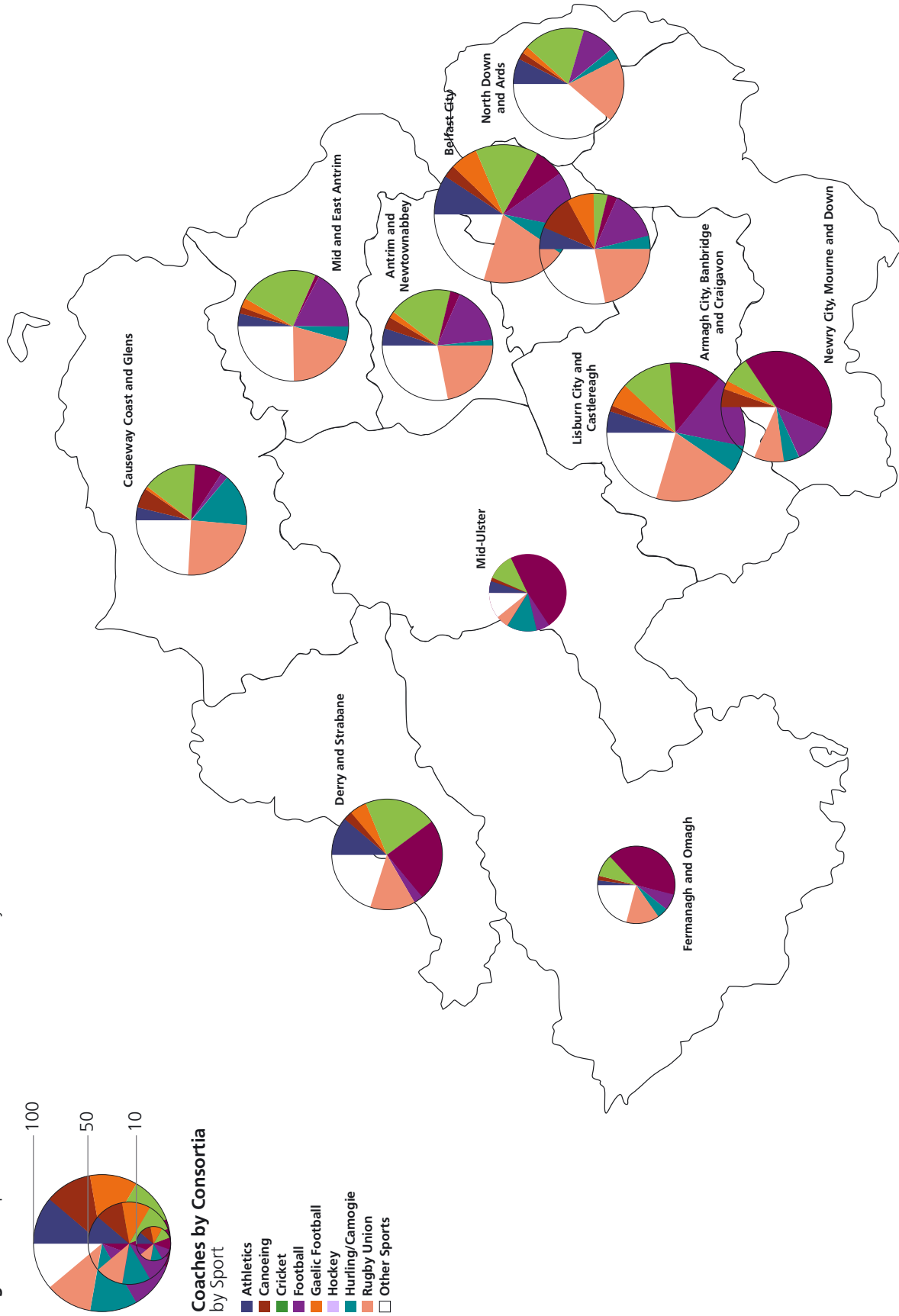


Figure 9 - Map to Show Distribution of Coaches by Consortium

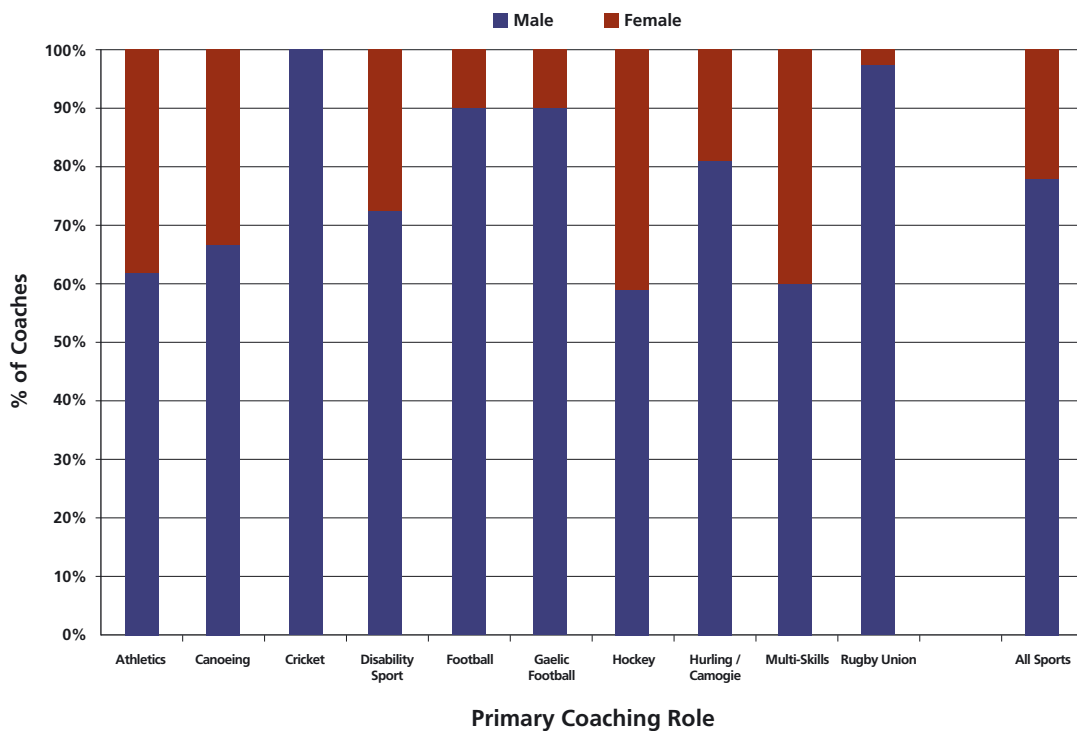


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3.3.1 GENDER

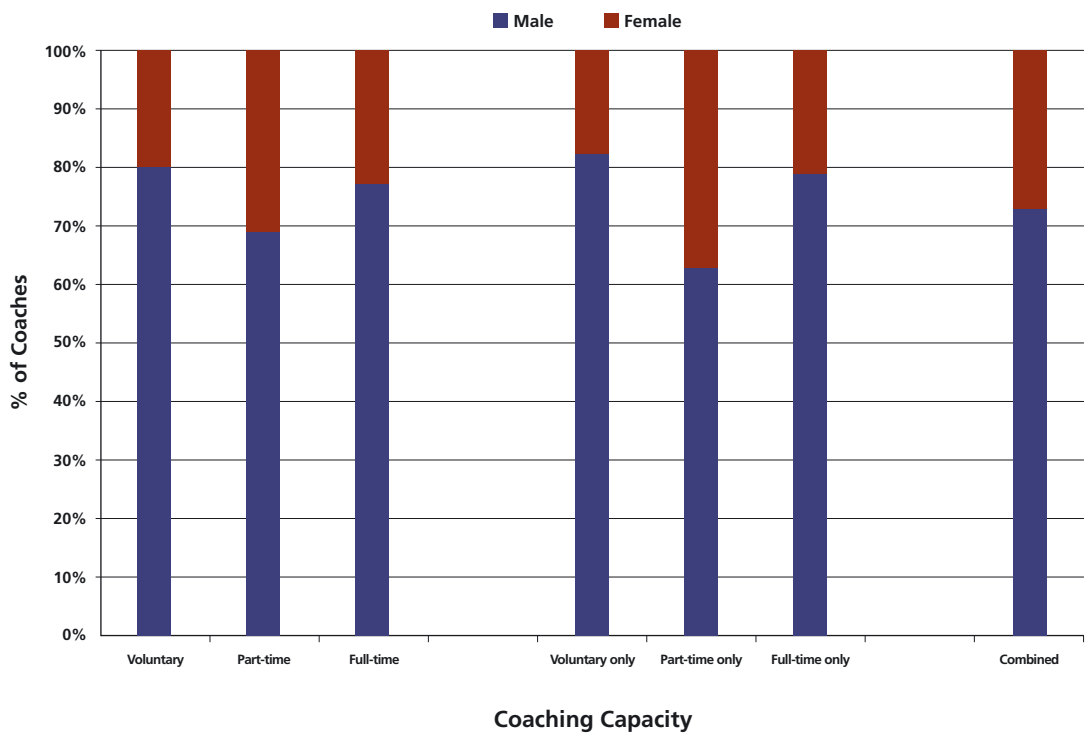
3.3.1.1 Figures 10 and 11 show the breakdown of coaches by gender. Just over a fifth of coaches in Northern Ireland are female, though this figure is as high as 41% in hockey and 38% in athletics. There are no women coaches in cricket, and only a small proportion (2%) in rugby union. Fewer than 10% of football and Gaelic football coaches are female (Figure 10).

Figure 10 - Coach Gender by Primary Coaching Role



3.3.1.2 There is less variation by district councils, but figures range from 29% in North Down and Ards to 7% in Mid Ulster (Figure 11). The proportion of male voluntary coaches is higher than average at 81%, while the proportion of part-time coaches who are female is 31% (Figure 11).

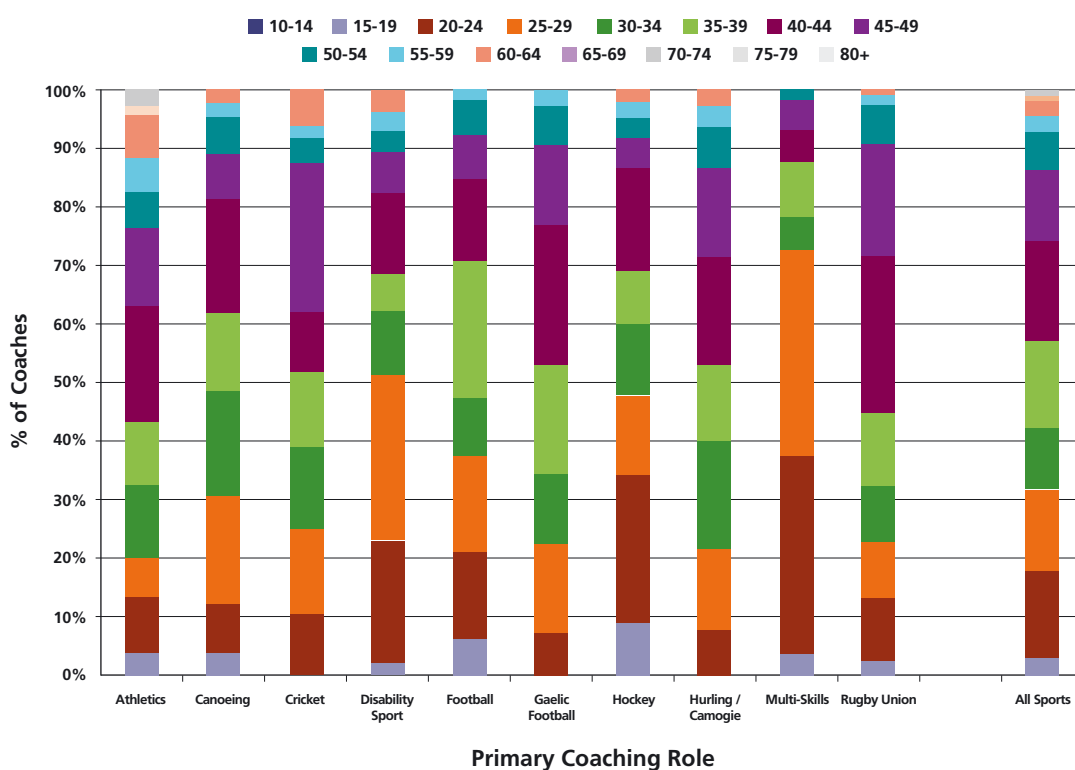
Figure 11 - Coach Gender by Coaching Capacity



3.3.2 AGE

3.3.2.1 Figures 12 to 14 show the breakdown of coaches by age. Nearly 60% of all coaches are under 40, though more than half of the coaches in athletics and rugby are over 40. More than one in ten Athletics coaches are over 60. Disability sport and multi-skills have a very young coaching workforce, with 69% and 87% respectively being aged under 40. Hockey coaches are younger still, with nearly 50% being aged under 30 (Figure 12).

Figure 12 - Coach Age by Primary Coaching Role



3.3.2.2 Figure 13 shows that across Northern Ireland there is less variation between areas, although more than half of the coaching workforce in the Causeway Coast and Glens area is aged 40 or over. Paid coaches tend to be younger, with 73% of part-time and 75% of full-time coaches aged under 40 (Figure 14).

Figure 13 - Coach Age by Area

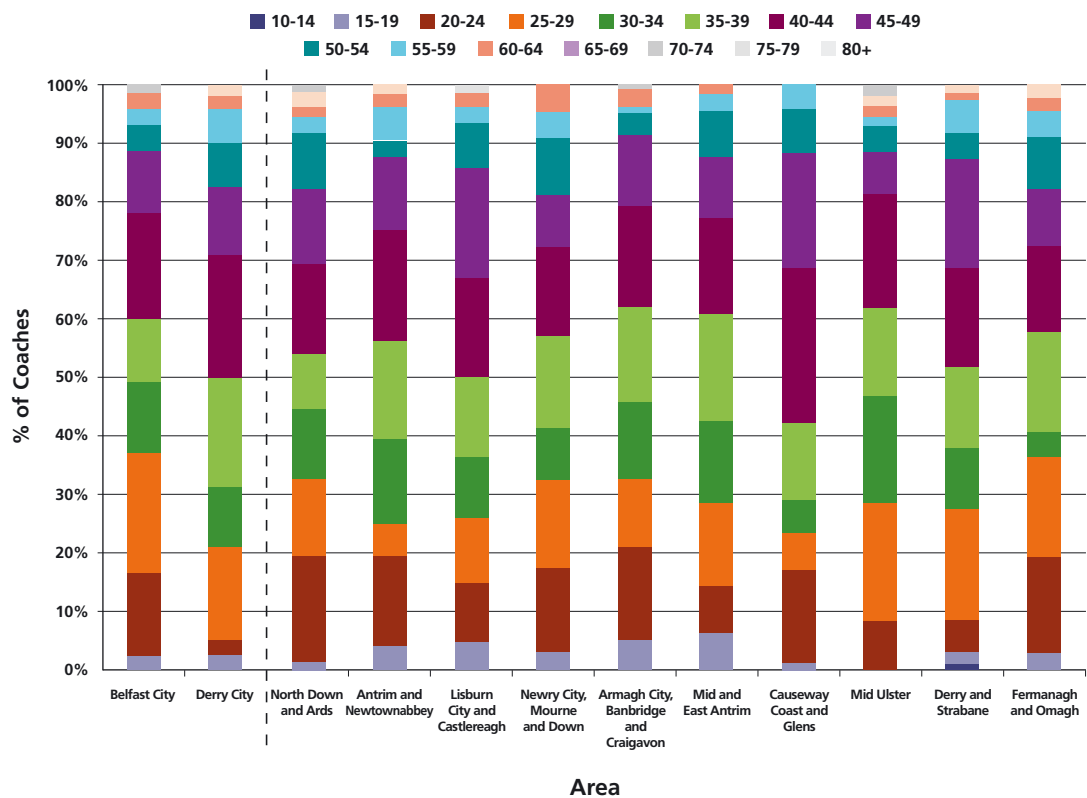
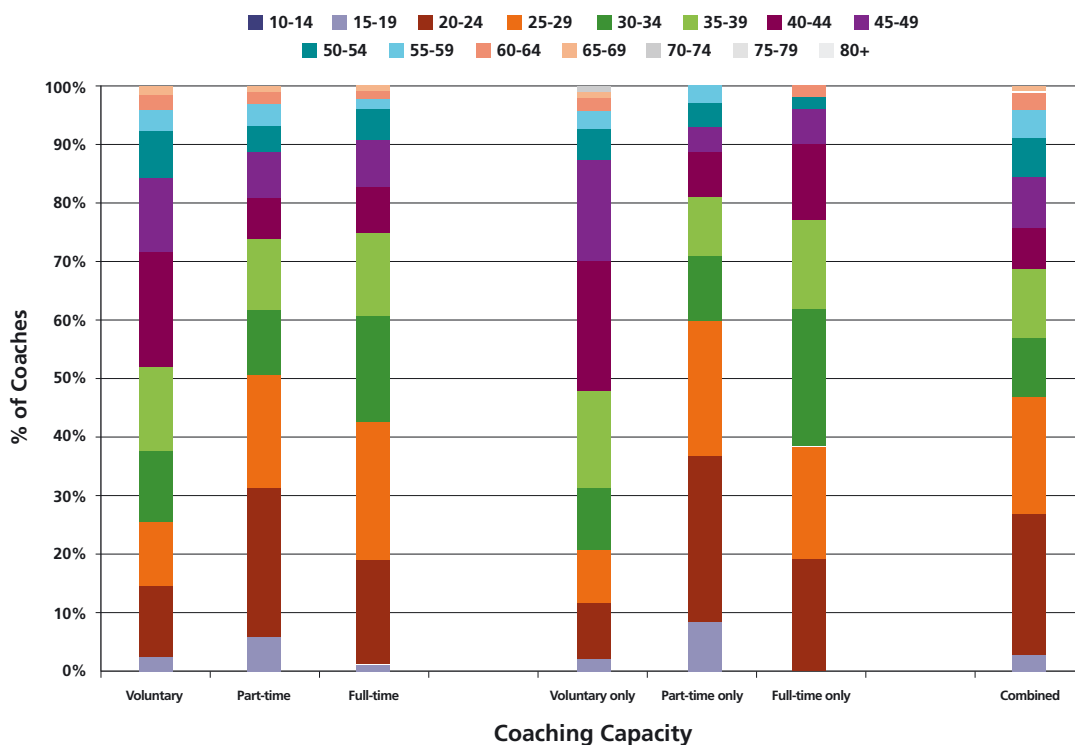


Figure 14 - Coach Age by Coaching Capacity



3.3.3 ETHNICITY

3.3.3.1 There is little or no variation in coach ethnicity with only 2% of coaches overall stating that they are from a minority ethnic group. This figure rises to 4% among cricket coaches.

3.3.4 MARITAL STATUS

3.3.4.1 Figures 15 to 17 show the breakdown of coaches by marital status. Over three fifths of coaches in Northern Ireland (61%) are married, which suggests that the majority of coaches are balancing their coaching commitments with the conflicting demands of family life. There is some variation by sport, with 64% of multi-skills coaches being single, reflecting the younger age profile of the workforce. The same is true, though to a lesser extent, of hockey (Figure 15).

3.3.4.2 Figure 16 shows that there is a consistent pattern across areas, with no significant variation.

Figure 15 - Coach Marital Status by Primary Coaching Role

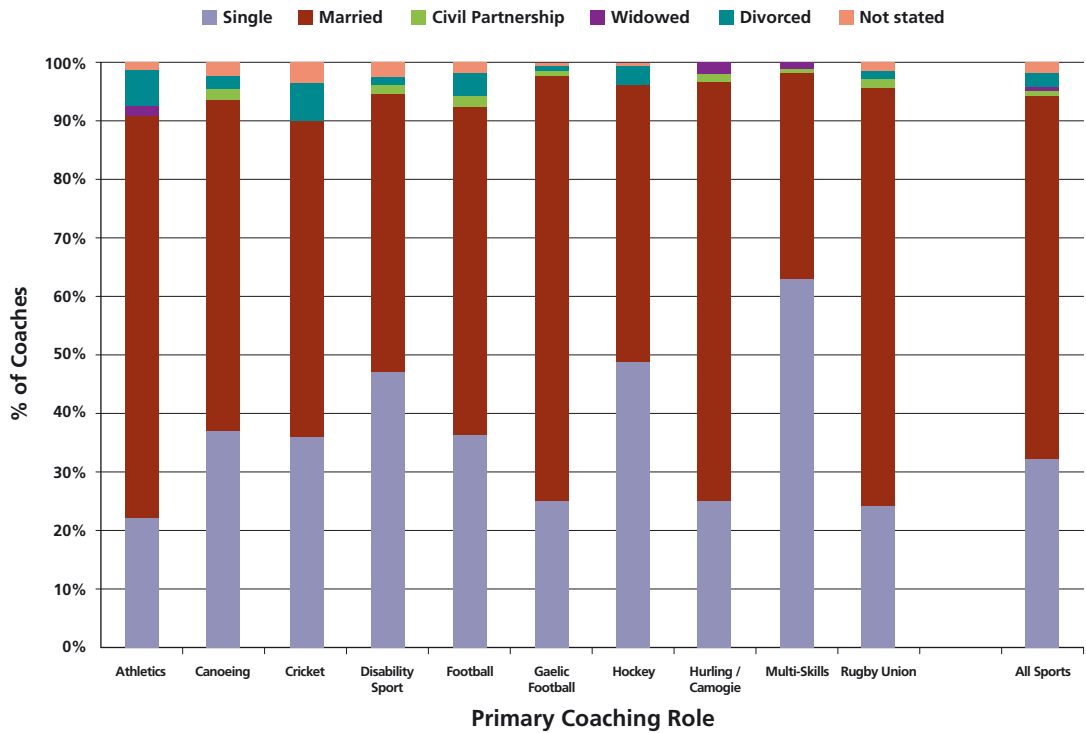
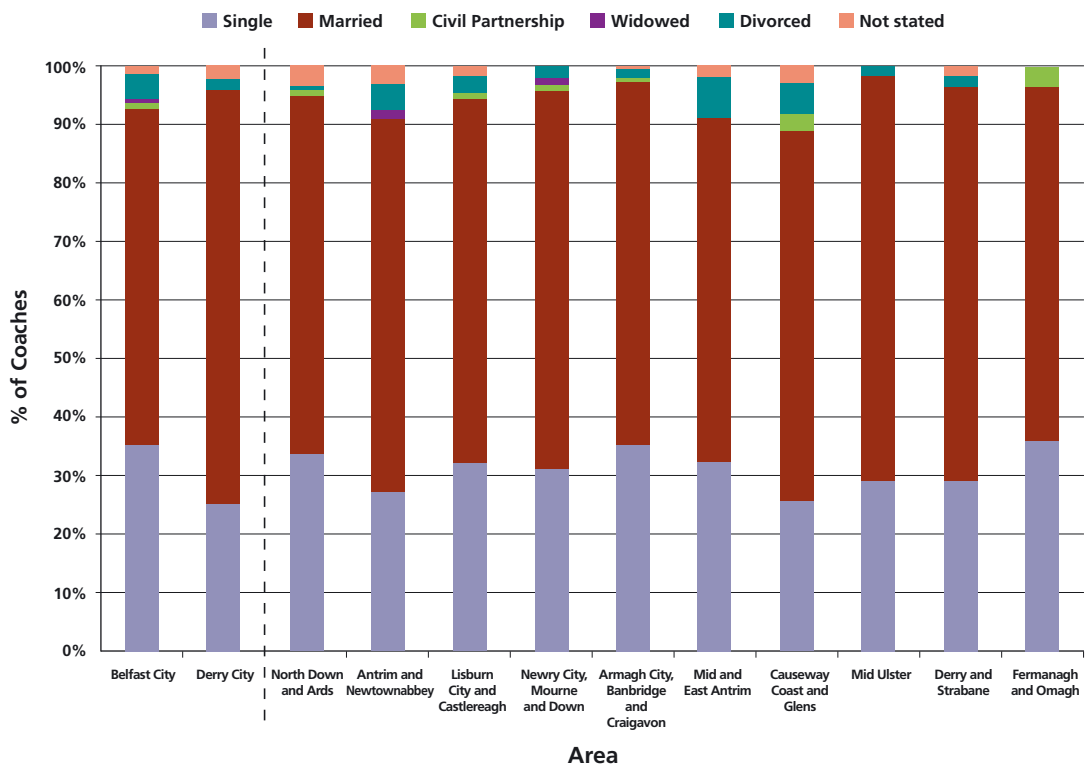
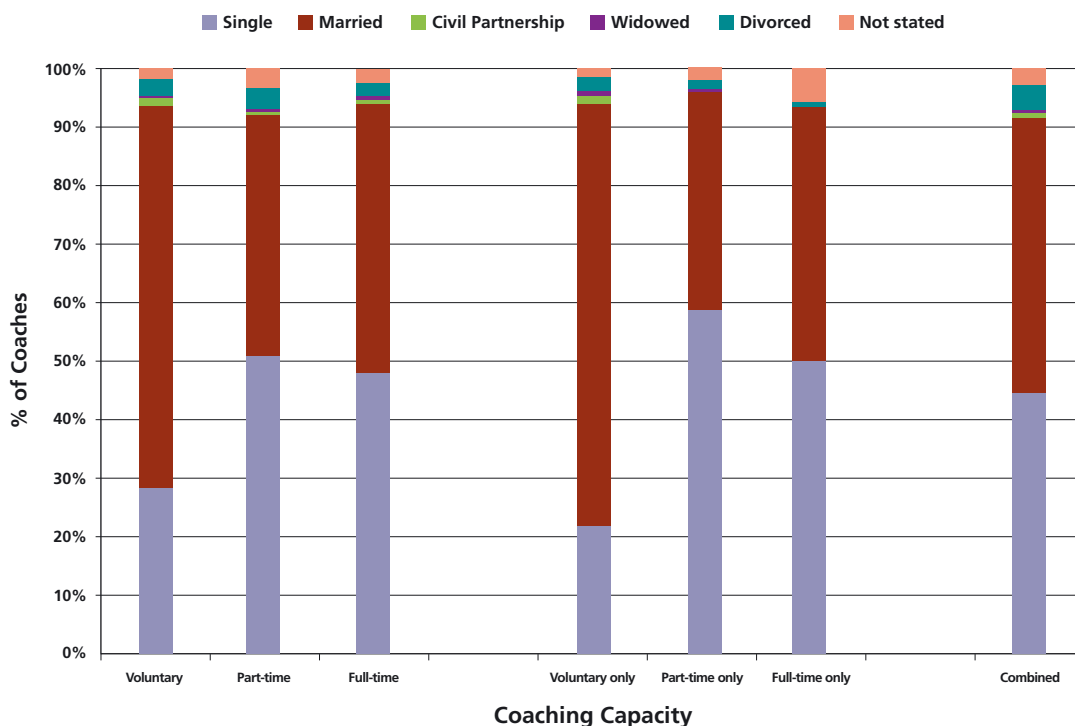


Figure 16 - Coach Marital Status by Area



3.3.4.3 Almost two thirds of voluntary coaches are married; while over half of part-time and 48% of full-time coaches are single (Figure 17).

Figure 17 - Coach Marital Status by Coaching Capacity



3.3.4.4 This is further evidence of the level of commitment required to be involved in coaching. Some clubs have, however, found solutions to this aspect of the time pressure problem:

“Volunteers, we have found, work better if one half can bring the other half of the partnership with them into the system. So you’re not creating conflict by one person continuously being at the club - this is a huge thing. We have found that our most successful coaches - husband and wife or partners - are there together.”

3.3.5 DISABILITY

3.3.5.1 Across Northern Ireland as a whole, fewer than 2.5% of coaches have a disability (Figure 18). This figure rises to 2.8% for Gaelic football coaches, and 4.8% for hurling/camogie coaches. Of coaches involved in disability sport, 3.3% are disabled. Fewer than 1% of paid coaches are disabled (Figure 19).

Figure 18 - Coaches who are Disabled, by Primary Coaching Role

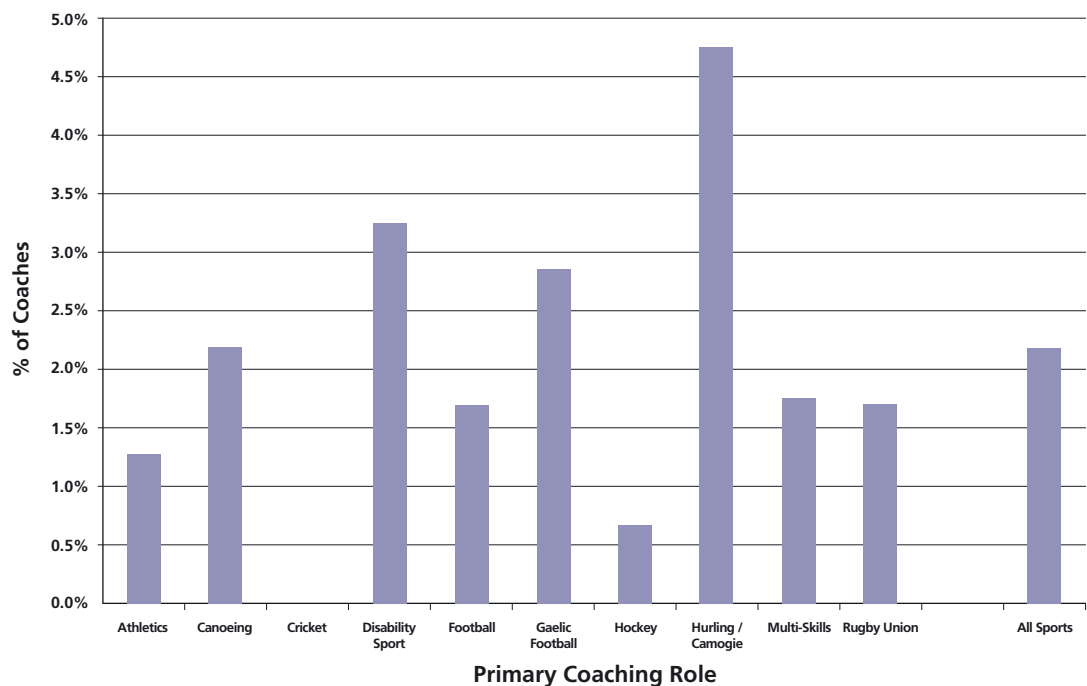
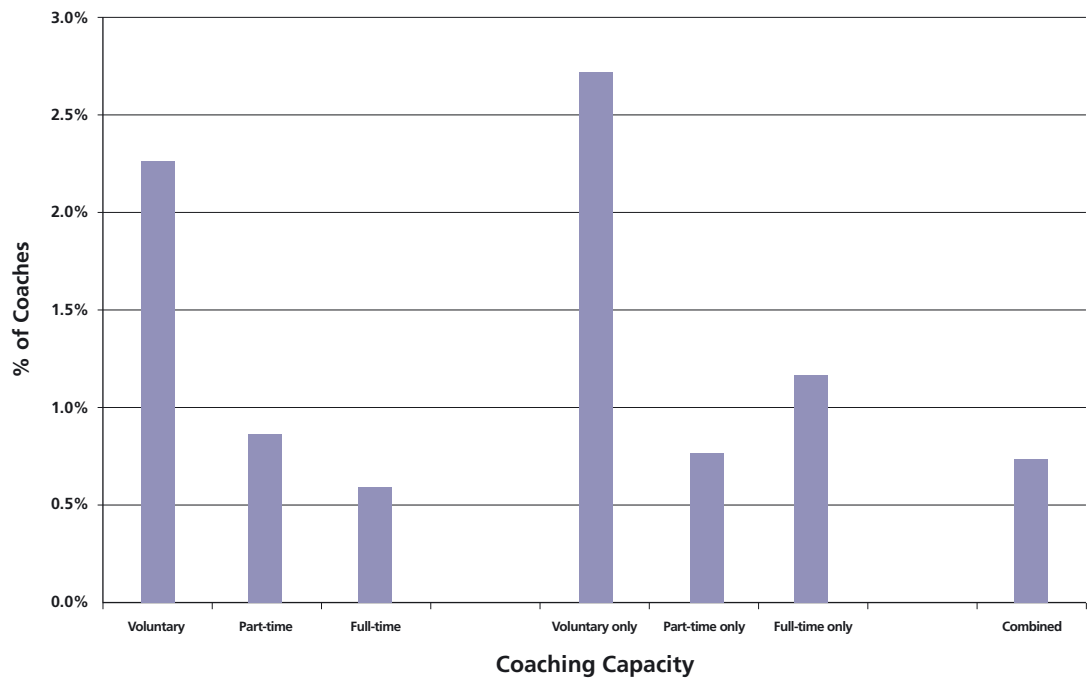


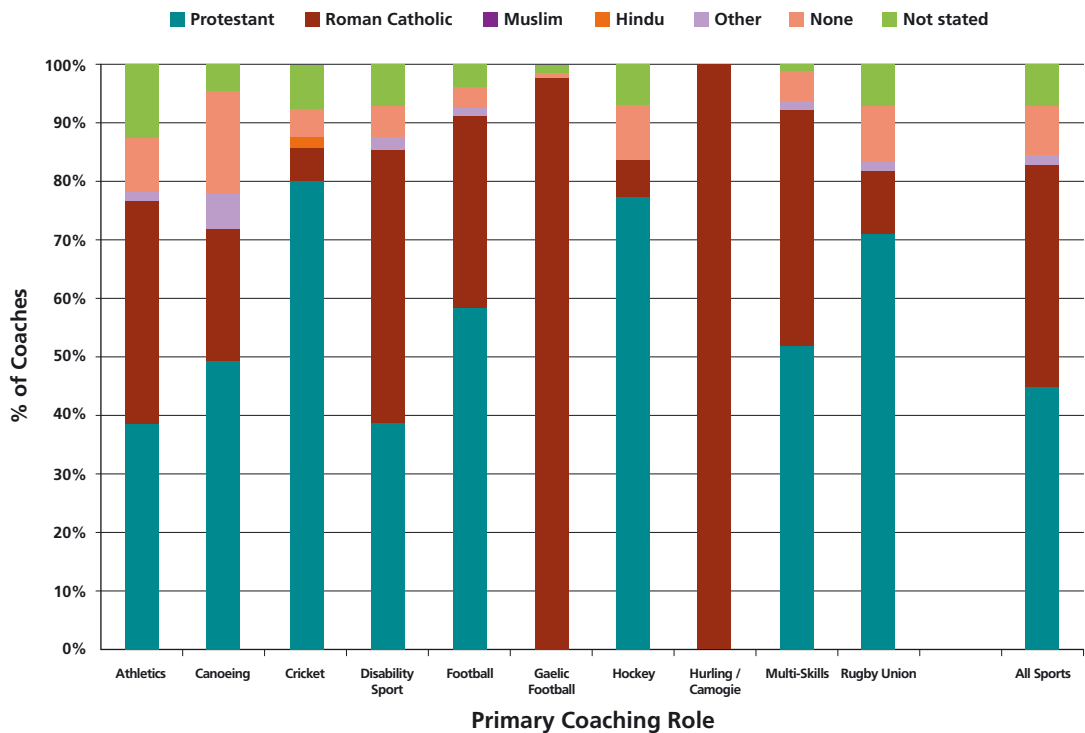
Figure 19 - Coaches who are Disabled, by Coaching Capacity



3.3.6 RELIGION

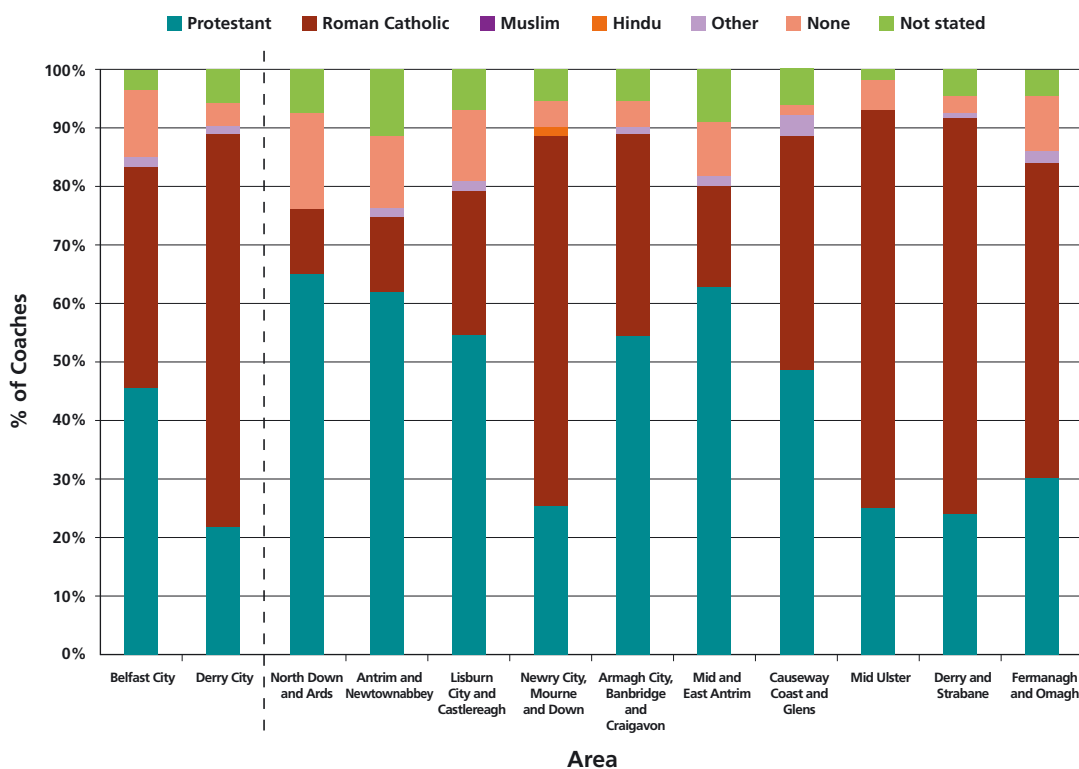
3.3.6.1 Figures 20 to 22 show the breakdown of coaches by religion. Overall, 45% of coaches who responded to the survey were Protestant, while 38% were Roman Catholic. The religious profile of sports coaches in Northern Ireland reflects the historical and cultural connections to some sports. For example 97% of Gaelic football and 100% of hurling coaches are Roman Catholic, while 80% of cricket coaches, 78% of hockey coaches and 71% of rugby coaches are Protestant. It is interesting to note that in the remaining sports such as athletics and canoeing, there is more of a balance between the two communities in terms of representation (Figure 20).

Figure 20 - Coach Religion by Primary Coaching Role



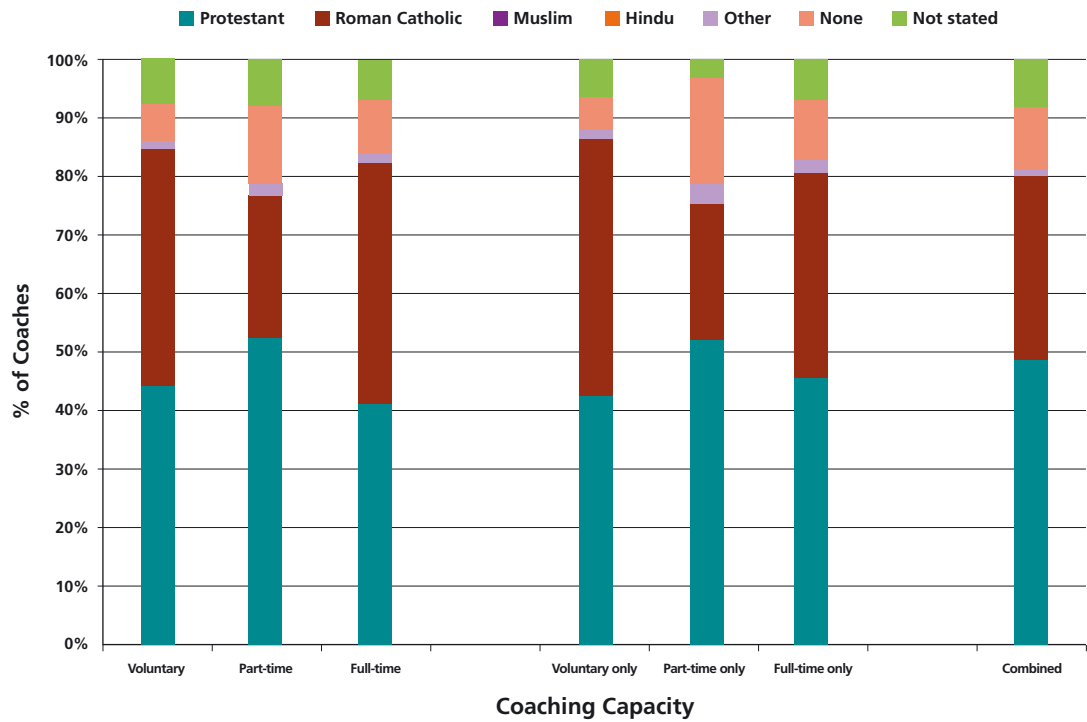
3.3.6.2 The distribution by area (Figure 21) reflects the socio-political make-up of the population of Northern Ireland, with a higher proportion of Roman Catholic coaches to the south and west (where Gaelic football and hurling are more prevalent), and more Protestant coaches to the north and east (where the popularity of football, rugby, cricket and hockey is higher).

Figure 21 - Coach Religion by Area



3.3.6.3 More than half of all part-time coaches are Protestant, while Roman Catholic coaches make up 40% of full-time coaches (Figure 22).

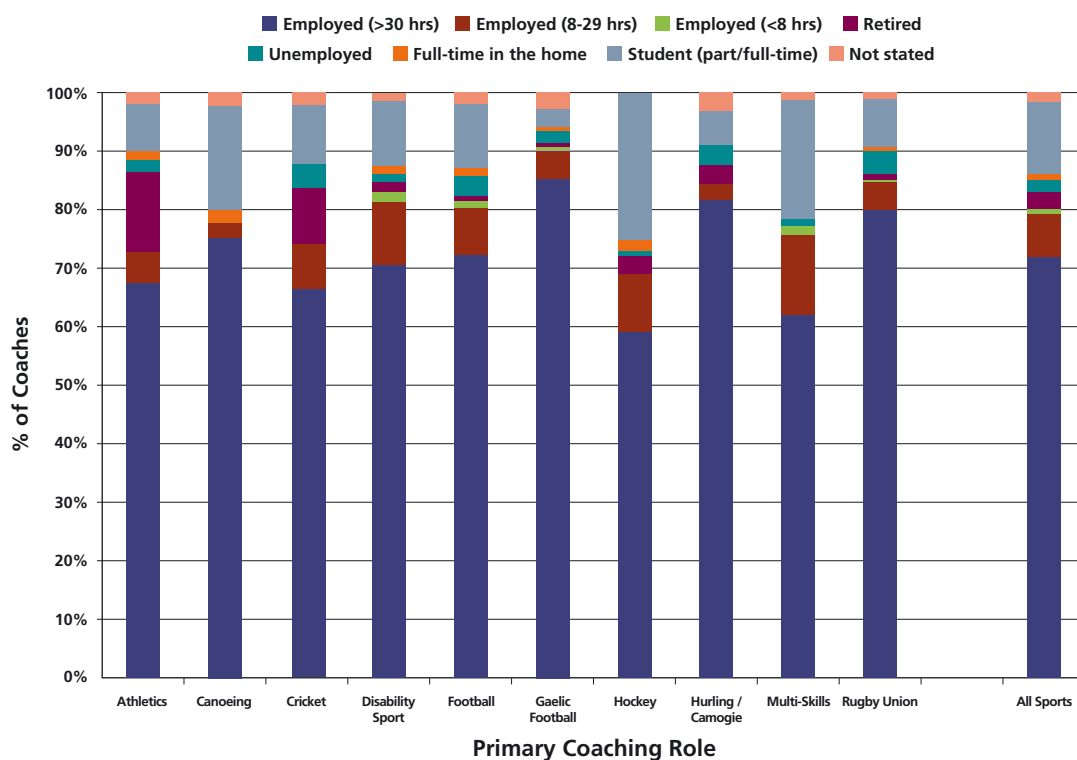
Figure 22 - Coach Religion by Coaching Capacity



3.3.7 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

3.3.7.1 Figures 23 to 25 show the breakdown of coaches by employment status. Nearly three quarters of coaches in Northern Ireland are in full-time employment (mostly not in coaching), presenting a further challenge in terms of balancing conflicting demands. Students account for a further 11% of coaches, while part-time employees make up another 8% of the total. More than a quarter of hockey coaches and 17% of canoeing coaches are students, while 14% of athletics coaches and 10% of cricket coaches are retired. Rugby (80%) and the Gaelic games (86% in Gaelic football and 83% in hurling) have the highest proportions of coaches who work full-time (Figure 23).

Figure 23 - Coach Employment Status by Primary Coaching Role

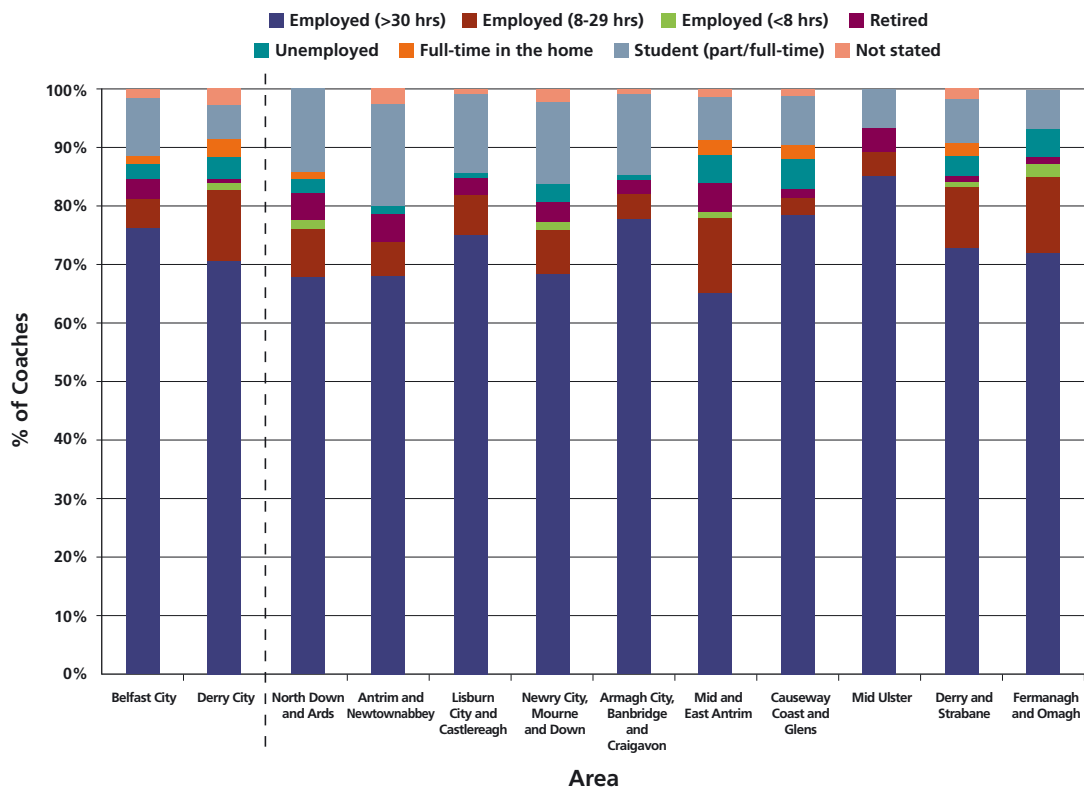


3.3.7.2 There is a generally uniform pattern across the 11 consortia of district councils, though the Greater Belfast Area tends to have higher proportions of coaches who are students (Figure 24). Crucially, 75% of voluntary coaches are in full-time employment.

3.3.7.3 Coaches who are employed full-time have to consider carefully the implications of coaching in terms of time, and not just when delivering coaching sessions, as this quote from a hurling coach indicates:

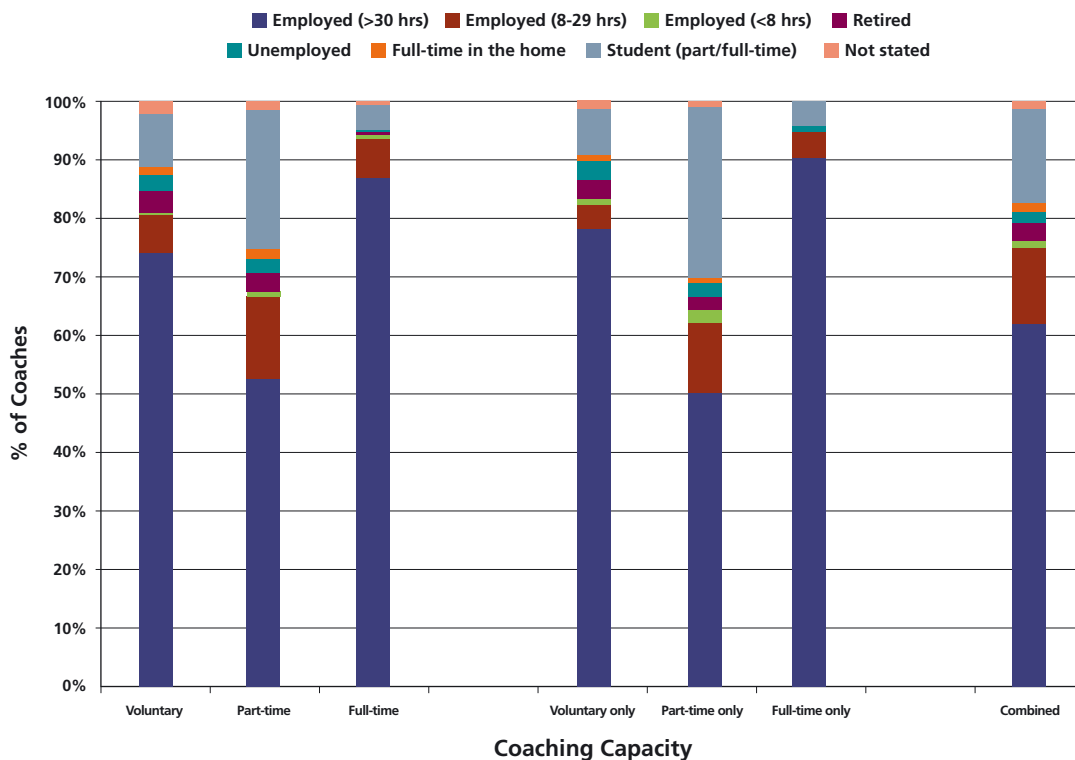
“A course in Belfast would usually start at 7pm and go on to 10pm. People from north Antrim would have to leave home at 5:30 and go home overnight. That places a heavy burden on them, because you’re practically out of action until Saturday evening. It’s a heavy burden in terms of commitment.”

Figure 24 - Coach Employment Status by Area



3.3.7.4 Nearly a quarter of part-time paid coaches (23%) are students, suggesting that paid coaching opportunities are used to supplement income (Figure 25).

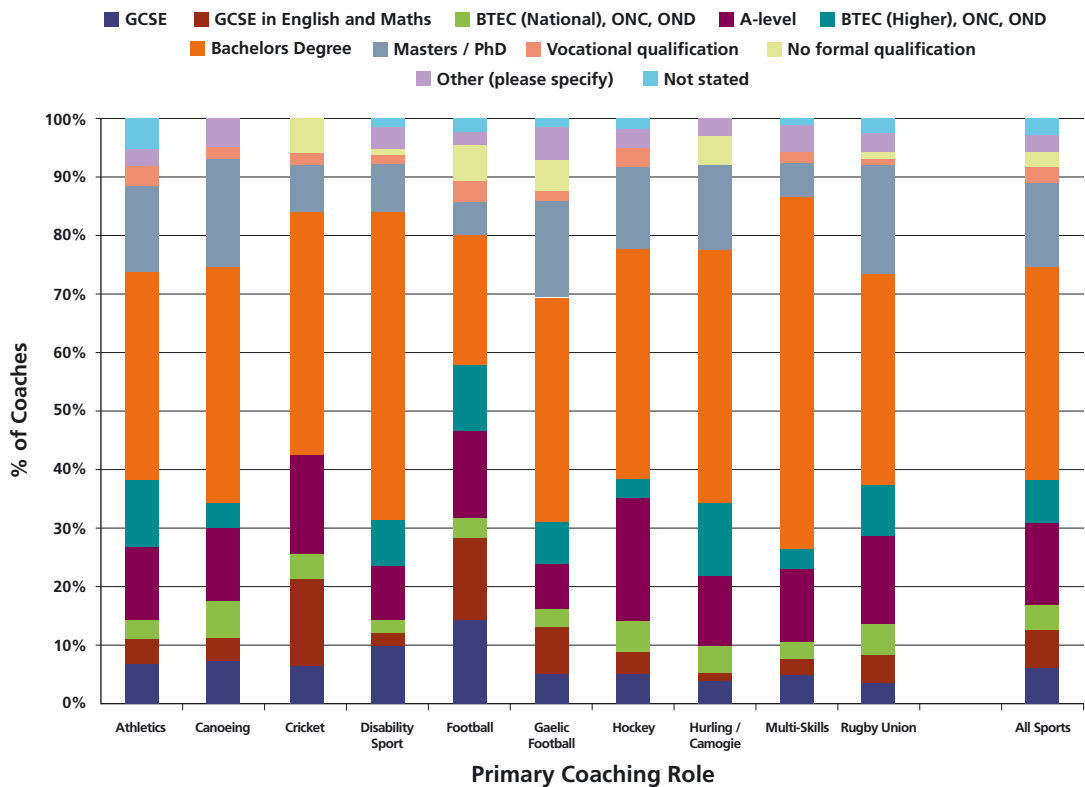
Figure 25 - Coach Employment Status by Coaching Capacity



3.3.8 EDUCATION LEVEL

3.3.8.1 Figures 26 to 28 relate to coaches' educational attainment level. More than half of all coaches (51%) have a university degree. This proportion rises to 61% of disability sports coaches and 66% of multi-skills coaches. Football coaches are the least likely to have a degree with only 28% having one (Figure 26).

Figure 26 - Coach Educational Attainment Level by Primary Coaching Role



3.3.8.2 Figure 27 demonstrates that there is less variation between areas, though it should be noted that Derry (34%) and Mid and East Antrim (31%) have a lower proportion of coaches educated to degree level. Full-time coaches are more likely than any other group to have been educated at a university, with over 64% having at least a Bachelor's degree (Figure 28).

Figure 27 - Coach Educational Attainment Level by Area

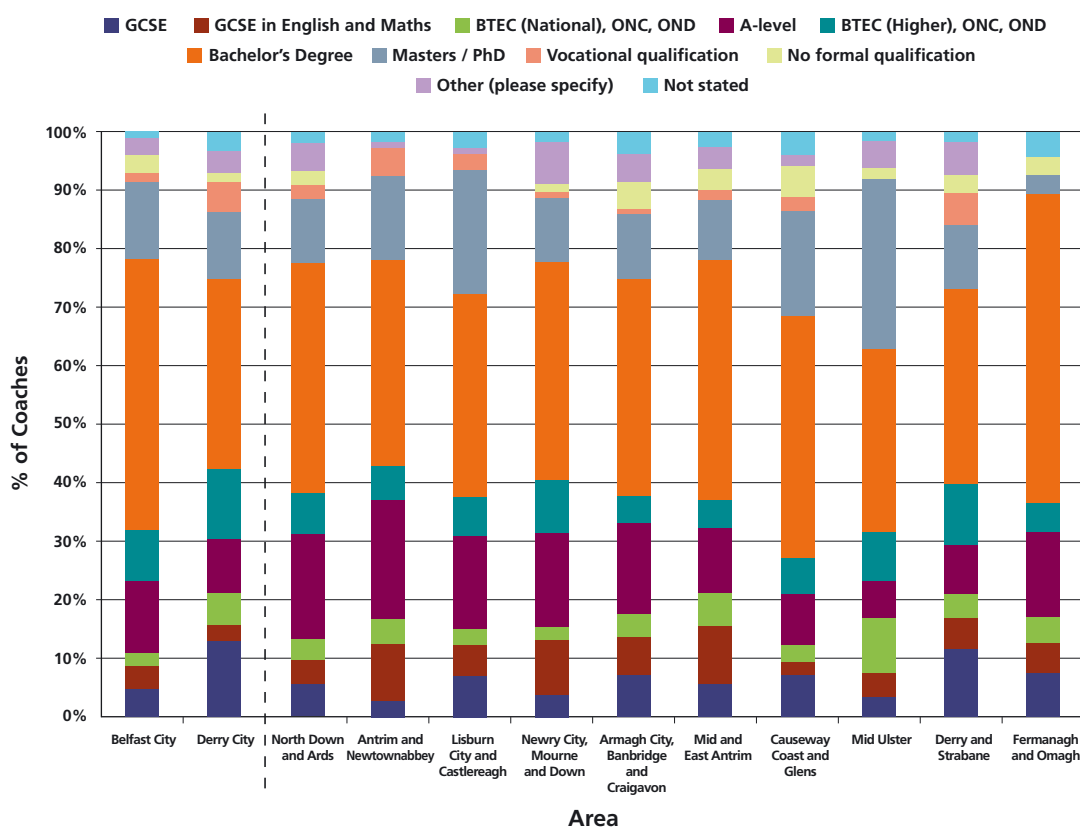
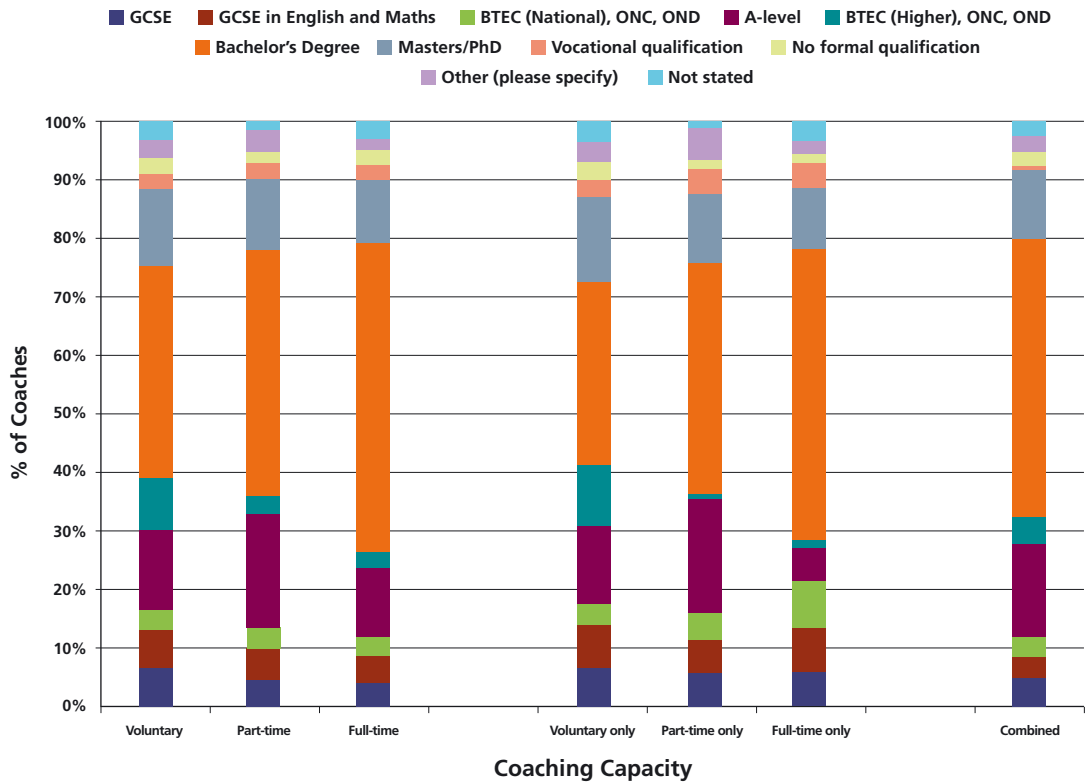


Figure 28 - Coach Educational Attainment Level by Coaching Capacity



3.3.8.3 One coach found it difficult to find employment in certain roles because, although he was an experienced coach with specialist skills, he didn't have a degree.

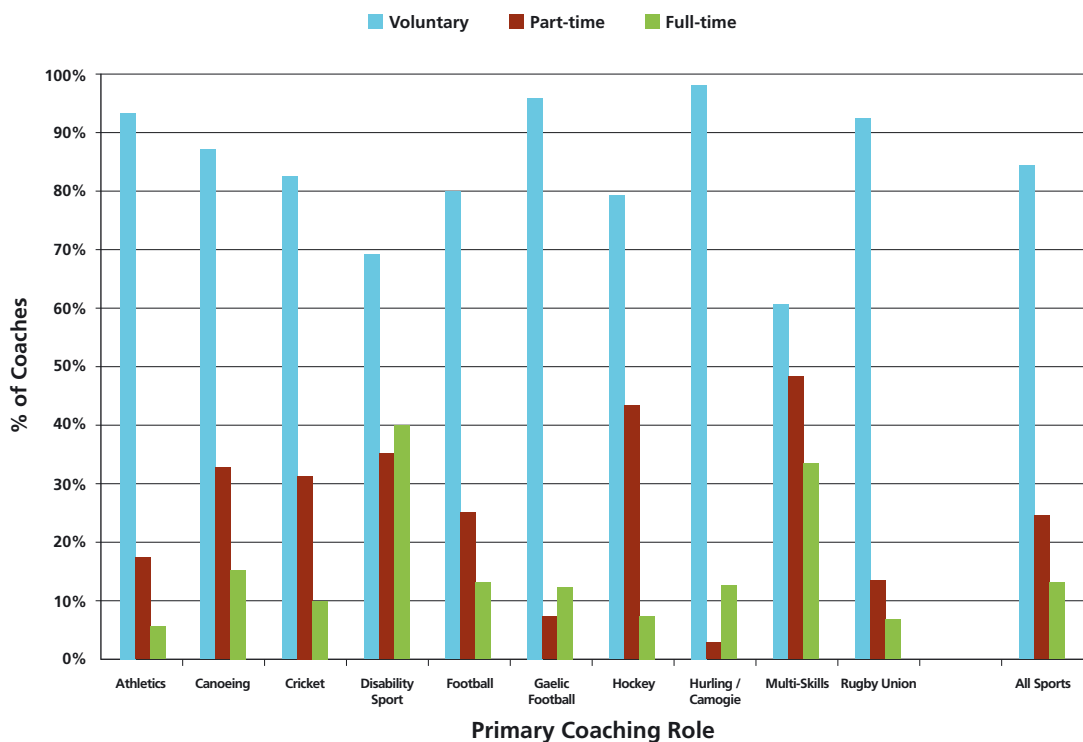
“Coaching is about more than being able to put across your sport. It’s about being able to actually teach somebody, and ... the background that I have is I’m a qualified adult and further education teacher. I can’t get a job in Northern Ireland because I don’t have a degree. But I can teach somebody how to actually coach and teach. Not their sport, but I can teach them the basics and the fundamentals of actually coaching.”

3.4 What Roles do Coaches Take?

3.4.1 COACHING CAPACITY

3.4.1.1 Figures 29 to 30 show the balance between voluntary and paid coaches. They show that, across all sports, 84% of coaches have a voluntary role, 25% are paid on a part-time basis for their coaching, and 12% are employed full-time in a coaching role. Coaches in disability sport and multi-skills are more likely to be paid on a full-time basis, while more than 40% of hockey coaches are paid part-time. In athletics, rugby and the Gaelic sports, over 90% of coaches give at least some of their time on a voluntary basis (98% in the case of hurling/camogie).

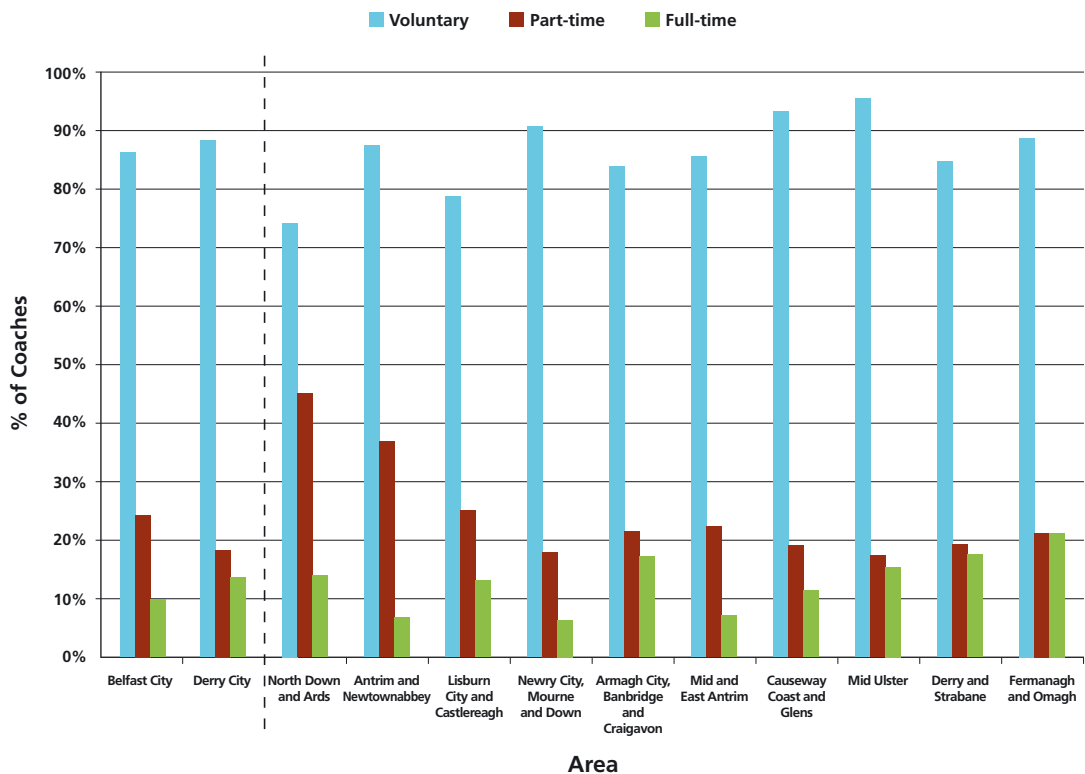
Figure 29 - Coaching Capacity by Primary Coaching Role



3.4.1.2 There is less variation when coaching capacity is analysed at a district level, though in North Down/Ards (45%) and Antrim/Newtownabbey (37%) the proportion of coaches being paid part-time is higher than average. Fermanagh/Omagh (21%) and Derry/Strabane (18%) have the highest proportion of full-time paid coaches. The proportion of voluntary coaches is lowest in North Down/Ards (74%), which may be related to the absence of Gaelic football coaches from this area in the survey.

3.4.1.3 There is clearly some overlap between voluntary and paid coaching, which is evident in Figure 29. Of the 1,160 coaches who coach on a voluntary basis, 212 or 18% are also paid part-time, while 82 (7%) coach full-time. Of these, 24 (2%) manage to combine voluntary, part-time and full-time paid coaching roles. Half of all of the full-time paid coaches, who responded to the survey, stated that they have additional coaching roles, be they voluntary or paid part-time. As will be explained later, this has the potential to generate conflicts of interest, as the demands of voluntary clubs and community organisations may differ from those of governing bodies of sport and district councils, which employ the majority of coaches.

Figure 30 - Coaching Capacity by Area



3.4.1.4 Opportunities for paid coaching work were felt by focus group participants to be variable, even though many coaches would welcome more such opportunities despite relatively low pay in many coaching sectors. This, however, is a double-edged sword because coaches drawn to paid opportunities will leave voluntary roles, causing shortages in clubs which can't afford to pay.

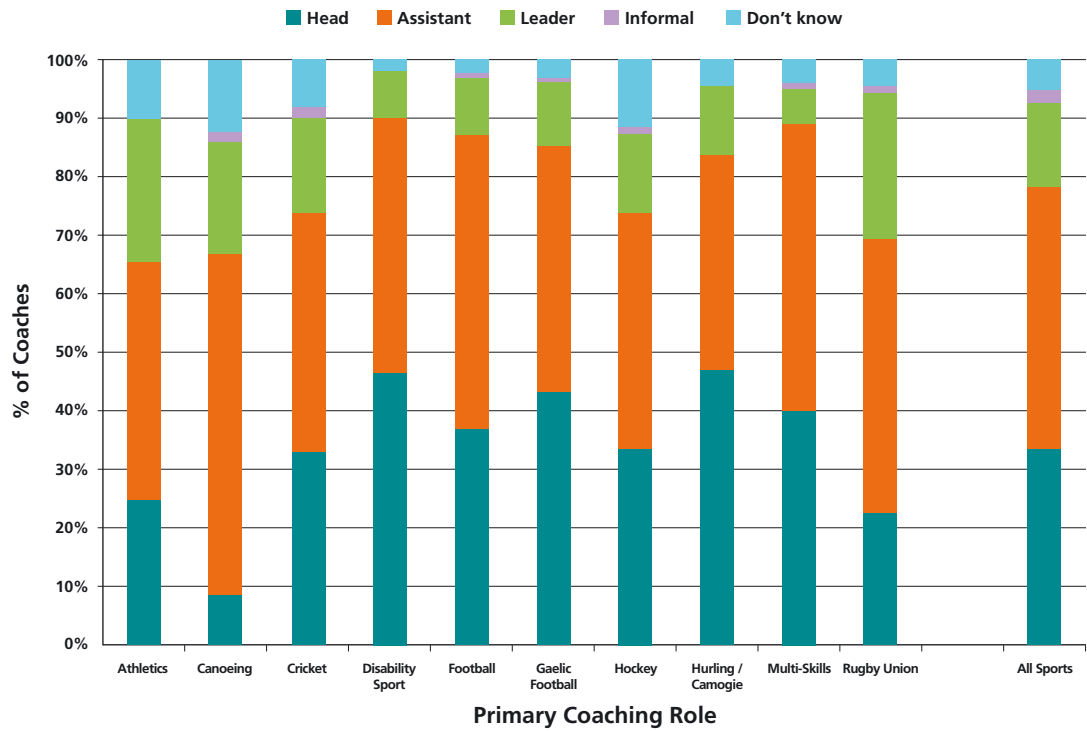
"I am a professional coach on a full-time basis. I get to coach as my job but where the conflicting demands come in, is where my own personal club would like me to coach as well outside of that. Because of my professional role I can't really do this and it is difficult to balance I have just had to tell them that I am not able to do this because of time."

"I would love to be full-time, but the lack of opportunities stops me. This area seems to be deprived of opportunities for full-time coaching. If you go further afield, they all seem to have people in place coaching full-time; even part-time coaches are doing full-time hours."

3.4.2 COACHING ROLES

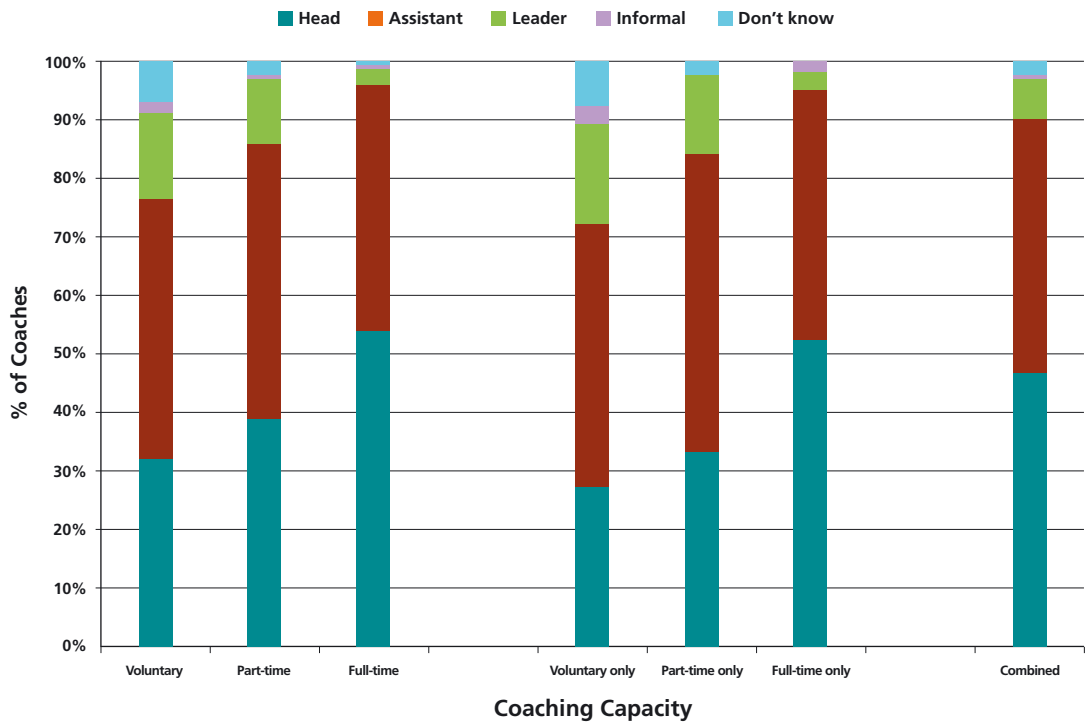
3.4.2.1 Respondents were asked to state what type of coaching they undertook in relation to their primary coaching role, and the responses are shown in Figures 31 and 32. Over a third of coaches are a head coach, with another 45% stating that they are an assistant coach. Only 2% regard their coaching as informal. Figure 31 demonstrates that in Gaelic football and hurling/camogie the proportion of head coaches was higher at 43% and 47% respectively, while canoeing (59%) and football (51%) had the highest proportion of assistant coaches. Athletics (25%) and rugby union (24%) had the highest proportions of coaching session leaders.

Figure 31 - Coach Type by Primary Coaching Role



3.4.2.2 The balance between head and assistant coaches is broadly consistent between areas, with little variation from the average for Northern Ireland as a whole. When analysed by coaching capacity however, it is clear that paid coaches, be they part-time or full-time, are more likely to have a head or assistant coach role. More than half of full-time coaches are head coaches, while around half of part-time coaches have an assistant role.

Figure 32 - Coach Type by Coaching Capacity



3.4.3 OTHER ROLES

- 3.4.3.1** Figures 33 to 34 relate to other roles undertaken by coaches in a sporting context. It is evident from these figures that coaches do not just coach, but also have a number of roles within their sport(s). Half of the coaches in the survey are also participants, though this varies between sports. In football and the Gaelic games, the proportion is less than 40%, whereas the figures for cricket and hockey are much higher (84% and 74% respectively). In cricket, rugby and hockey, just under half of coaches are also match officials, while a similar proportion of coaches in Gaelic games have a parent/helper role. Fewer than 10% of coaches have no other role.
- 3.4.3.2** The pattern is more consistent when analysed by area, though the proportion of coaches who are also players appears to be lower in Derry/Londonderry. In terms of coaching capacity, 16% of full-time coaches have a parent/helper role compared with 33% of voluntary coaches.
- 3.4.3.3** Two focus group participants highlighted the conflicts which can arise within a club environment:

"It's just sometimes that when you are so involved in a club, you get pulled into everything. Ideally I would love to just go along and maybe play on a Saturday and coach the juniors and would have no problem with that. But when you're involved with the committee you are pulled into everything."

"I am the coach and the secretary. People think all you do is turn up for two hours on a Monday and Wednesday. They don't see all the work that has to go on behind the scenes."

Figure 33 - Other Roles by Primary Coaching Role

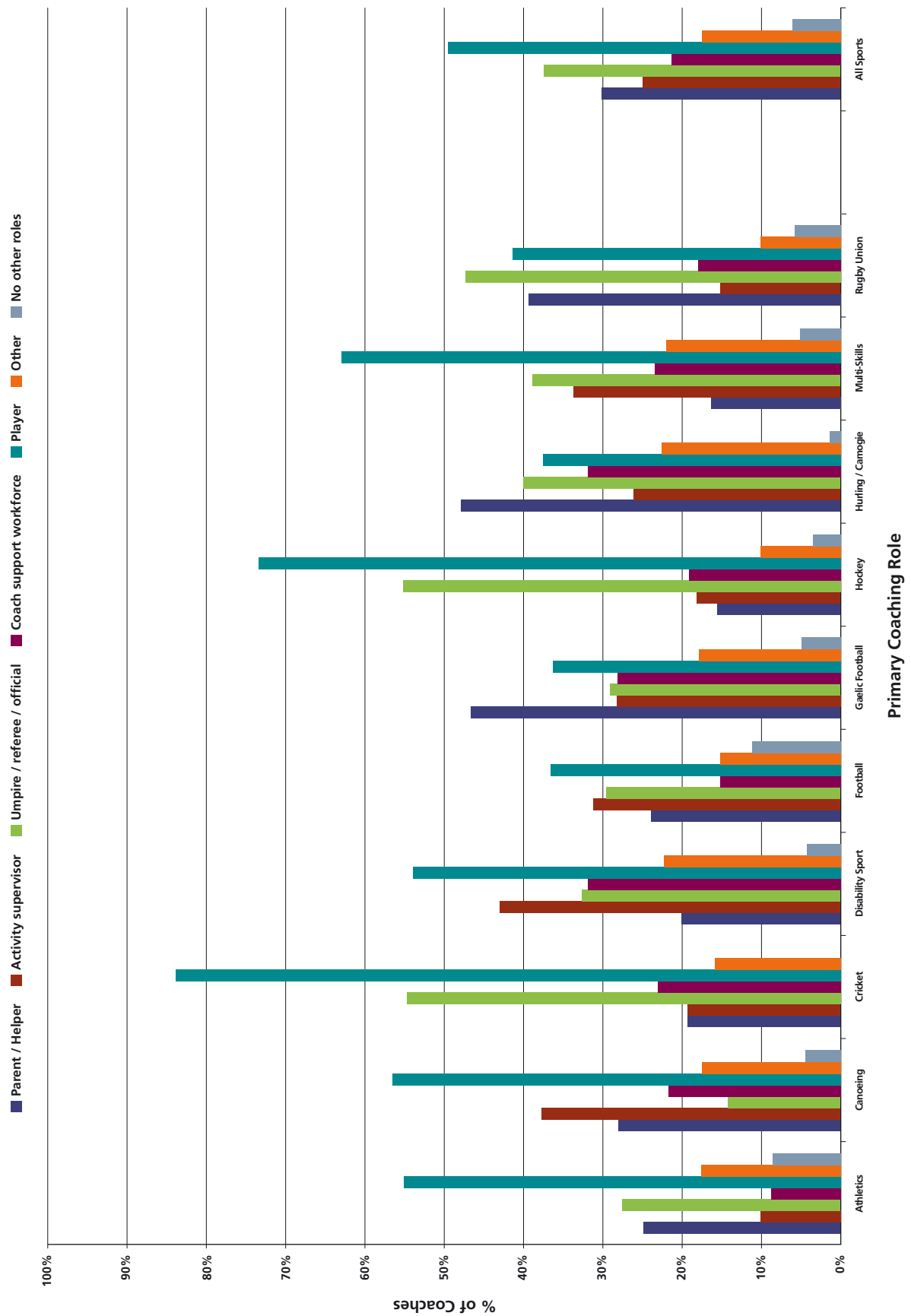
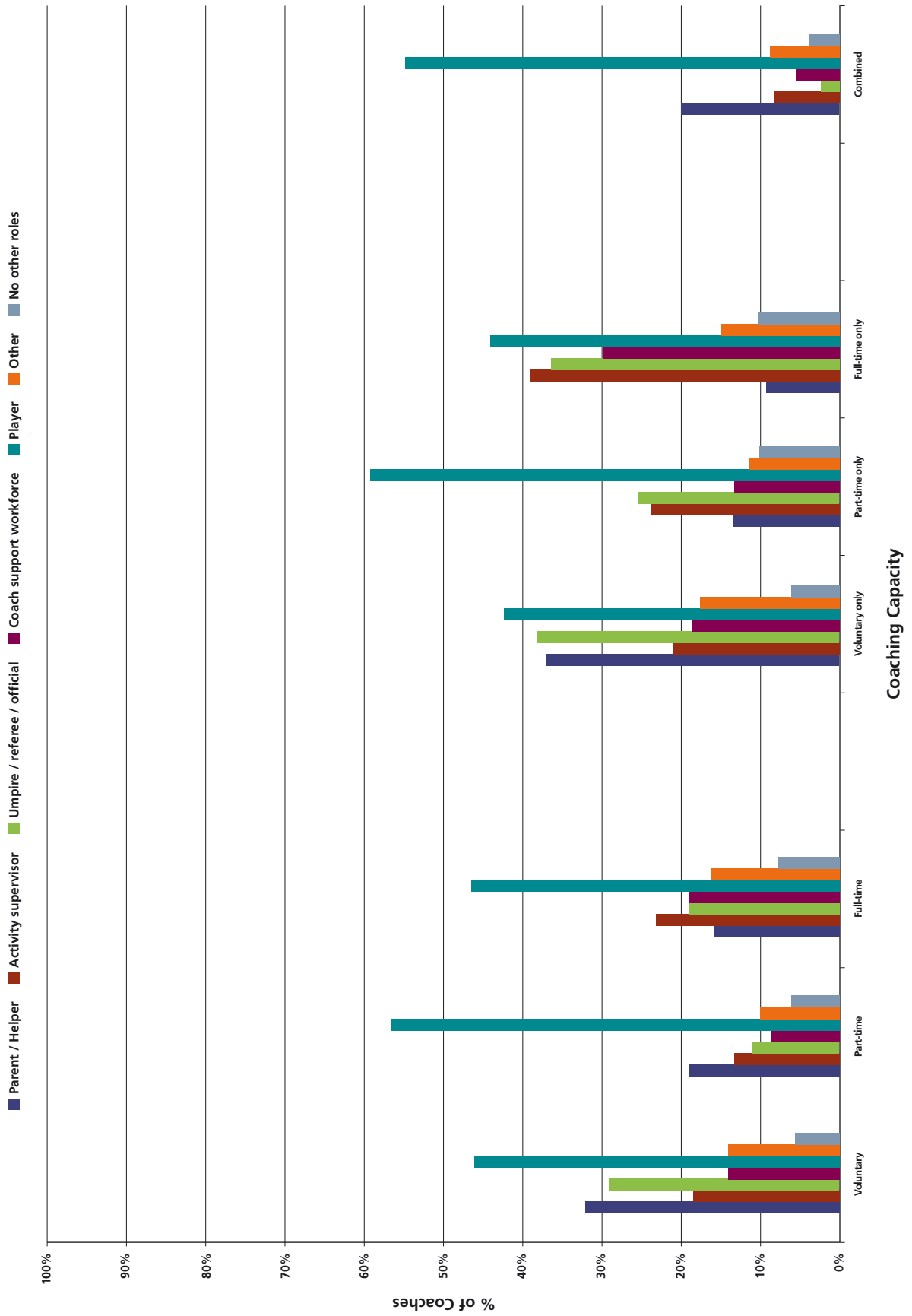


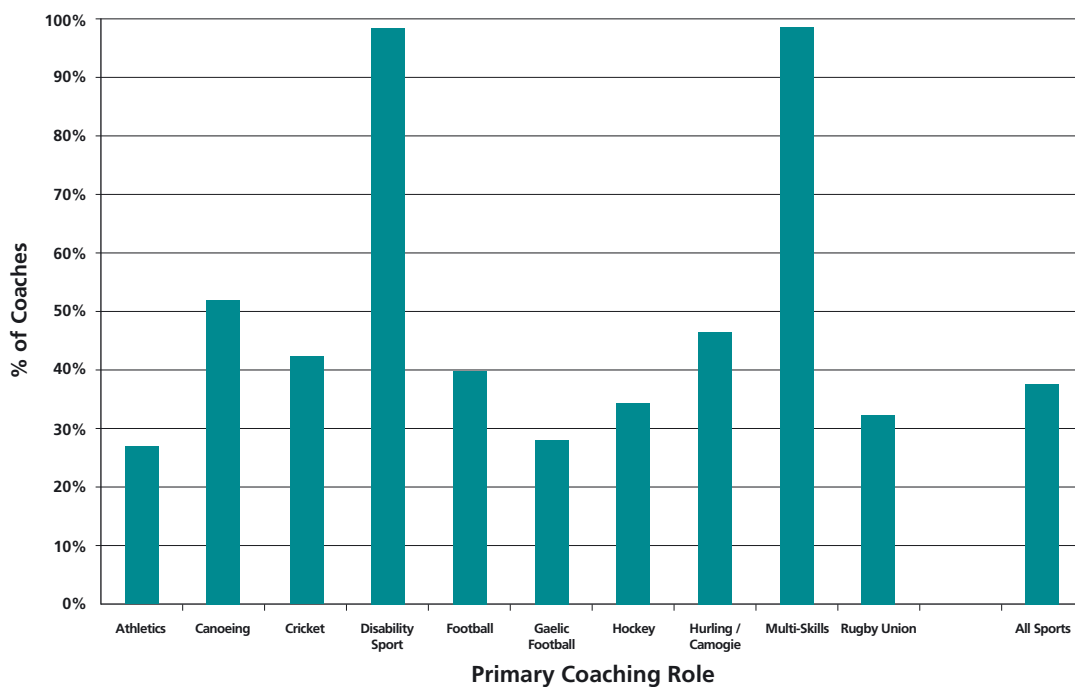
Figure 34 - Other Roles by Coaching Capacity



3.4.4 DELIVERING ACROSS A RANGE OF SPORTS

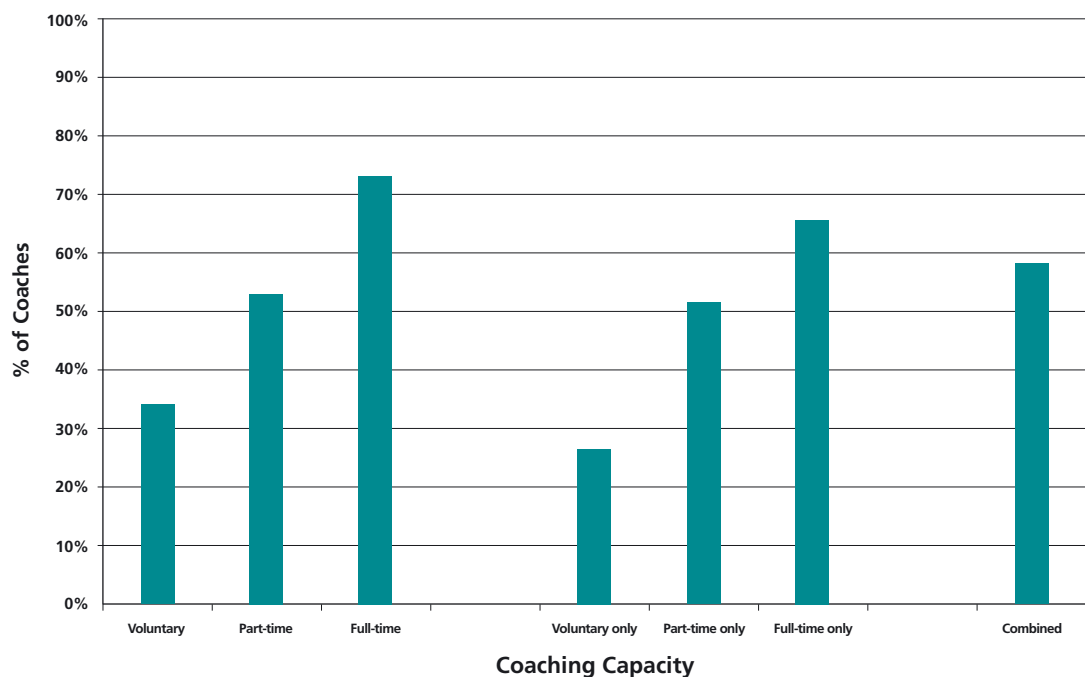
3.4.4.1 Figures 35 and 36 show the degree to which survey respondents deliver coaching beyond their primary coaching role. Over a third (38%) of coaches in all sports deliver coaching in other sports beyond their primary coaching role (Figure 35). Almost all disability sport (99%) and multi-skills (99%) coaches deliver coaching in other sports. The rate is also high for canoeing (52%) and hurling / camogie (48%). Across the areas, rates vary between 30% in Mid and East Antrim and 51% in the Causeway Coast and Glens consortia.

Figure 35 - Coaches Delivering Other Sports by Primary Coaching Role



3.4.4.2 There is a very clear pattern of variation by coaching capacity as 34% of voluntary coaches deliver more than one sport, however this figure rises to 53% of part-time and 74% of full-time coaches (Figure 36).

Figure 36 - Coaches Delivering Other Sport by Coaching Capacity

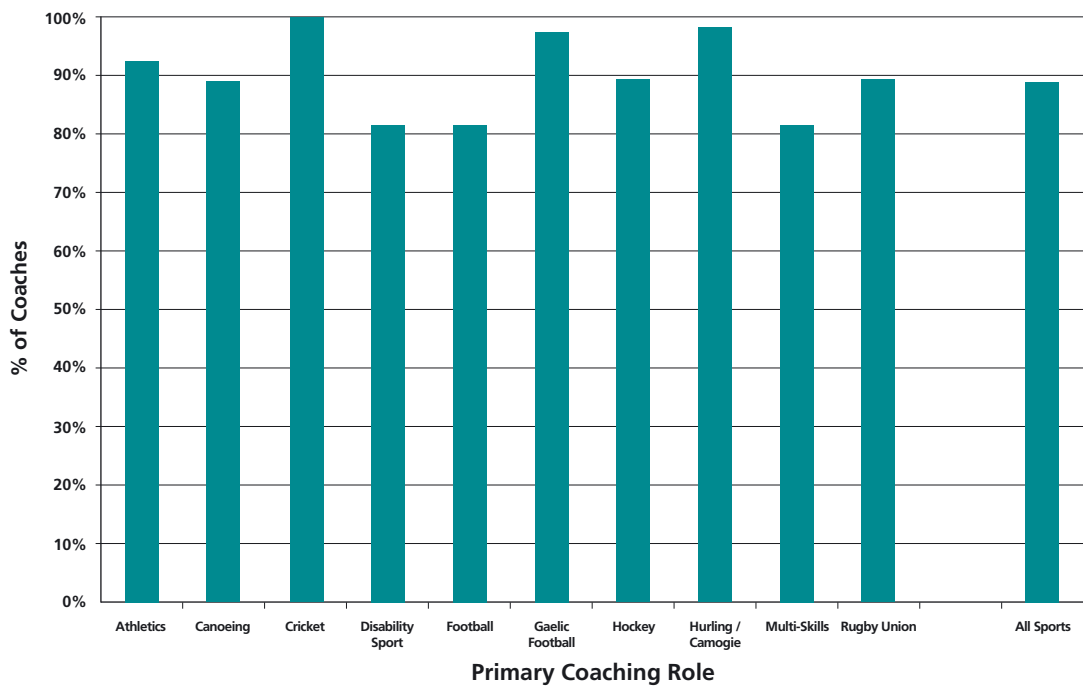


3.4.5 CLUB INVOLVEMENT

3.4.5.1 Figures 37 and 38 demonstrate that there is a very high rate of involvement in club sport among coaches in Northern Ireland, with 89% stating that they are a club member. This figure falls to 81% for football, and is similarly low for disability sport (82%) and multi-skills (82%), neither of which are organised along traditional sports club lines. Almost all GAA coaches are club members, reflecting the organisational structure of Gaelic games.

3.4.5.2 The pattern of club membership by area is very consistent, ranging from 82% in Antrim/Newtownabbey to 94% in Mid Ulster. Paid coaches are less likely than voluntary coaches to be club members, though the rate for full-time coaches is still 79% (Figure 38).

Figure 37 - Coaches Delivering Other Sport by Coaching Capacity

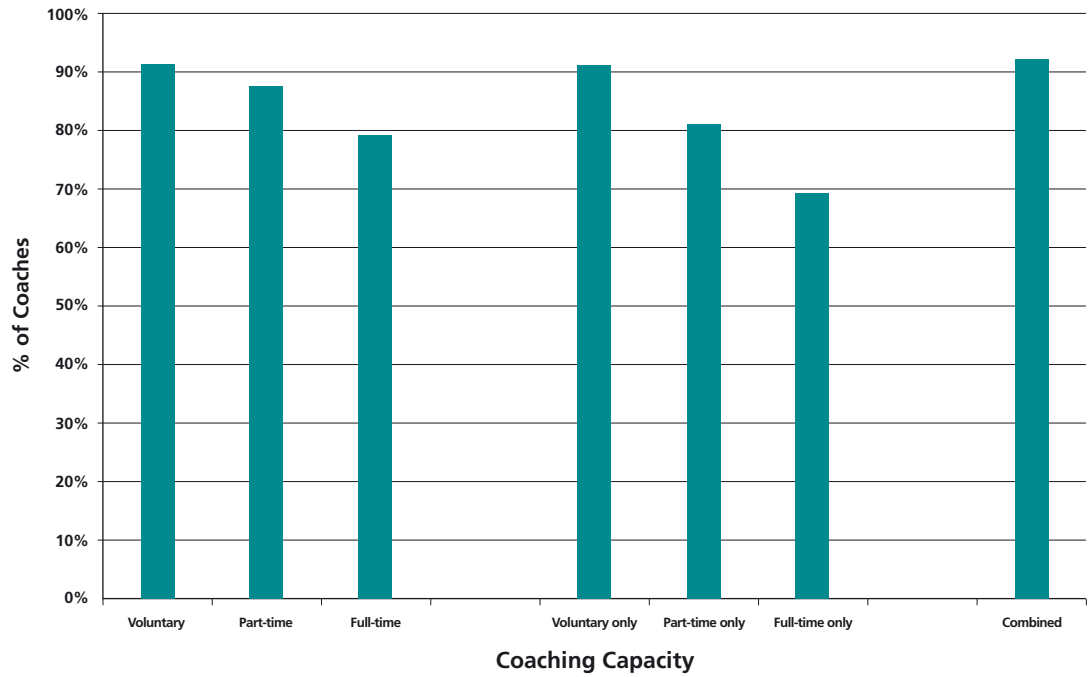


3.4.5.3 Club involvement does bring with it some inherent risks however, as the following quotes from focus group participants illustrate.

“Probably the biggest issue I find is your own personal development as a coach. You get so absorbed in the day to day running of the club that trying to balance that against how you want to take yourself forward with your own skills plus take on board new developments which are coming on board all the time and getting time to go to courses.”

“Coaching is the easy bit, it’s the communicating ... everyone has a mobile phone now that they have to be contacted on, constantly ... it’s the hassle and the time involved.”

Figure 38 - Club Membership by Coaching Capacity



3.4.6 COACHING LEVEL

- 3.4.6.1** Coaching for club level athletes forms the bulk of coaching activity in Northern Ireland, with 81% of coaches delivering to club-level athletes. Figure 39 demonstrates that coaching for beginner and recreational participants is also significant, particularly in disability sport and multi-skills, and also in canoeing. Athletics has the highest proportion of coaches in the survey sample involved with national (36%) and elite/international level participants (20%).
- 3.4.6.2** The pattern across the 11 consortia of district councils is consistent across all districts, though there is a relatively high level of involvement with county level athletes in Mid Ulster, where 37 out of 63 coaches who responded to the survey identified either Gaelic football or hurling/camogie as their primary coaching role (Figure 40).
- 3.4.6.3** Figure 41 shows that paid coaches have less involvement with club-level athletes, particularly full-time coaches (72% compared with 84% of voluntary coaches). There is an interesting paradox, however, in that a higher proportion of paid coaches deliver to beginners (75% of part-time and 85% of full-time) and recreational participants (63% and 61%) respectively, while, at the other end of the coaching continuum, 21% of full-time coaches are involved with elite athletes, compared to 8% of voluntary coaches.

Figure 39 - Coaching Level by Primary Coaching Role

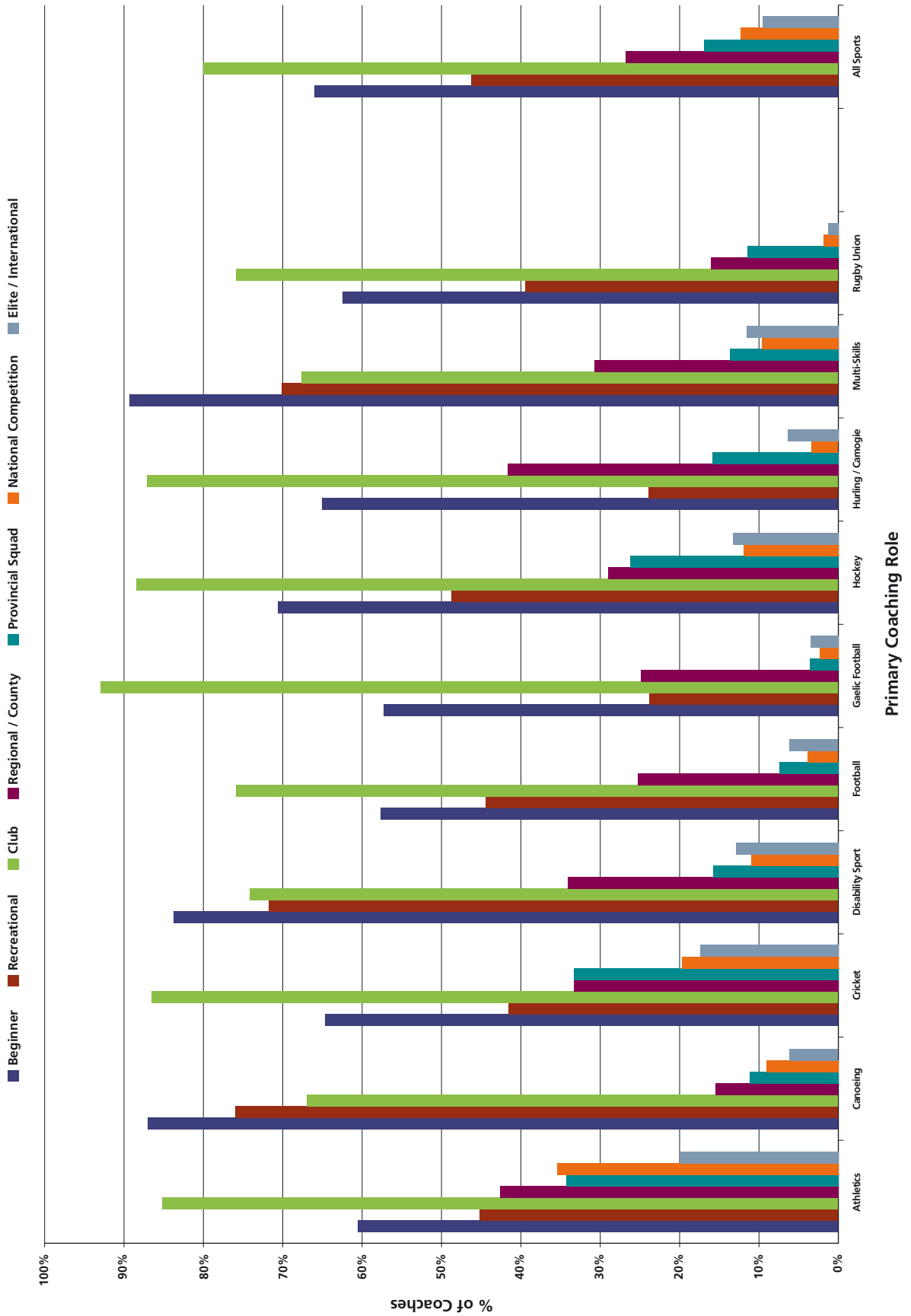


Figure 40 - Coaching Level by Area

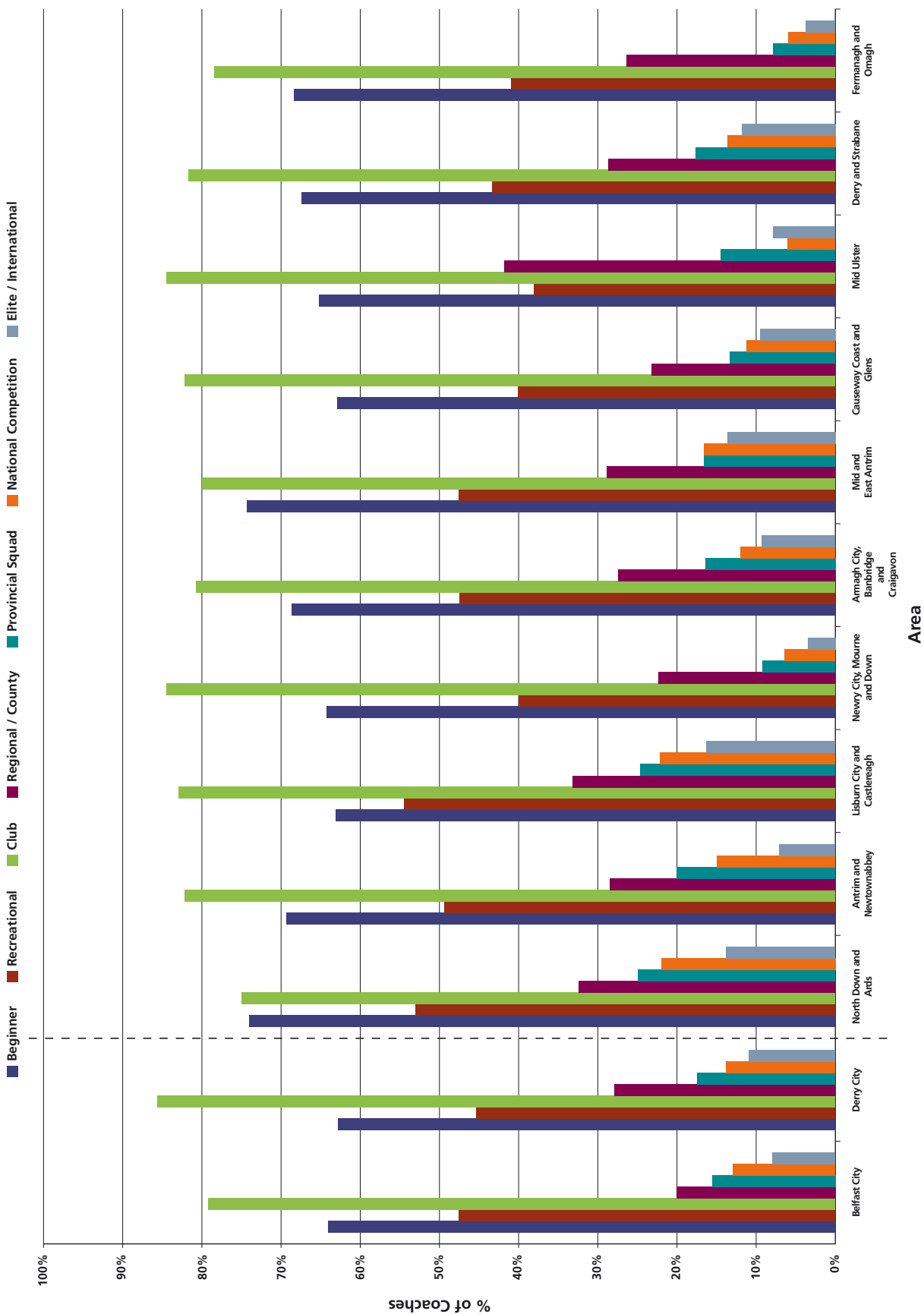
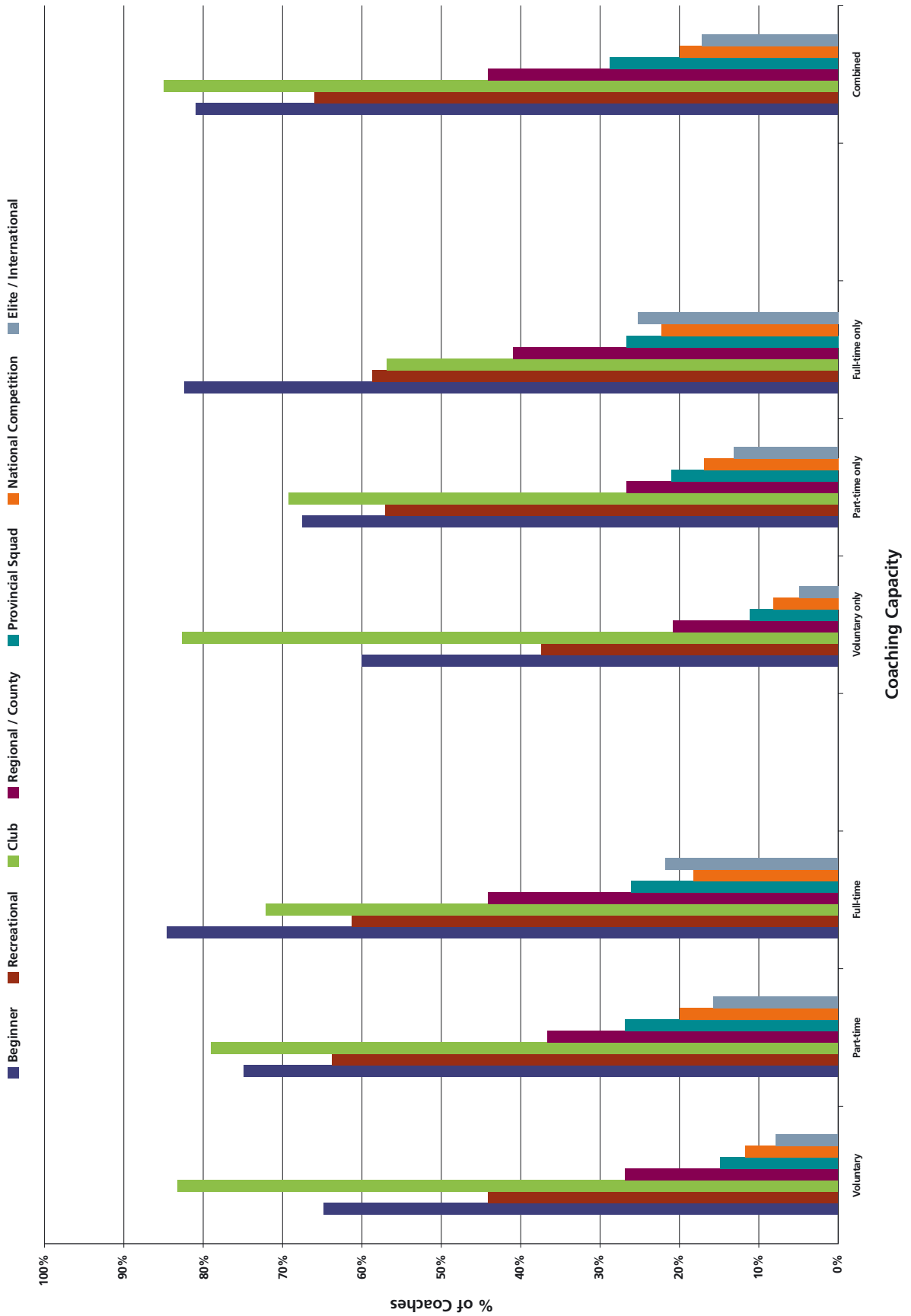


Figure 41 - Coaching Level by Coaching Capacity



3.4.7 COACHING ON BEHALF OF ORGANISATIONS

- 3.4.7.1** Coaches were asked to state which organisations had engaged them to coach over the last 12 months and the results are presented in Figures 42 to 44. It is evident from the survey responses that club coaching forms the backbone of sports coaching in Northern Ireland, with 83% of coaches stating they coached for a club in the last year. There is interesting variation by sport, with over 90% of coaches in cricket and the Gaelic games coaching for a club, but only 70% of canoeing coaches having done so.
- 3.4.7.2** There is also a much lower level of club coaching for disability sport and multi-skills, where coaching on behalf of governing bodies of sport and district councils is more prominent. Half of the disability sports coaches in the survey have coached on behalf of a governing body of sport in the past year. Disability sports coaches are also the most likely to have coached for a community group, 38% having done so in the last 12 months. Canoeing coaches are the most likely to have delivered tuition on behalf of a private company (26%), a university (15%) or an individual (35%).
- 3.4.7.3** The pattern of club coaching by area (Figure 43) is more regular, but there is some evidence of variation in the amount of coaching on behalf of schools. This ranges from 22% in Mid and East Antrim to 46% in both the adjacent Causeway Coast and Glens consortium and in Mid Ulster. This may be due to variations in the policies of district councils with regard to the employment of paid coaches, since it is part-time and full-time paid coaches who are more likely to deliver on behalf of schools (54% and 50% respectively).
- 3.4.7.4** Paid coaches also deliver more on behalf of governing bodies of sport, with 52% of full-time coaches having done so over the last year. They are less likely than average to have coached on behalf of a club, although the figure for full-time coaches is still 64% (Figure 44).

Figure 42 - Recipient Organisations by Primary Coaching Role

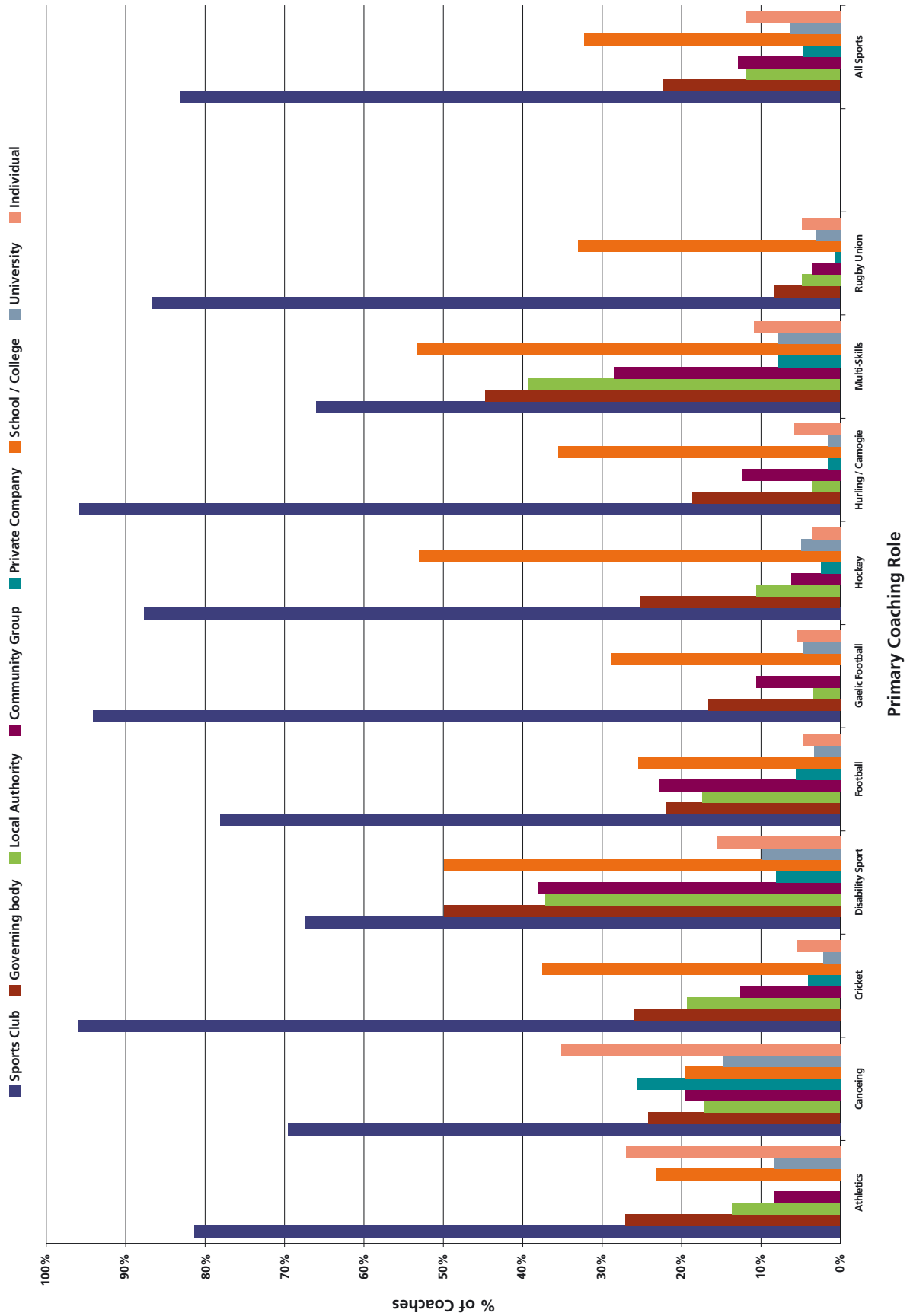


Figure 43 - Recipient Organisations by Area

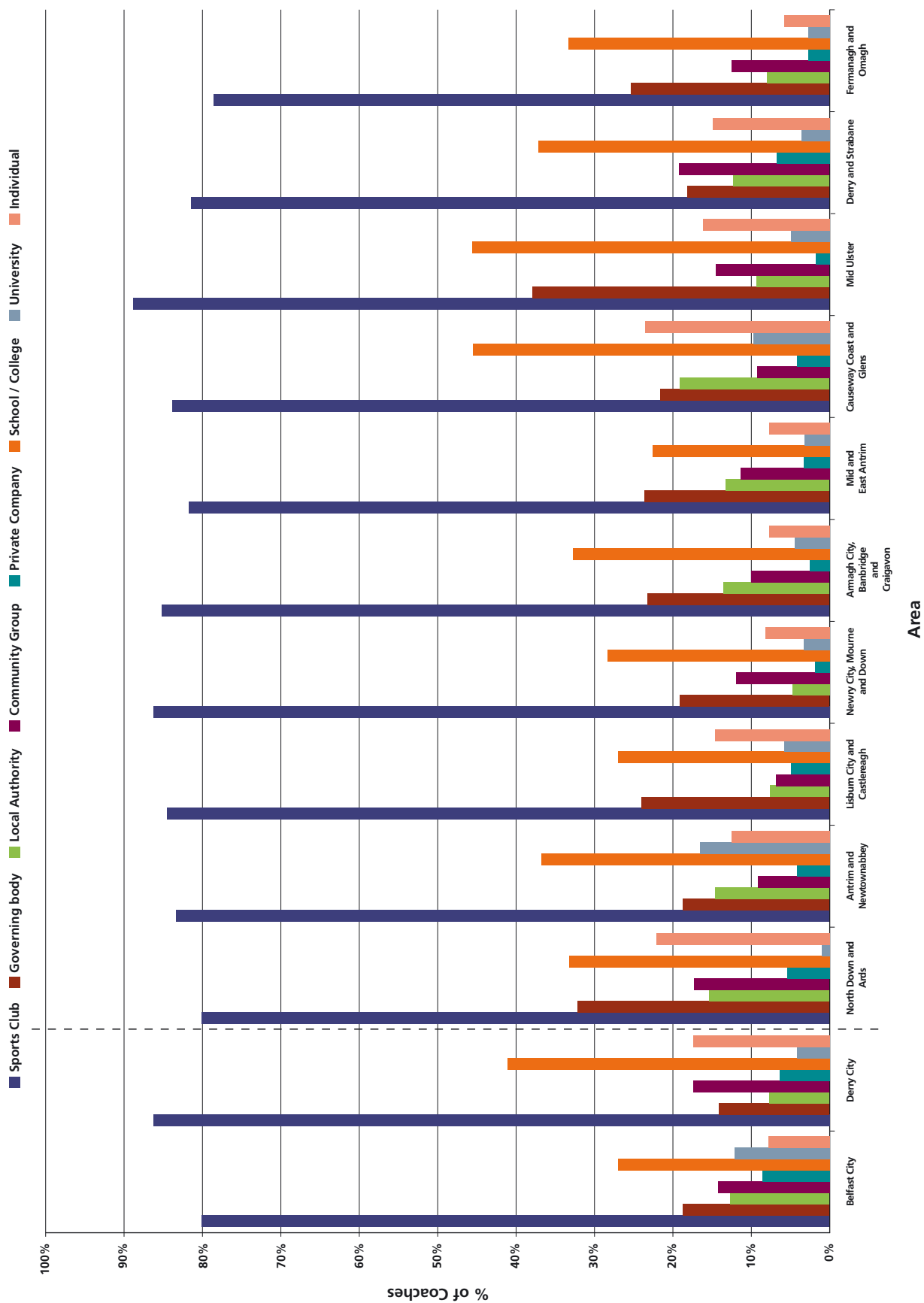
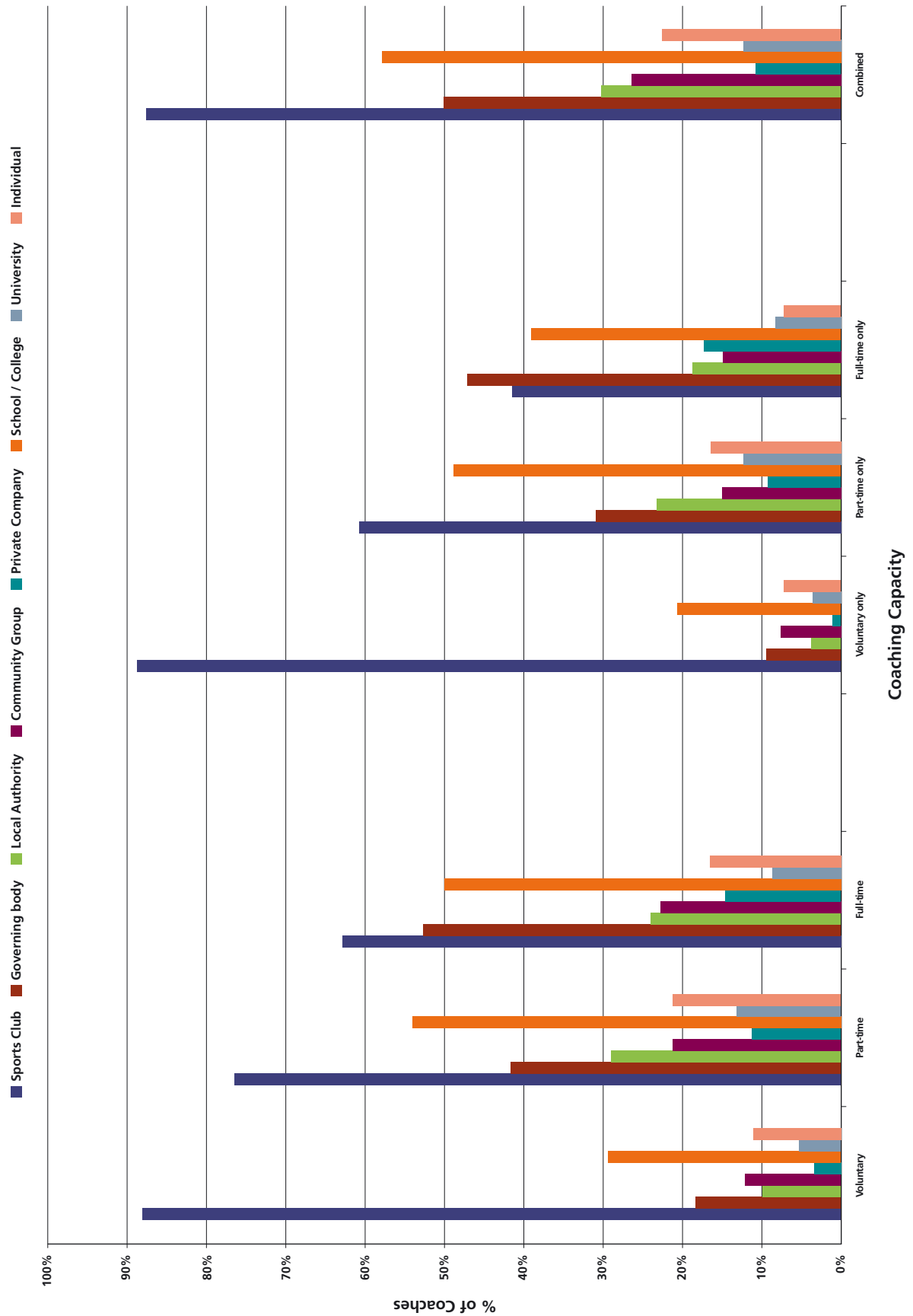


Figure 44 - Recipient Organisations by Coaching Capacity



3.4.7.5 It is significant that coaches have delivered on behalf of a variety of organisations, as this has the potential to generate conflicts of interest, in much the same way as balancing the demands of voluntary and paid coaching.

3.4.8 COACHING SETTINGS

3.4.8.1 In terms of coaching settings (where the coaching takes place), the club environment is predominant, with 88% of coaches having delivered in a club setting. Figure 45 shows that roughly a fifth (23%) of coaches have worked in a community or youth club setting, while 24% have coached in schools during curriculum time and 34% after school. There is a significant amount of variation between sports, with multi-skills, in particular, being delivered in community and school settings. Disability sports and multi-skills are also the most likely to make use of public sports halls and swimming pools.

3.4.8.2 The same variation in schools coaching by area is evident in Figure 46, with the lowest rates in Mid and East Antrim, and the highest in Causeway Coast and Glens, Mid Ulster and Derry/Strabane. Full-time and part-time coaches deliver proportionately less in a club setting and are more likely to work in community groups, schools and universities (Figure 47).

Figure 45 - Coaching Settings by Primary Coaching Role

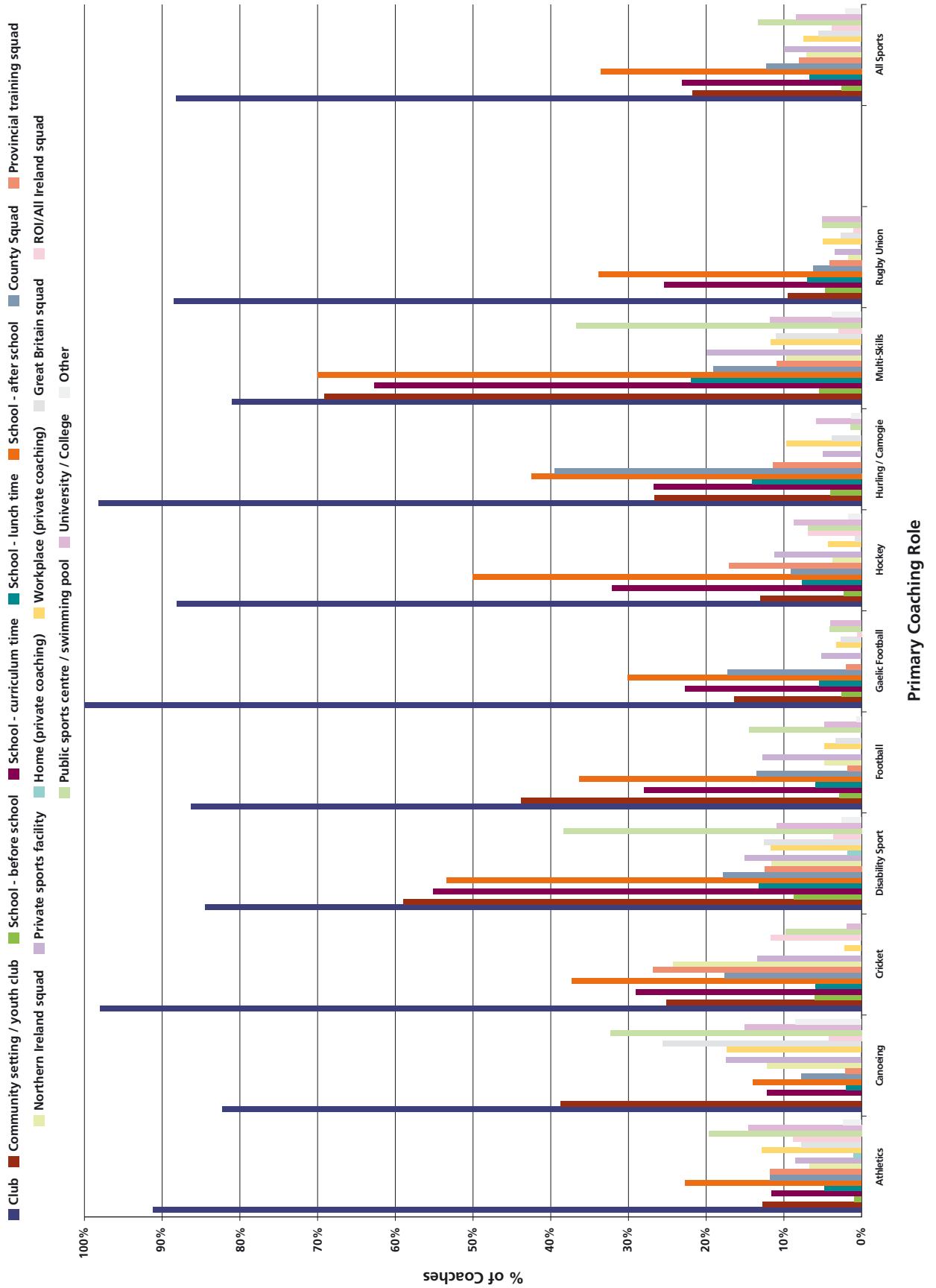


Figure 46 - Coaching Settings by Area

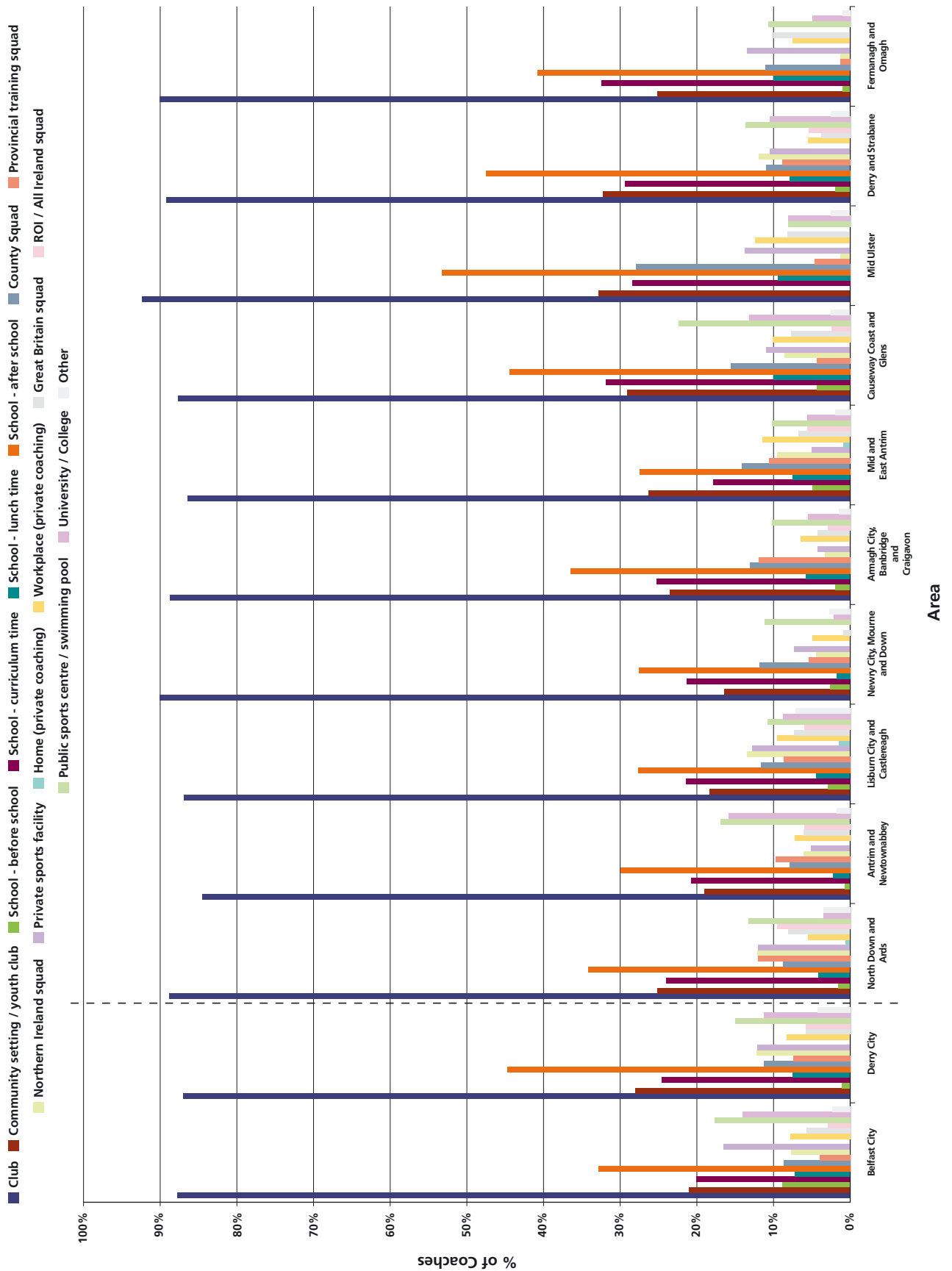
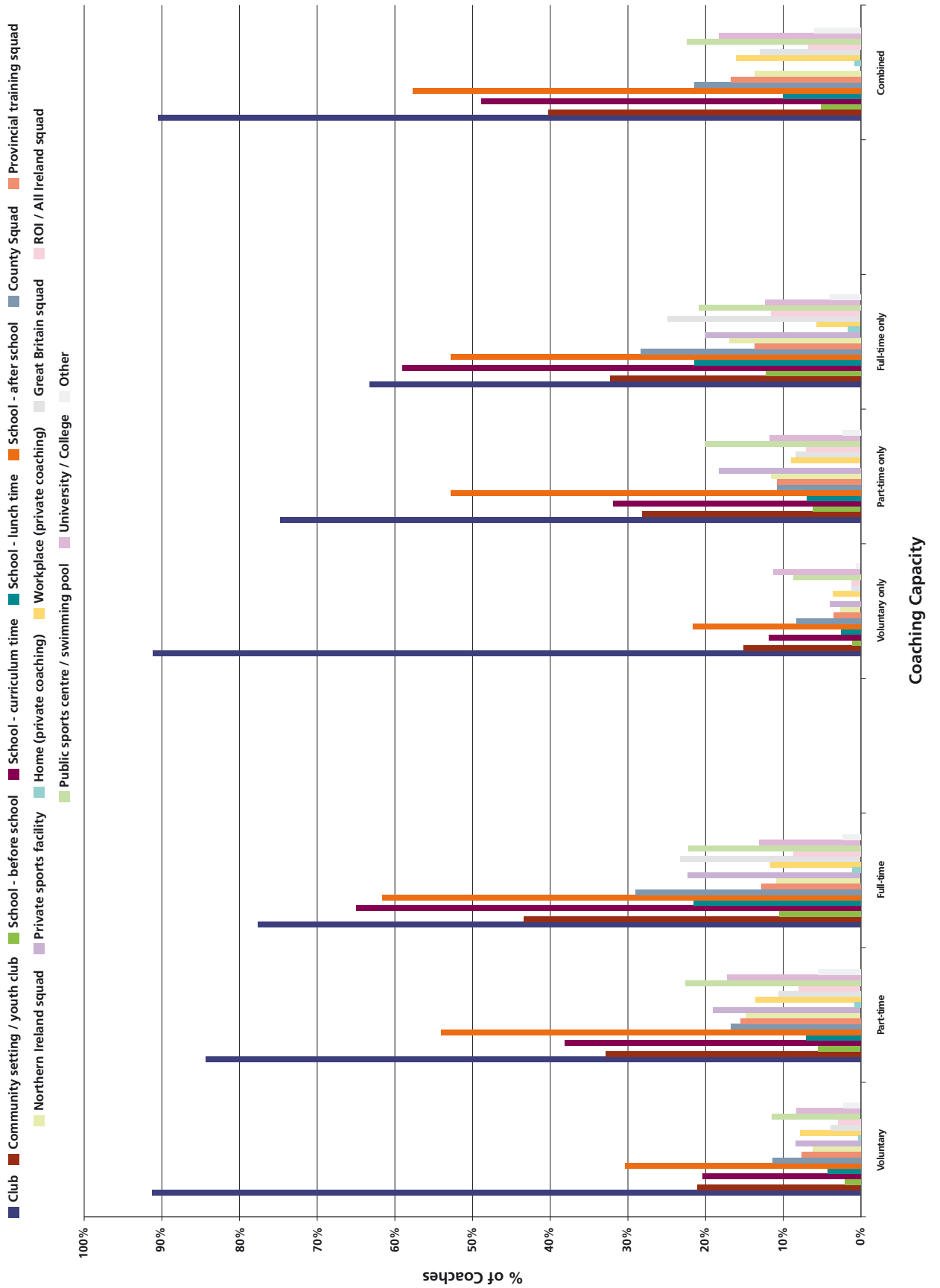


Figure 47 - Coaching Settings by Coaching Capacity



3.5 Who Receives Coaching?

3.5.1 PARTICIPANT AGE

- 3.5.1.1** Over half of all coaches deliver to children aged 10 and under, while 74% coach 11- to 16-year-olds, and 48% work with 17 to 20 year olds. There is a fall-off in the proportion of coaches delivering to adults aged over 20, reflecting the consistent pattern of post 16 drop off in participation in sport in the UK. Only 22% of coaches work with adults aged 35 and over.
- 3.5.1.2** Figure 48 demonstrates that some coaches deliver to groups with very different participant age profiles. In canoeing, for example, more than 70% of coaches deliver sessions to people aged between 21 and 44; the highest proportion for any sport. Participants receiving coaching in disability sport are much more evenly spread between age groups. In contrast, multi-skills coaching is very much focused on school age children, as is to be expected.
- 3.5.1.3** Broadly speaking, there is little variation between areas in terms of the age profile of participants, but it is perhaps notable that there is a lower than average proportion of coaches delivering to 11- to 16-year-olds living in Belfast City, while more than 60% of coaches deliver to children aged 10 and under in Newry Mourne and Down, Causeway Coast and Glens and Derry/Strabane.
- 3.5.1.4** Volunteers tend to deliver to fewer children and young adults than paid coaches, half of whom work with adults in the 20 to 24 age bracket. This reflects the higher proportion of paid coaches who work with senior squads in all sports (Figure 49).



Figure 48 - Participant Age by Primary Coaching Role

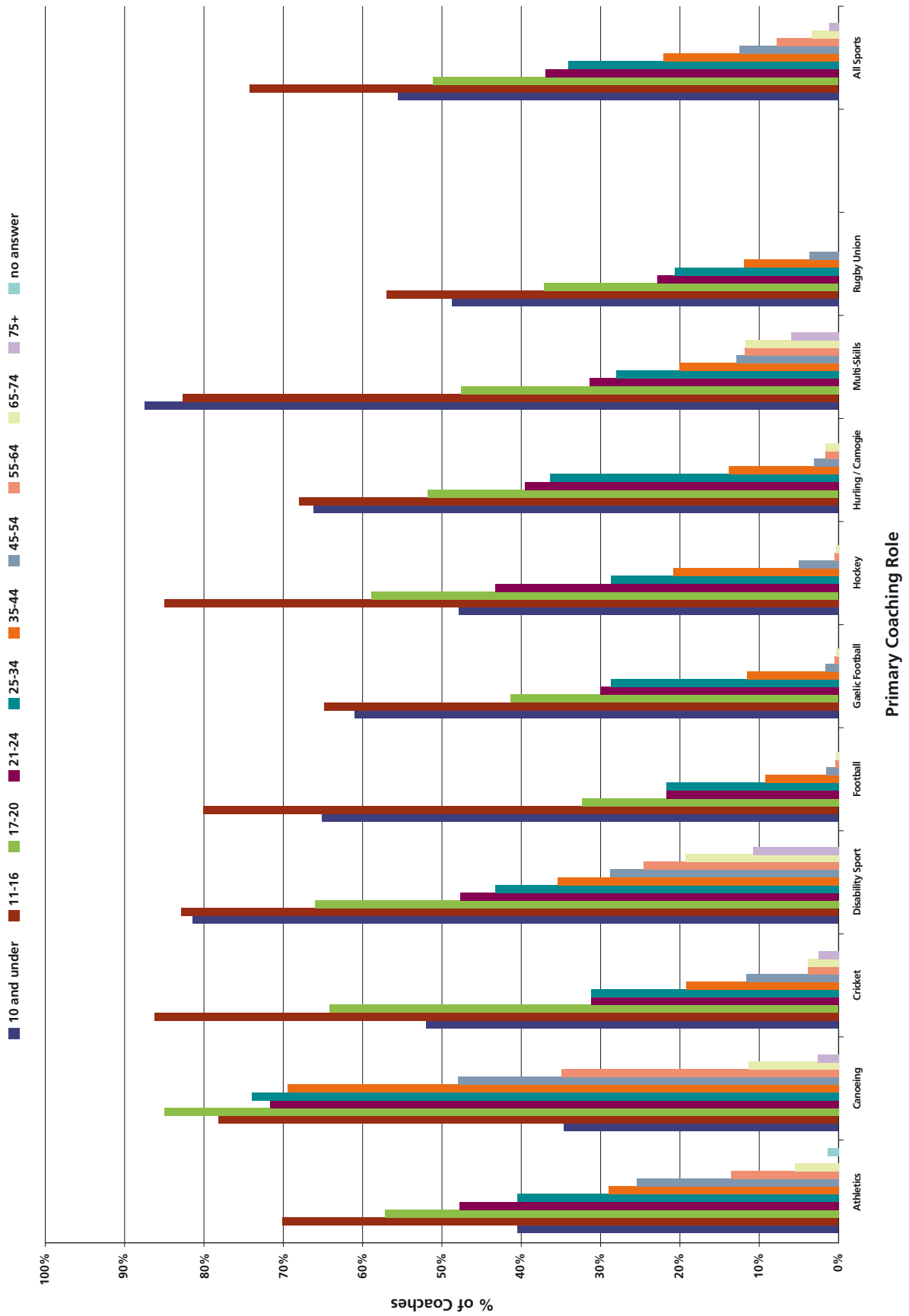
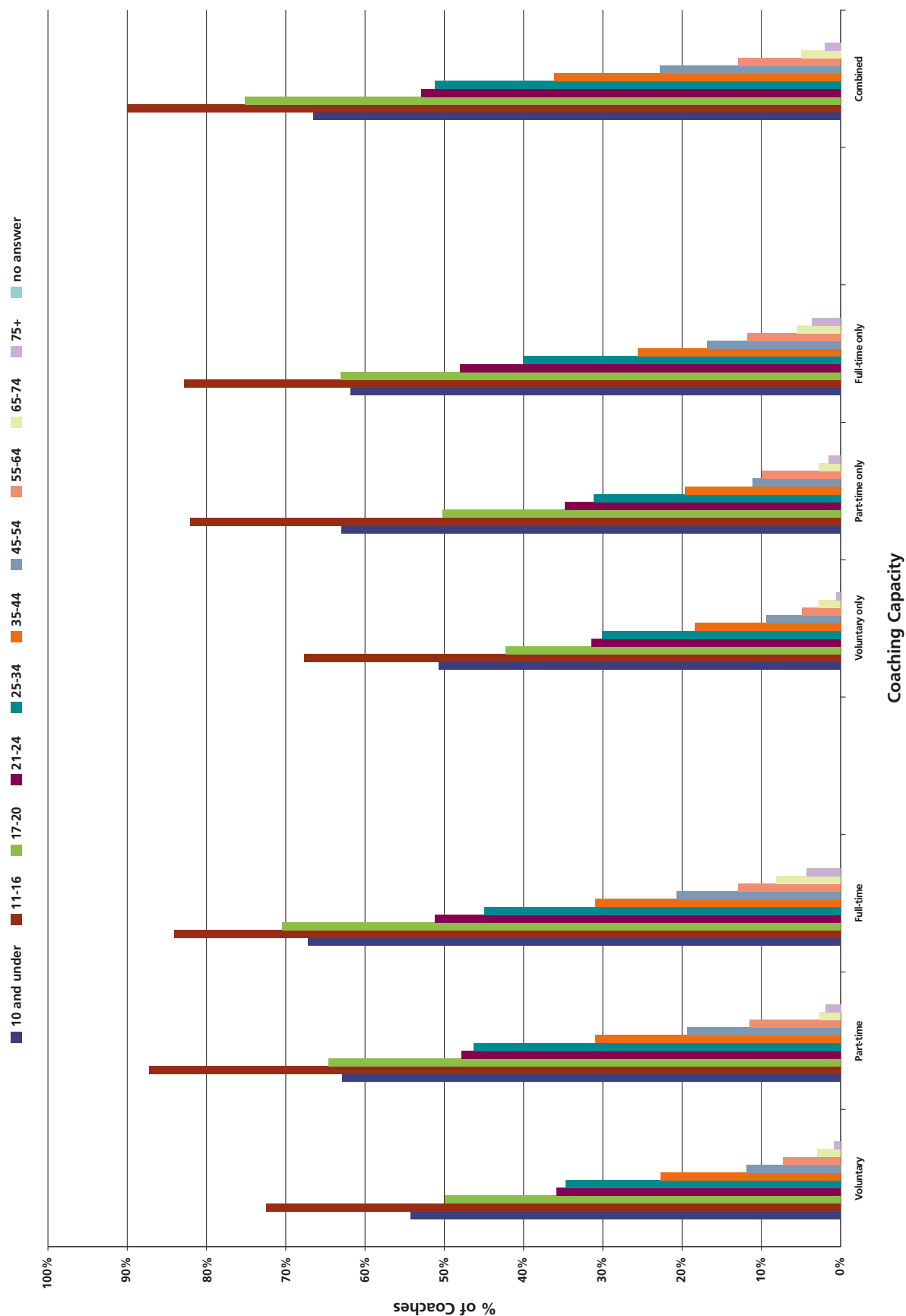


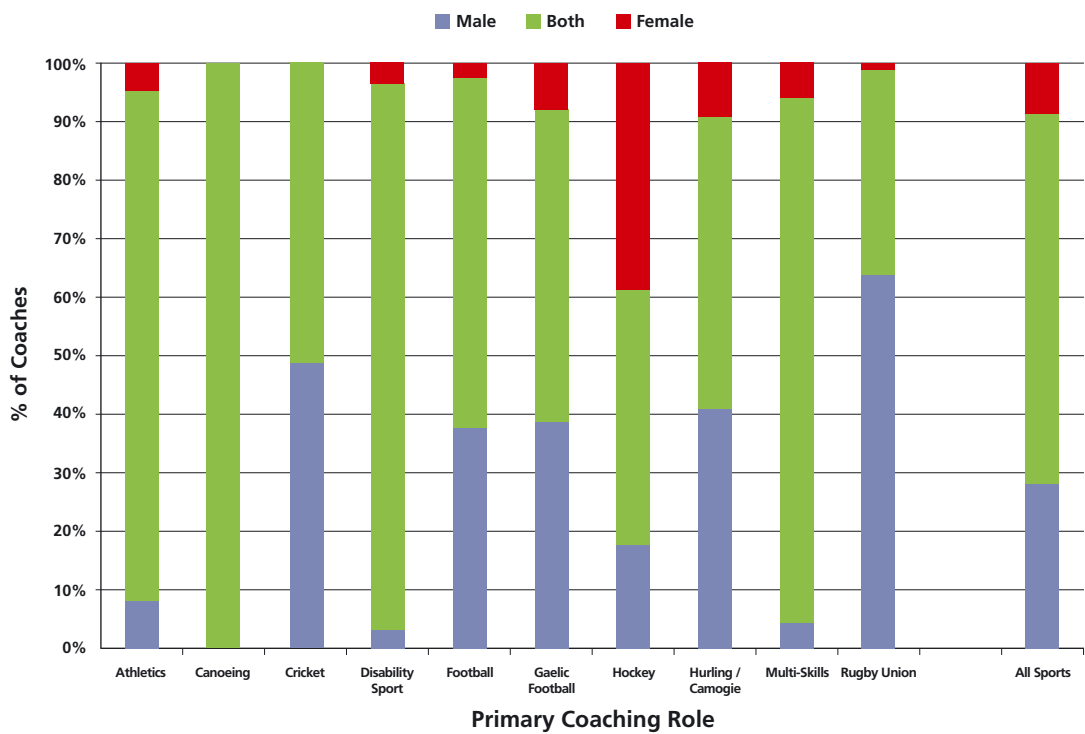
Figure 49 - Participant Age by Coaching Capacity



3.5.2 PARTICIPANT GENDER

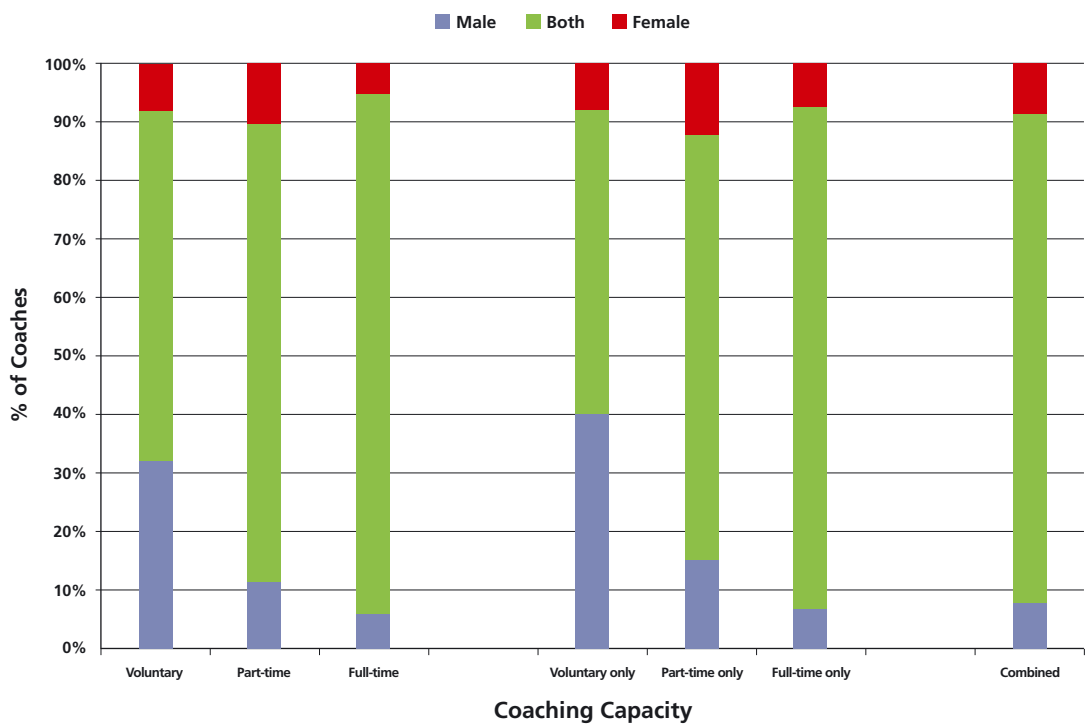
3.5.2.1 Across Northern Ireland, fewer than one in ten coaches work exclusively with female participants, while 29% work only with male participants. Over three fifths of coaches work with participants of both genders. There is considerable variation between sports, as evident in Figure 50, with 65% of rugby coaches and 49% of cricket coaches only coaching male participants, while in hockey, 39% of coaches work only with female players. Almost all disability sport and multi-skills coaches, and all canoeing coaches work with participants of both genders.

Figure 50 - Participant Gender by Primary Coaching Role



3.5.2.2 There is little if any variation between areas, with only Belfast City and Mid Ulster standing out as having a higher than average number of coaches working only with males. Paid coaches are more likely to work with a balance of males and females, the figures being 77% for part-time coaches and 88% for full-time (Figure 51).

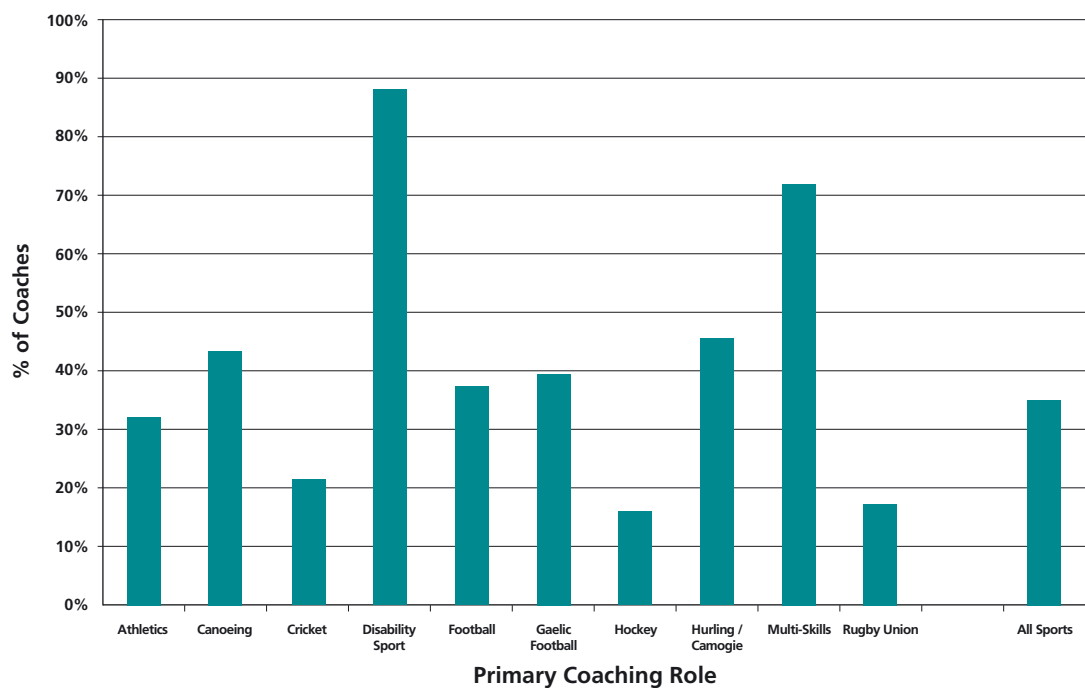
Figure 51 - Participant Gender by Coaching Capacity



3.5.3 DISABLED PARTICIPANTS

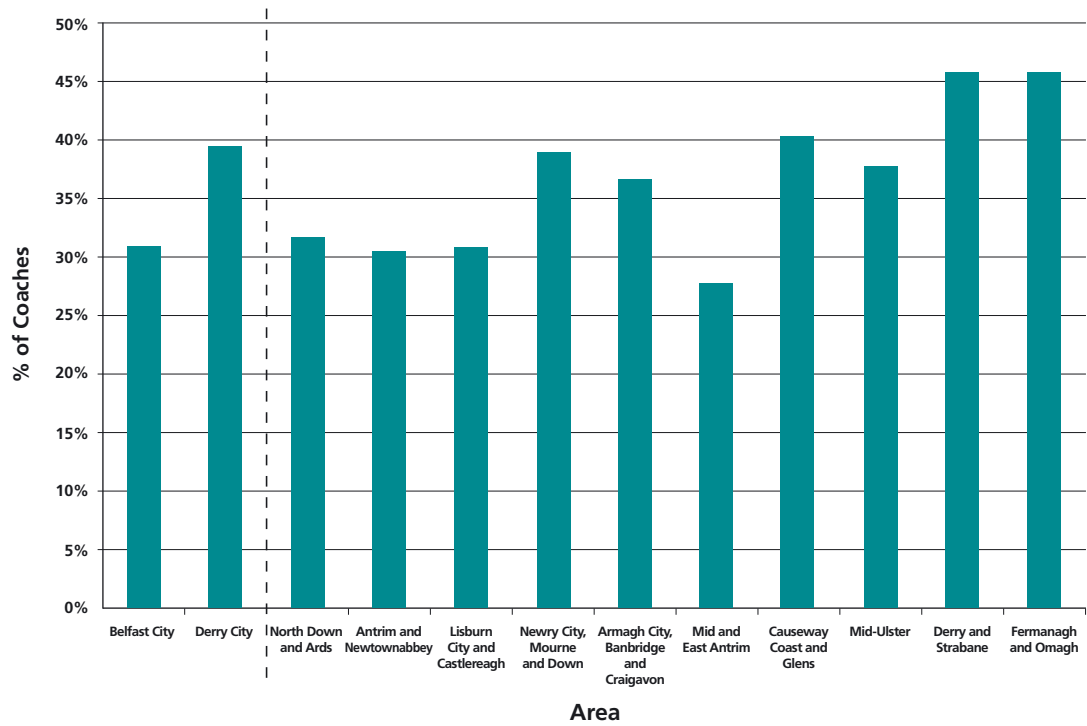
3.5.3.1 It is encouraging to note from Figure 52 that 35% of all coaches claim to work with participants who are disabled. There are, however, some significant variations between sports, with a much lower proportion of cricket (22%), hockey (16%) and rugby union (17%) coaches delivering to disabled participants.

Figure 52 - Disabled Participants by Primary Coaching Role



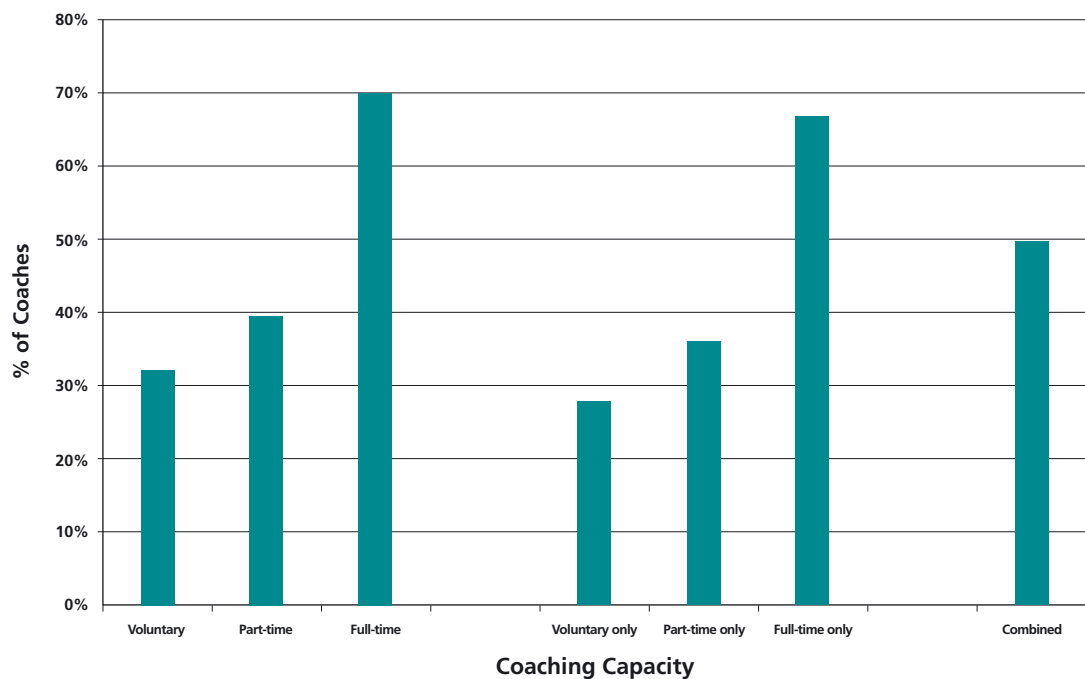
3.5.3.2 At area level the figures range from 28% in Mid and East Antrim to 46% in Derry/Strabane and Fermanagh/Omagh (Figure 53).

Figure 53 - Disabled Participants by Area



3.5.3.3 Paid coaches are much more likely to deliver coaching to disabled participants, with 70% of full-time coaches stating that they do so (Figure 54). Paid coaches are also more likely to be aware of the proportion of participants who are disabled, as they are more often required to monitor attendance at coaching sessions.

Figure 54 - Disabled Participants by Coaching Capacity

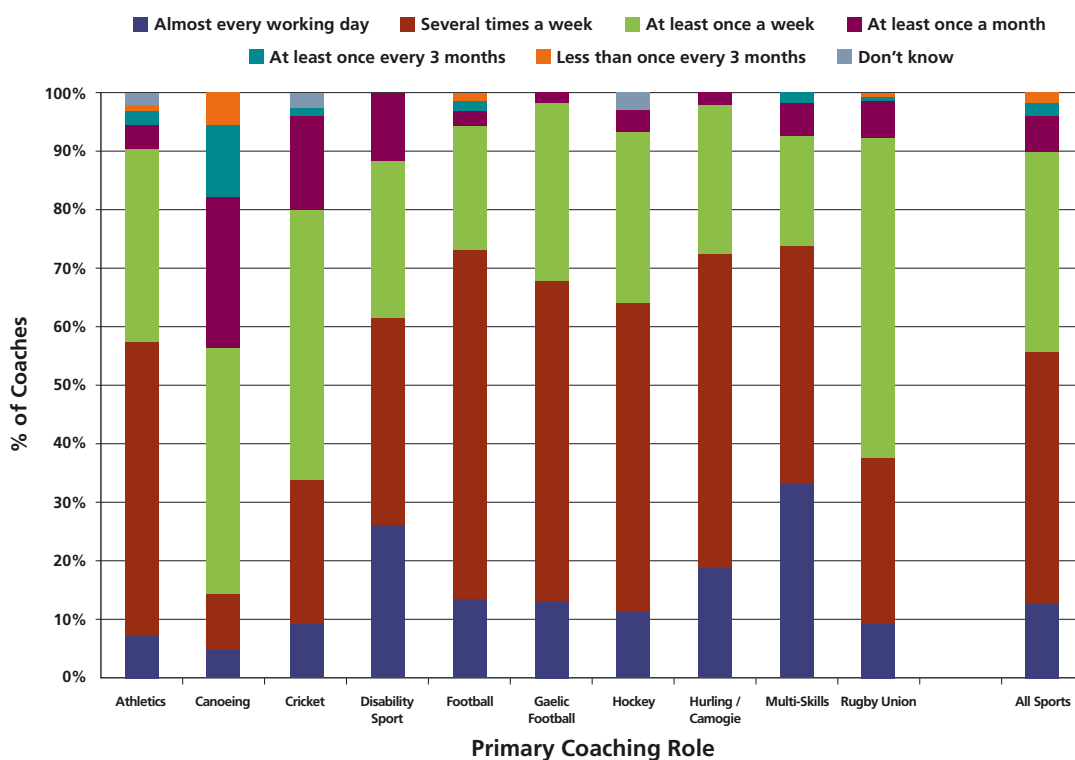


3.6 Coaching Delivery – When and Where?

3.6.1 FREQUENCY OF COACHING DELIVERY

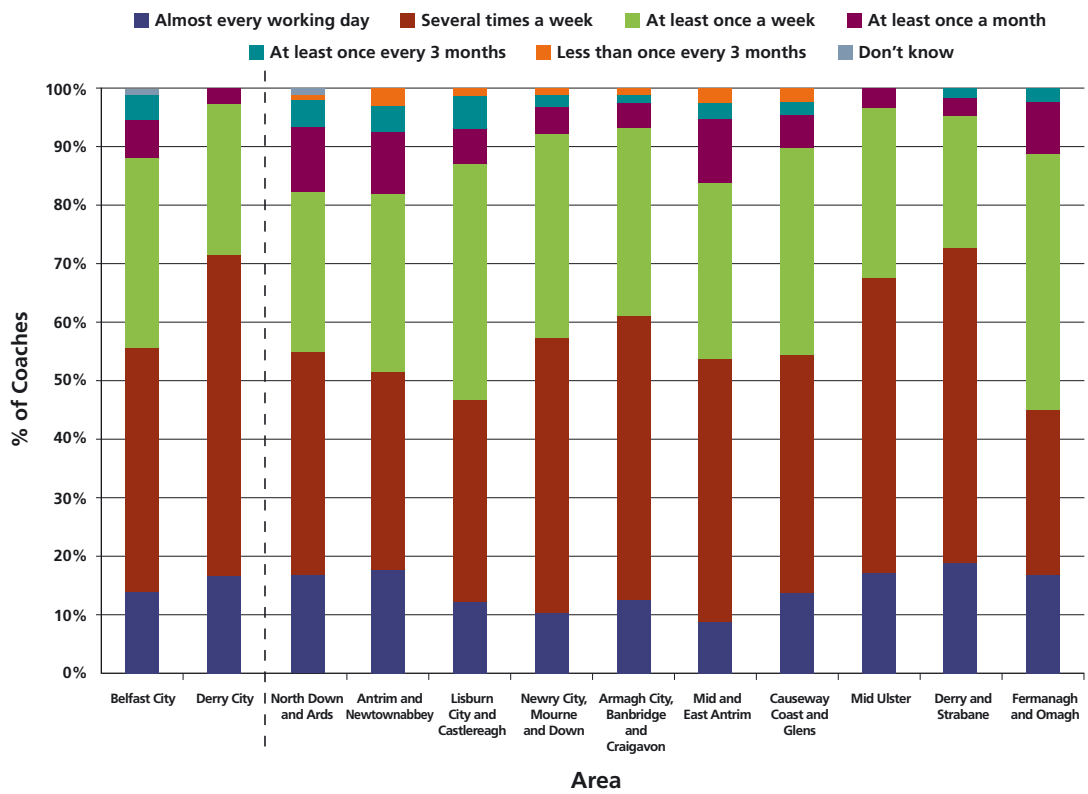
3.6.1.1 More than half of coaches in Northern Ireland deliver more than once a week, with only 10% coaching less than once a week. Figure 55 shows that the proportion of coaches delivering sessions more than once a week is much lower in canoeing (15%), cricket (34%) and rugby union (39%), and higher for football (73%) and hurling / camogie (73%), suggesting that coaches in these sports are in higher demand.

Figure 55 - Frequency of Coaching Delivery by Primary Coaching Role



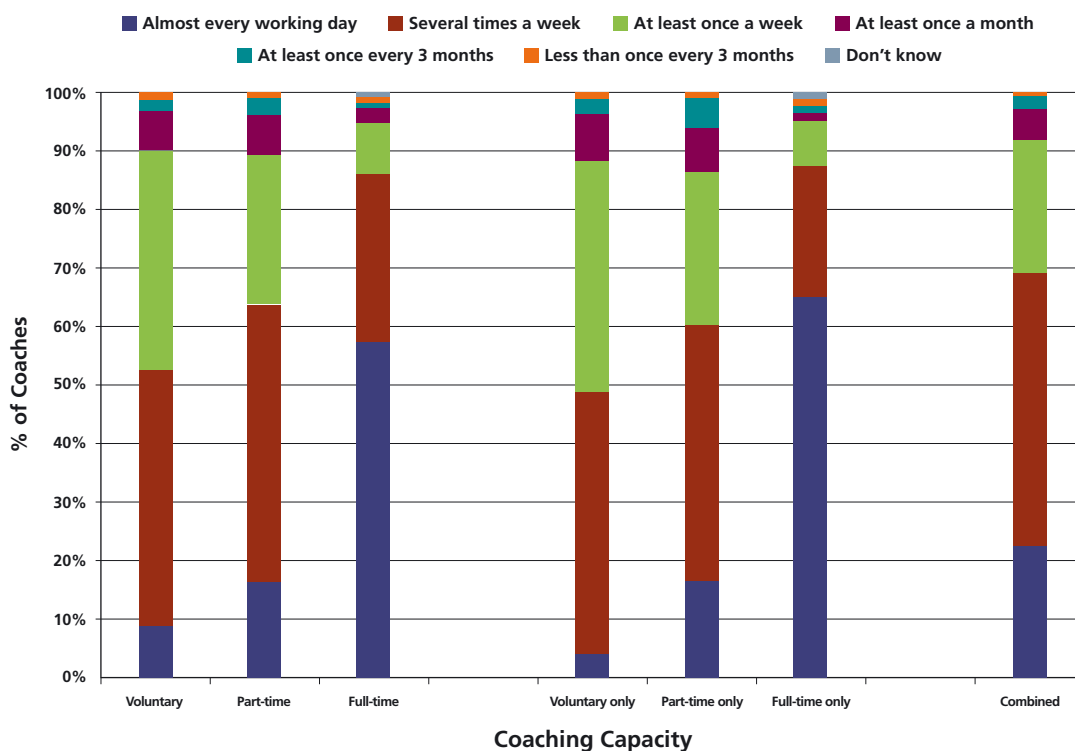
3.6.1.2 There is some variation between areas (Figure 56), with more than 70% of coaches in Derry City and 68% in Mid Ulster coaching more than once a week, though the equivalent figure for Lisburn / Castlereagh is 47%, and for Fermanagh/Omagh 46%.

Figure 56 - Frequency of Coaching Delivery by Area



3.6.1.3 As many as 86% of full-time paid coaches deliver sessions more than once a week, while 53% of voluntary coaches work this frequently (Figure 57).

Figure 57 - Frequency of Coaching Delivery by Coaching Capacity



3.6.2 WHEN DOES COACHING TAKE PLACE?

3.6.2.1 Most coaches do their delivery on weekday evenings (73%) and at weekends (63%), raising further issues about demands on time, particularly for voluntary coaches. Figure 58 demonstrates that in canoeing and rugby union, a higher proportion of coaches work at weekends, which in the case of rugby may well be related to mini-rugby coaching, which traditionally takes place on Sunday mornings. Disability sport (63%) and multi-skills coaches (61%) tend to deliver more on weekdays, while hockey has the highest proportion of coaches who work in the afternoon, at 43%.

3.6.2.2 There is a limited amount of variation between areas, although Mid Ulster stands out as having a notably higher proportion of coaches operating in the evenings. Paid coaches are more likely than their voluntary counterparts to deliver coaching during the week, and less likely to work in the evening (Figure 59). They are also more likely to work in the afternoon (58% of full-time coaches) and during school term time (58%).

Figure 58 - When Coaching Takes Place by Primary Coaching Role

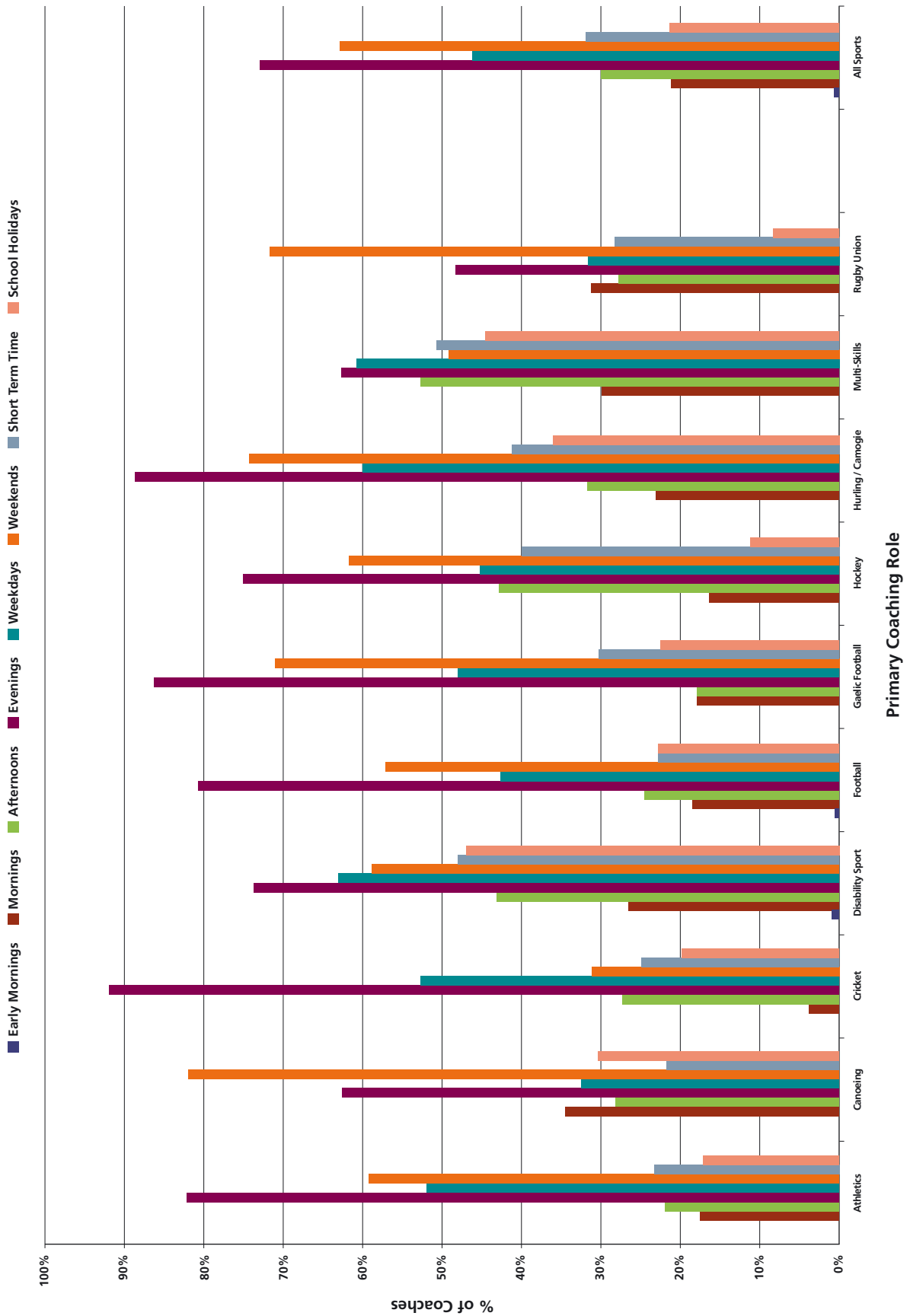
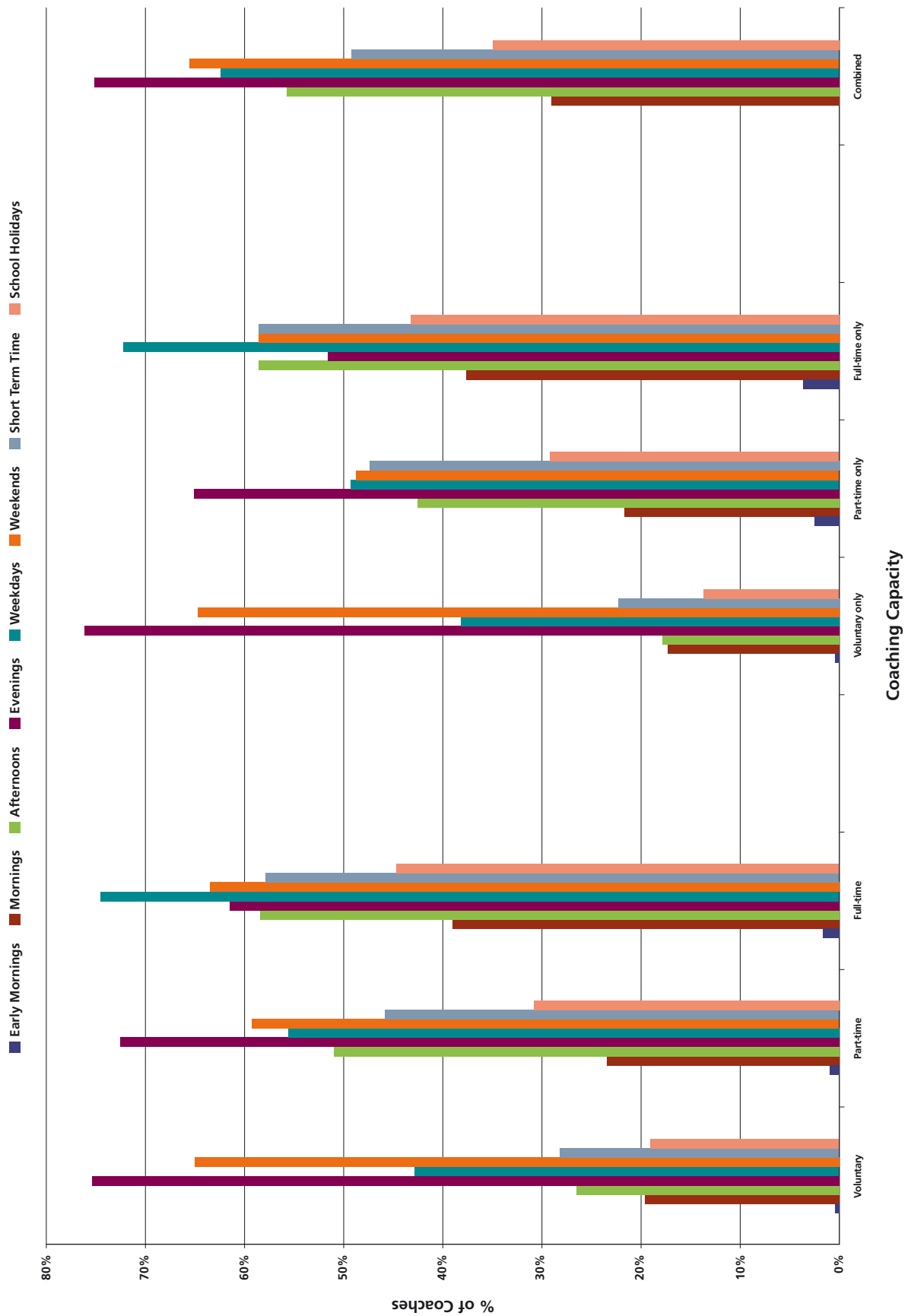


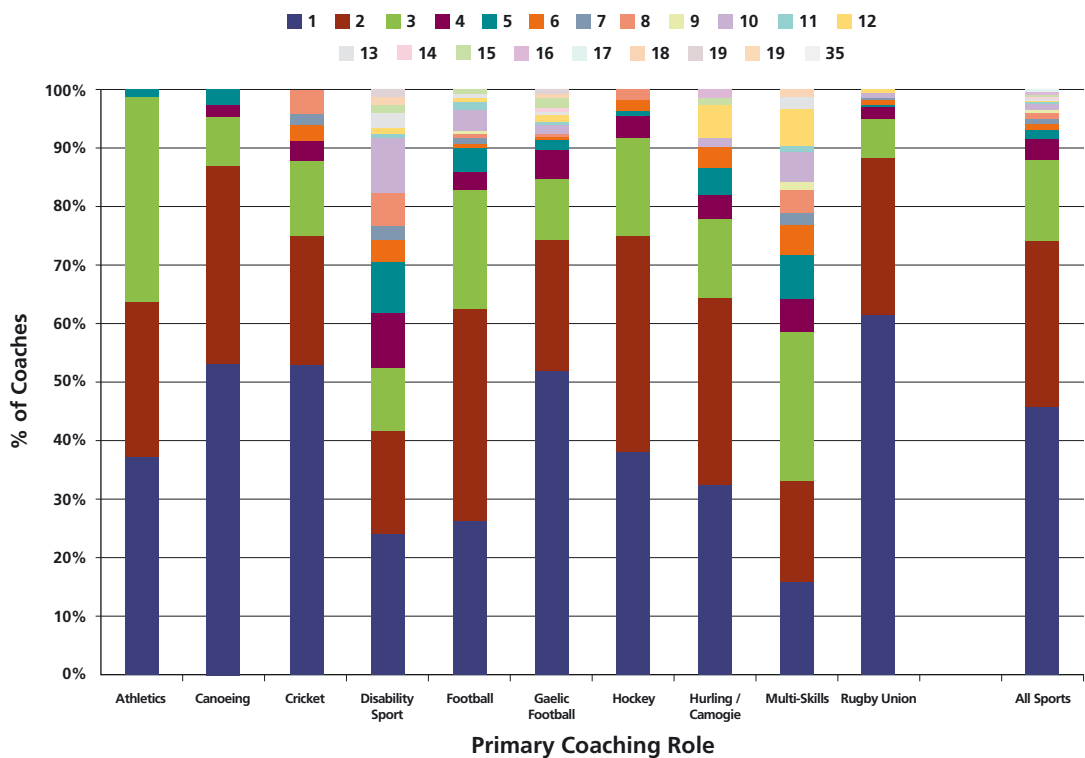
Figure 59 - When Coaching Takes Place by Coaching Capacity



3.6.3 COACHING VENUES USED

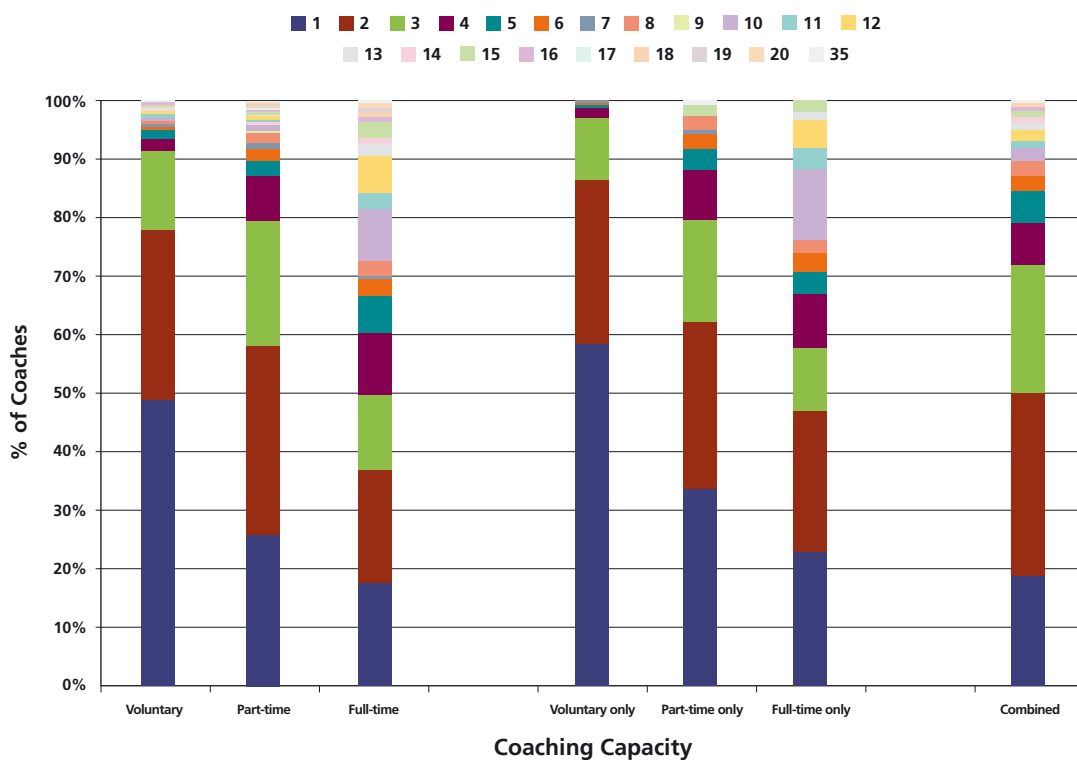
3.6.3.1 The overwhelming majority of coaches operate at three venues or fewer. Indeed 45% of coaches use only one venue; a figure which rises to 51% for Gaelic football and 61% for rugby (Figure 60). Multi-skills coaches are much more peripatetic, with 39% using four or more venues during a typical week.

Figure 60 - Number of Venues Used, by Primary Coaching Role



3.6.3.2 The pattern is much more consistent between areas, with around 80 to 90% of coaches in each area using three venues or fewer. Figure 61 suggests that paid coaches tend to be more mobile, with almost half of all full-time coaches using four or more venues per week, compared with only 9% of voluntary coaches.

Figure 61 - Number of Venues Used, by Coaching Capacity



3.7 Coach Development

3.7.1 BEGINNING TO COACH

- 3.7.1.1** Figures 62 to 64 show the variety of ways in which coaches initially become involved in coaching. Almost 60% of the coaches in the survey began to coach younger participants while still playing. This implies that coaches begin by taking charge of sessions for junior participants, which is a traditional route into coaching in many sport clubs. This confirms the data which suggest that over half of all coaches are still active participants in their sport, though this is less true of athletics, where 23% of coaches began their careers after their active participation had ended. This is complicated by the fact that athletes frequently continue to compete up to masters (over 40) and veterans (over 60) level.
- 3.7.1.2** Figure 62 shows that more than half of the rugby coaches in the survey became involved in coaching through their child's involvement in the sport, while 33% of disability sport coaches became involved through the education route (eg, through work experience); a figure which rises to 43% for multi-skills coaches. In addition, 36% of disability skills coaches, and 46% of multi-skills coaches progressed to a coaching role from volunteering. Almost two thirds (65%) of canoeing coaches began to coach as a result of their involvement in volunteering.

Figure 62 - Introduction to Coaching, by Primary Coaching Role

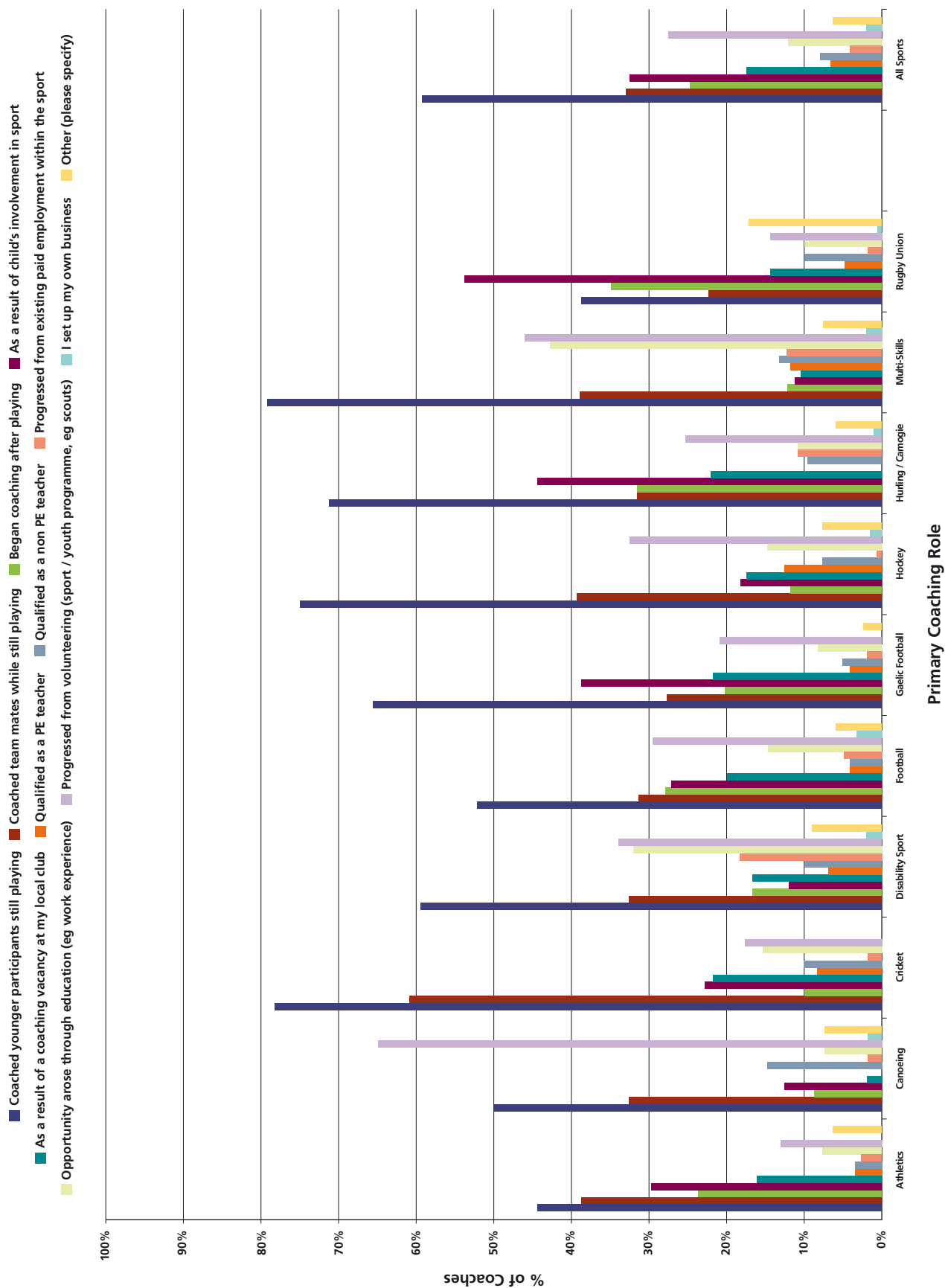


Figure 63 - Introduction to Coaching, by Area

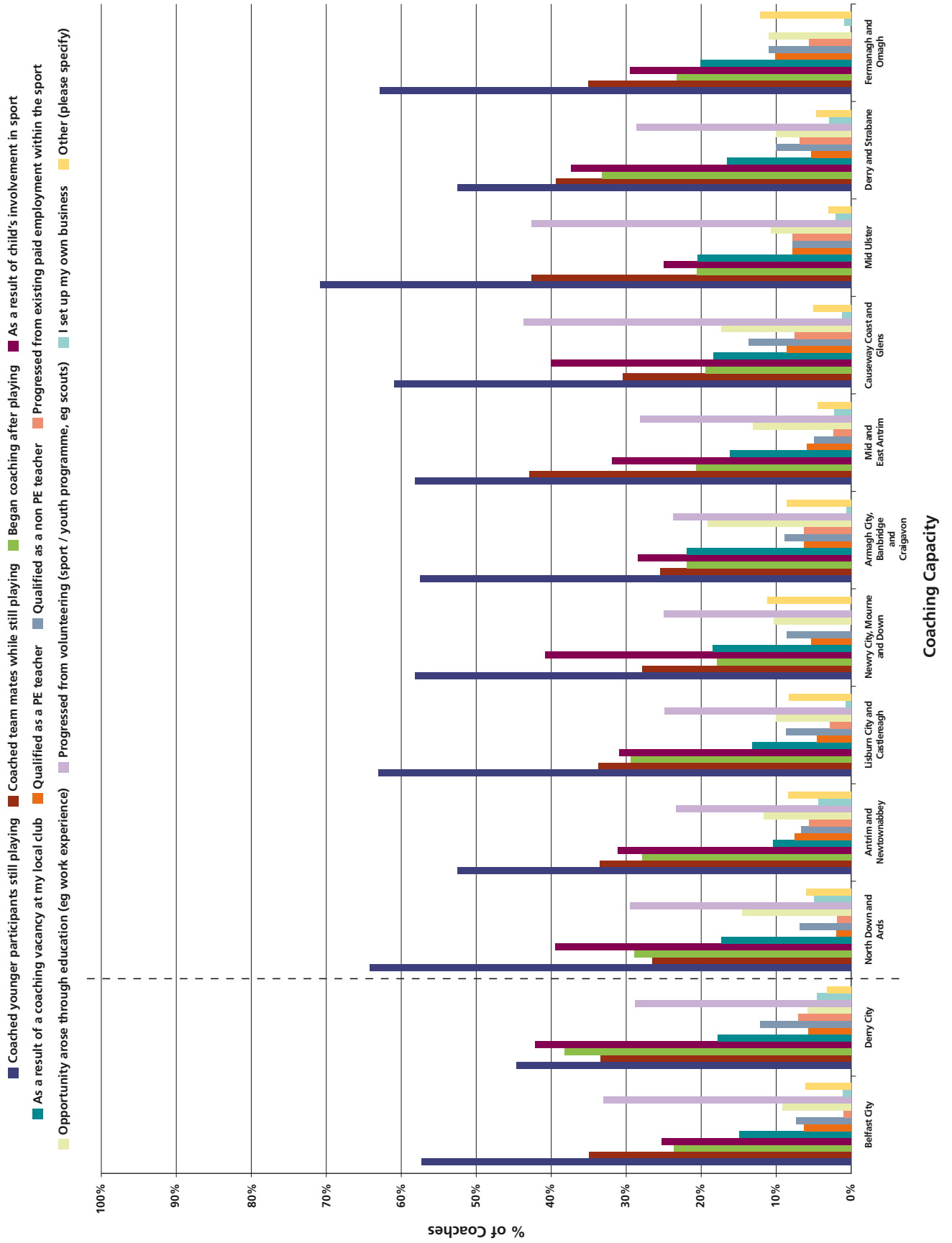
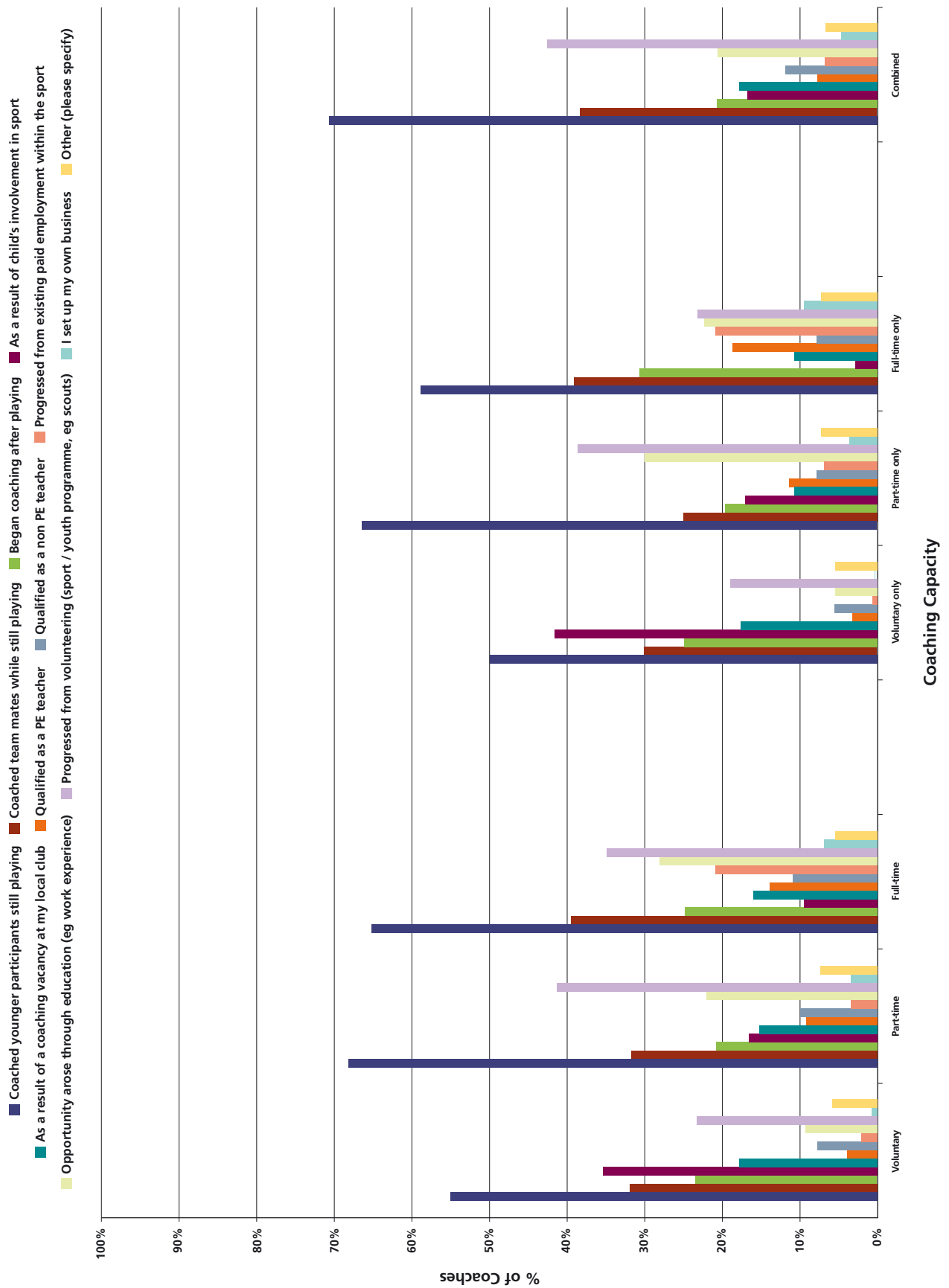


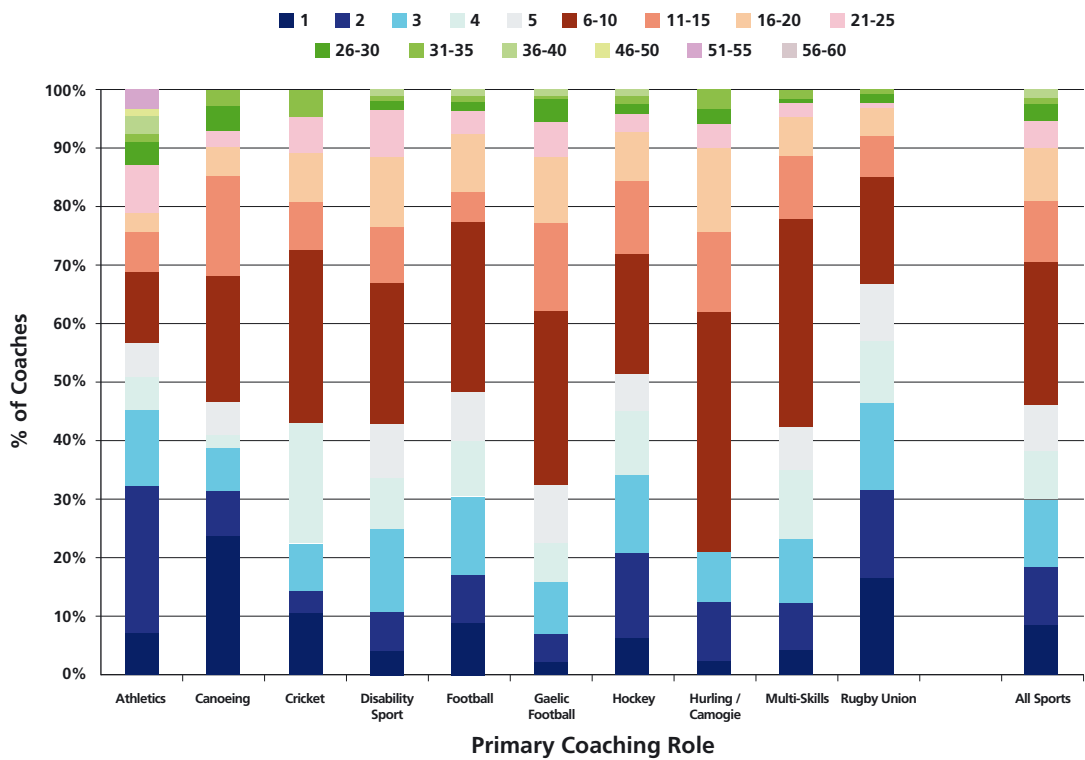
Figure 64 - Introduction to Coaching, by Coaching Capacity



3.7.2 COACHING EXPERIENCE

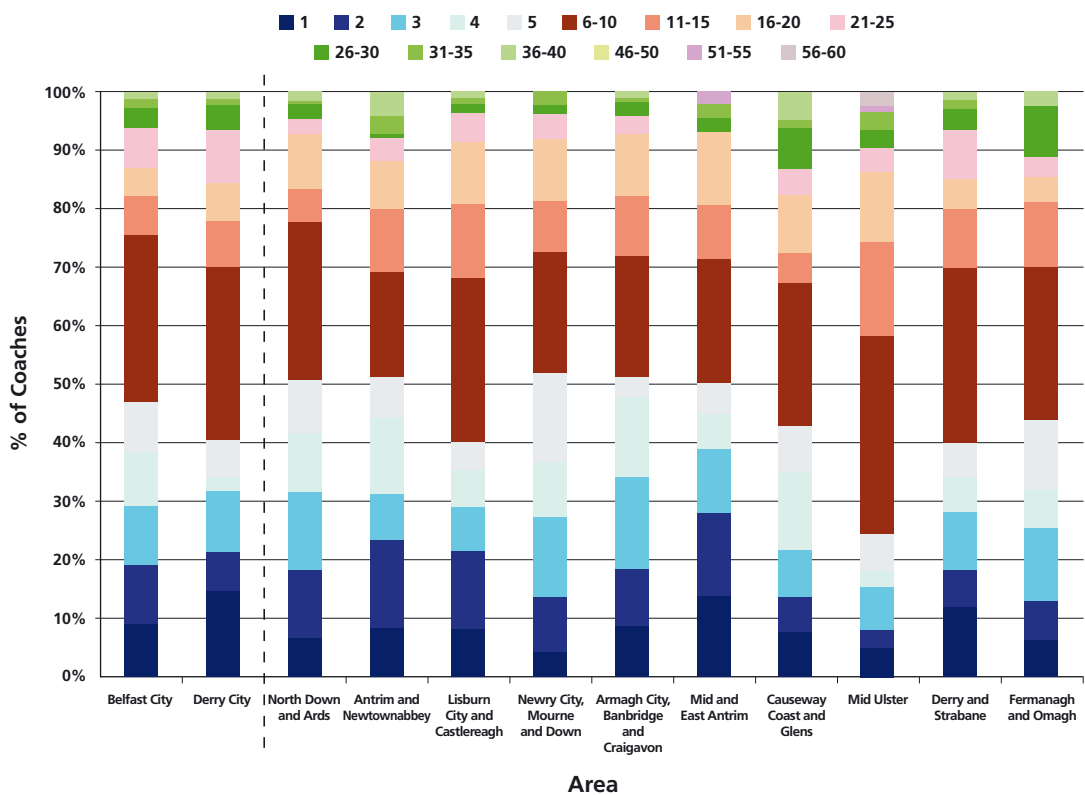
3.7.2.1 More than half of the coaches in the survey have been coaching for more than five years (54% in total). This figure falls to 33% however for rugby union, as evident in Figure 65. Almost four fifths (79%) of hurling/camogie coaches have been working in the sport for more than five years. In athletics, which has a much older coaching workforce than other sports, almost 10% of coaches have been coaching for more than 30 years.

Figure 65 - Years of Coaching Experience, by Primary Coaching Role



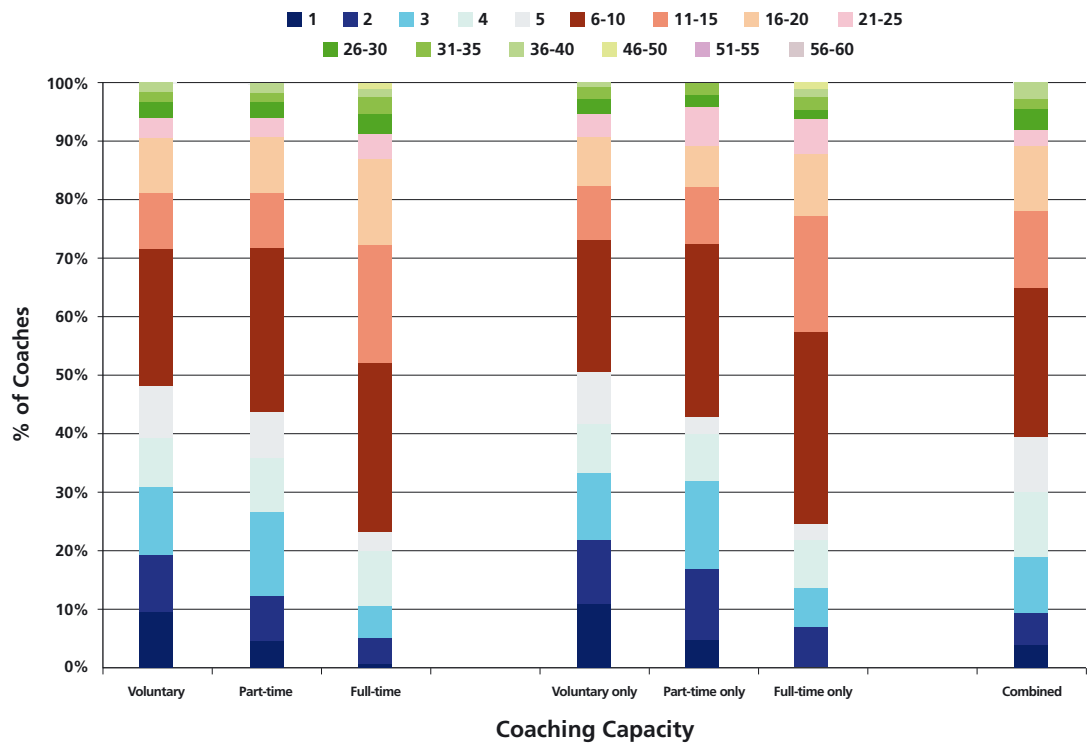
3.7.2.2 Figure 66 shows that Mid Ulster has the most experienced coaching workforce according to the survey sample, with 75% having coached for more than five years, followed by Lisburn/Castlereagh (60%), and Belfast City (53%). Mid Ulster's experienced workforce appears to be related to the high proportion of coaches in the area involved in Gaelic football and hurling/camogie in the area.

Figure 66 - Years of Coaching Experience, by Area



3.7.2.3 Just over three quarters of full-time coaches have more than five years' experience compared to 52% of voluntary coaches. Nearly half of all full-time coaches (47%) have been coaching for more than ten years (Figure 67).

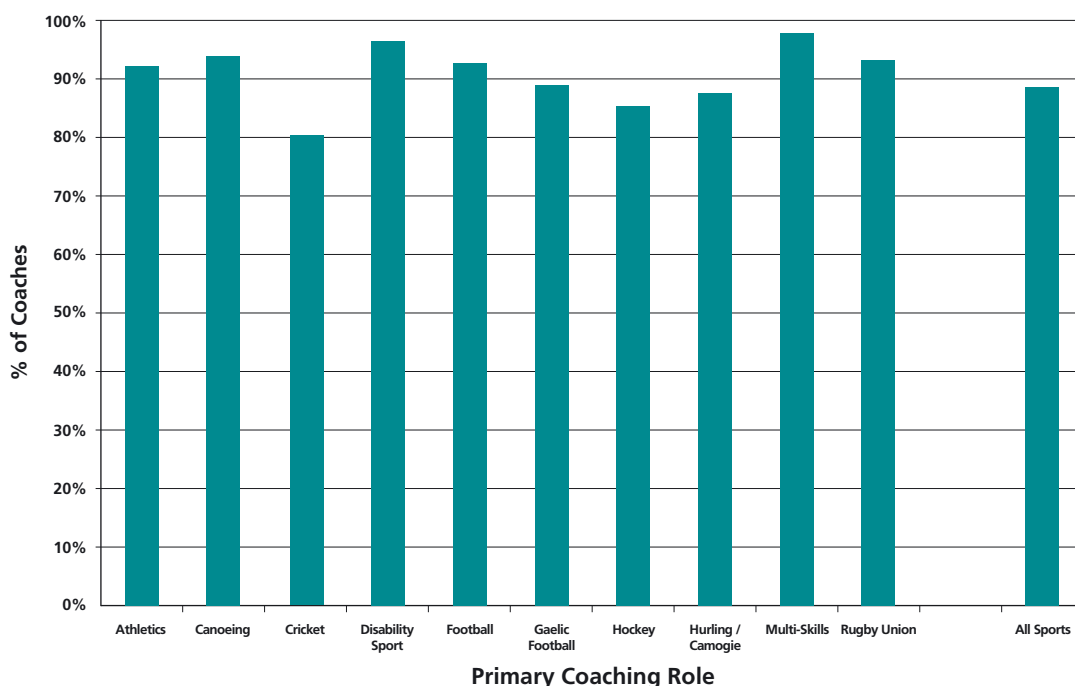
Figure 67 - Years of Coaching Experience, by Coaching Capacity



3.7.3 EXISTING QUALIFICATIONS

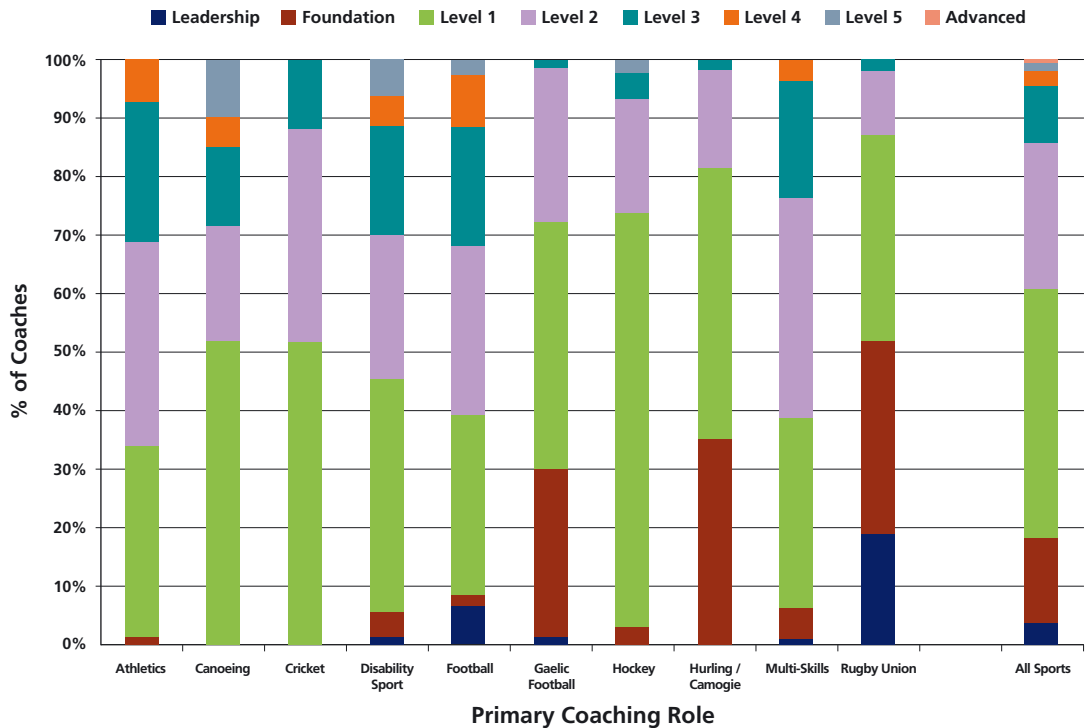
3.7.3.1 Overall, 89% of coaches have a valid qualification to coach in their sport, although, as highlighted later, some of these are working towards further qualifications. This figure does not include coaches who may have qualified some time ago, but whose certification has expired. The figure for cricket is lower at just over 80% and hockey at 85%, while, in canoeing and football, 93% of coaches hold a valid qualification (Figure 68).

Figure 68 - Coaches with a Valid Qualification, by Sport



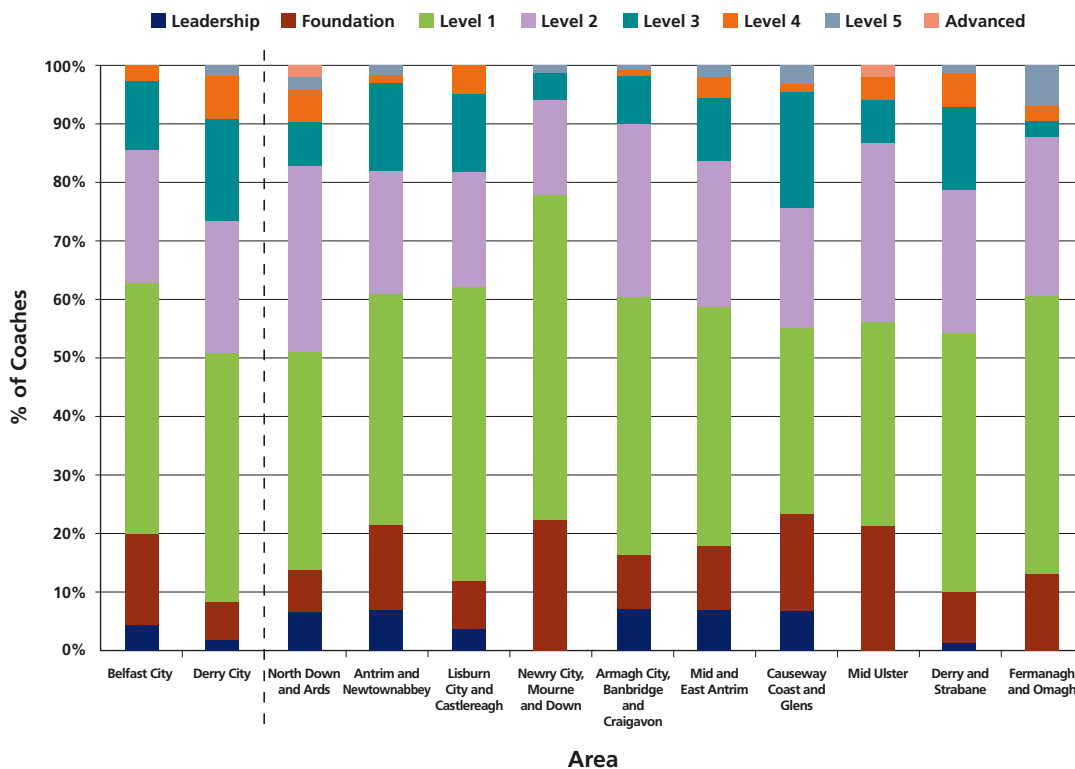
3.7.3.2 Regarding areas, the proportion of coaches with valid qualifications ranges from 88 to 95%, with one exception in Newry/Mourne/Down, where the level is 81%. Paid coaches (full and part-time) are more likely to have valid qualifications (96% in each case).

Figure 69 - Highest Coaching Qualification Attained, by Primary Coaching Role



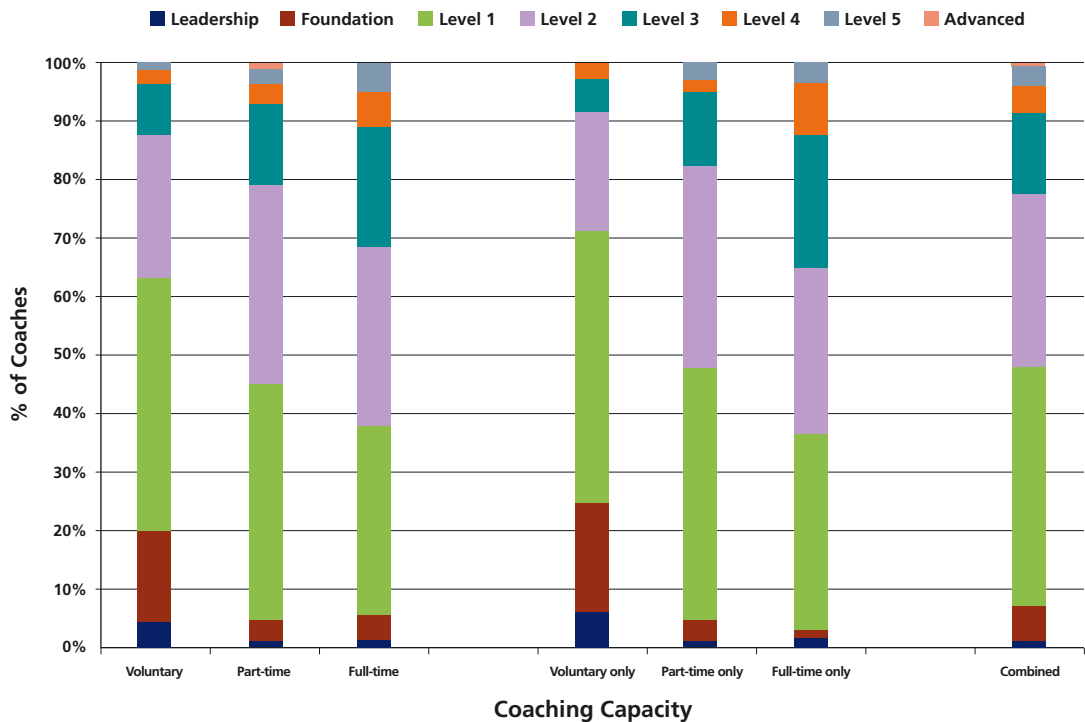
3.7.3.3 Of those coaches who hold a valid qualification, 39% have a qualification at Level 2 or above. Figure 69 shows that the figures are higher for athletics (66%), disability sport (55%), football (61%) and multi-skills (62%), but much lower in Gaelic football (28%), hurling (18%) and rugby union (12%). There are more coaches in these sports at leadership and Foundation Level, with as many as 52% of rugby coaches qualified below Level 1.

Figure 70 - Highest Coaching Qualification Attained, by Area



3.7.3.4 There are some significant variations in qualifications by area (Figure 70), with Newry, Mourne and Down standing out in particular as having the fewest coaches qualified at Level 2 or above (22%). This is in contrast with Derry City and North Down and Ards where the proportion of coaches qualified at Level 2 or above approaches 50%. This may be partly explained by the relative popularity of Gaelic football in the areas. There were no coaches resident in North Down and Ards who listed Gaelic football as their primary coaching role, compared to 37 in Newry, Mourne and Down (more than in any other area).

Figure 71 - Highest Coaching Qualification Attained, by Coaching Capacity

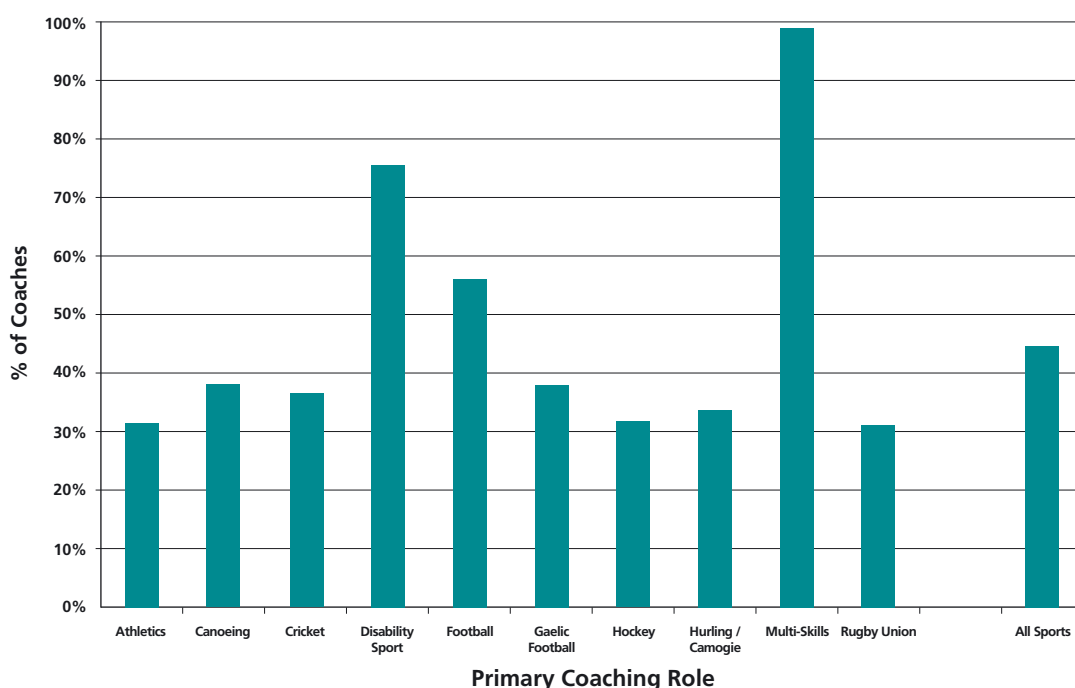


3.7.3.5 The proportion of coaches qualified at Level 2 or above shows consistent variation by coaching capacity (Figure 71), with a much higher proportion of full-time coaches possessing higher level coaching qualifications (63%) compared with part-time (55%) and voluntary coaches (36%). Of full-time coaches, 32% are qualified at Level 3 or above, while fewer than 12% of voluntary coaches possess such an advanced level of coaching qualification. Again, the high proportion of voluntary coaches in Gaelic football may provide some explanation for this pattern.

3.7.4 COACHES POSSESSING OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

3.7.4.1 There is considerable variation between sports in terms of the proportion of coaches who possess another qualification. Coaches delivering disability sport (76%) and multi-skills (89%) are the most likely to possess another qualification (as evident in Figure 72). More than half of football coaches (56%) possess another qualification.

Figure 72 - Coaches Possessing Other Qualifications, by Primary Coaching Role



3.7.4.2 There is relatively little variation between areas in terms of the proportion of coaches who possess more than one qualification, although it is interesting to note that in Belfast City the percentage is much lower at 31% (Figure 73).

3.7.4.3 Paid coaches, particularly full-time coaches are more likely than voluntary coaches to possess other qualifications. Over 70% of full-time coaches possess more than one qualification, compared with 42% of voluntary coaches (Figure 74).

Figure 73 - Coaches Possessing Another Qualification, by Area

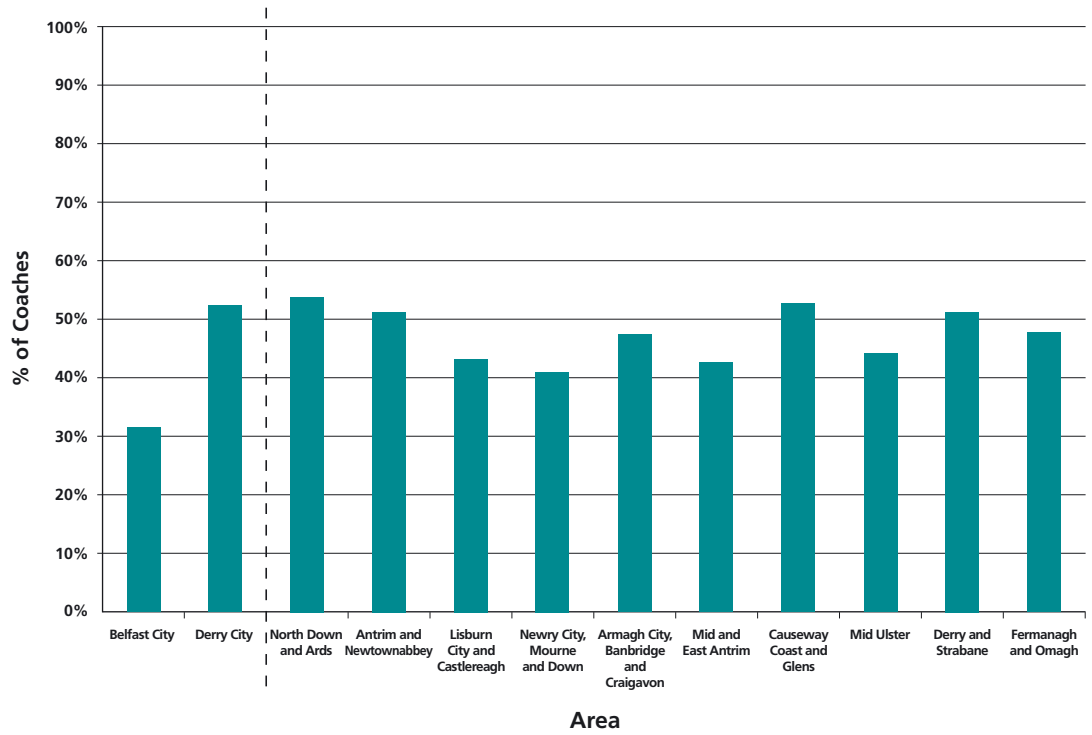


Figure 74 - Coaches Possessing Another Qualification, by Coaching Capacity

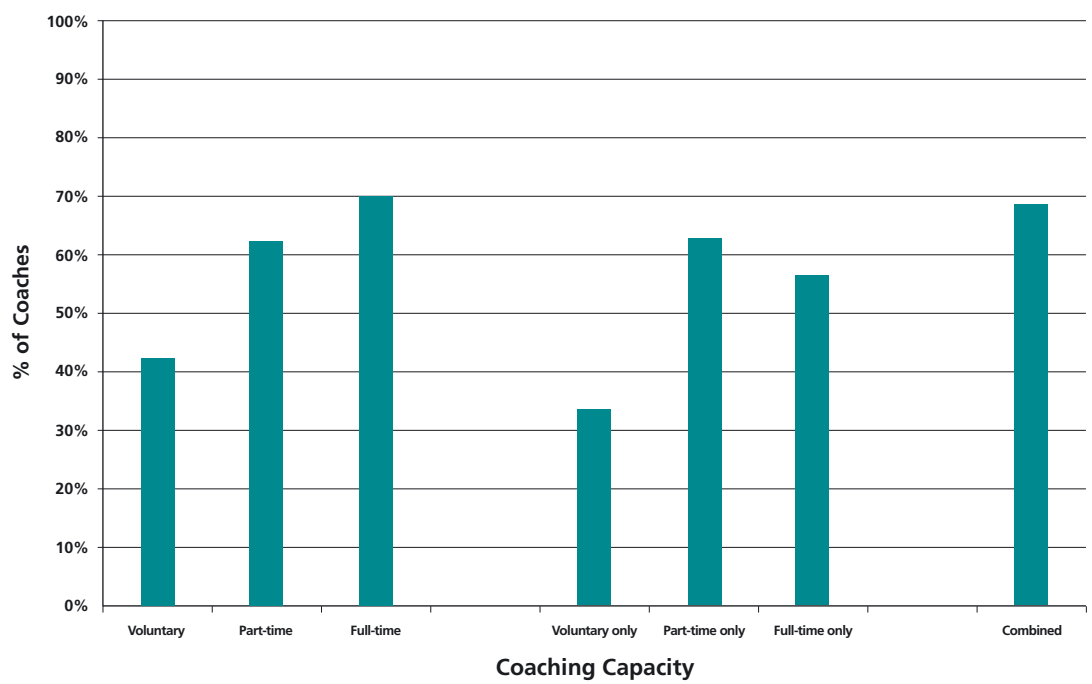
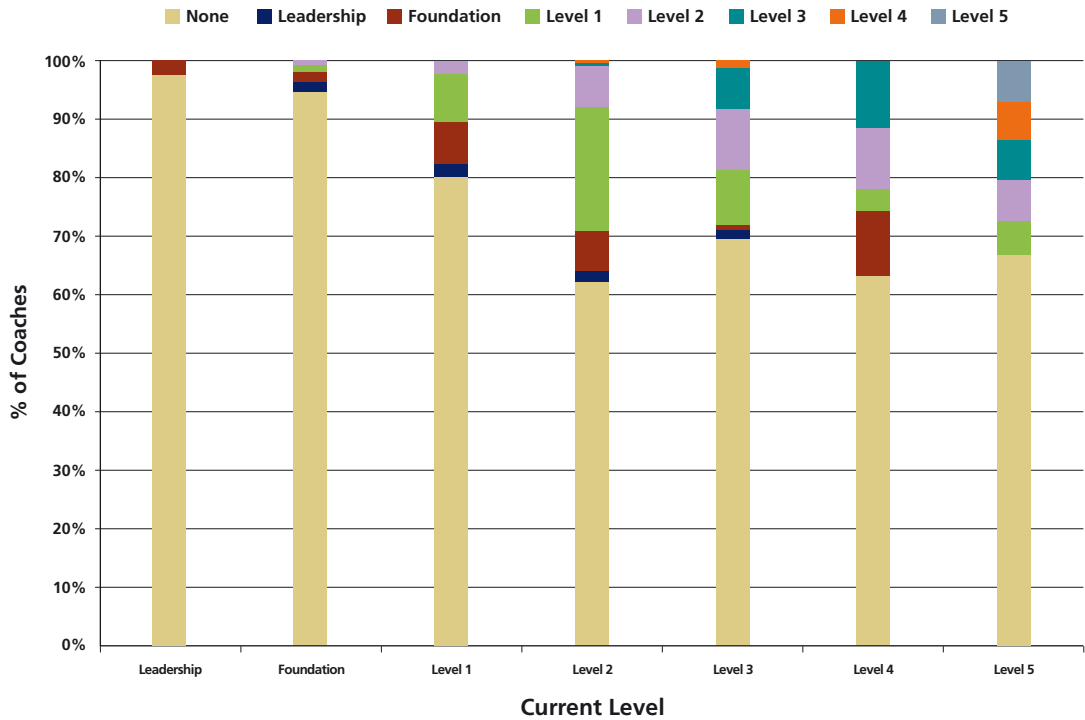


Figure 75 - Coaches Possessing Another Coaching Qualification, by Existing Qualification

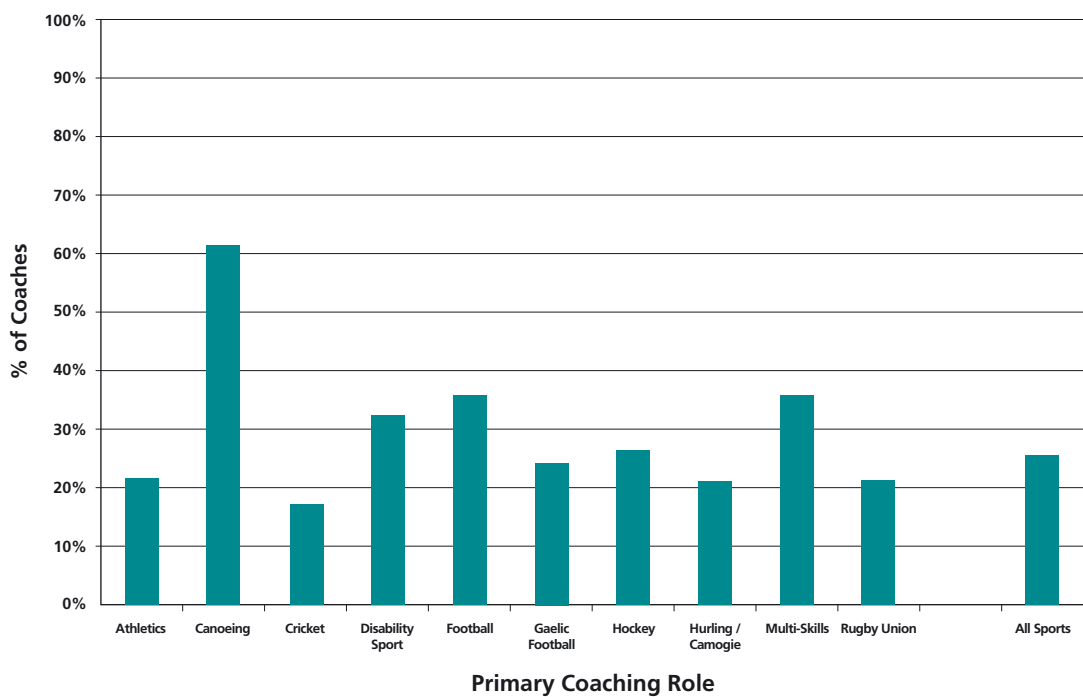


3.7.4.4 Figure 75 shows that coaches at higher levels of qualification are more likely to possess more than one qualification. Up to 38% of Level 2 coaches also possess another qualification; the majority of these (21%) being at Level 1. Similarly, 36% of Level 4 coaches possess another qualification.

3.7.5 PROGRESS TOWARDS NEW QUALIFICATIONS

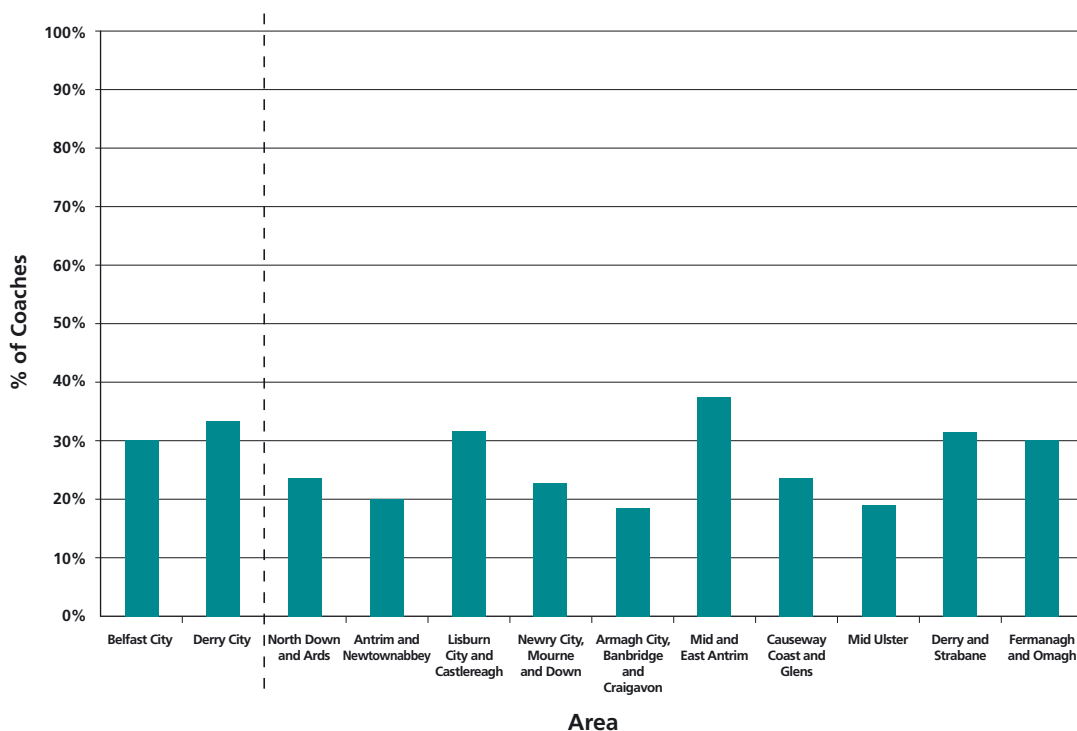
3.7.5.1 Just over a quarter of all coaches (26%) are currently working towards a valid qualification. This figure includes coaches who already have a valid qualification, as well as those who do not. Figure 76 shows that, for canoeing, the proportion working towards a qualification is much higher, at 61%. The next highest figure is for football (36%), followed by multi-skills (35%).

Figure 76 - Coaches Working Towards a Valid Coaching Qualification, by Primary Role



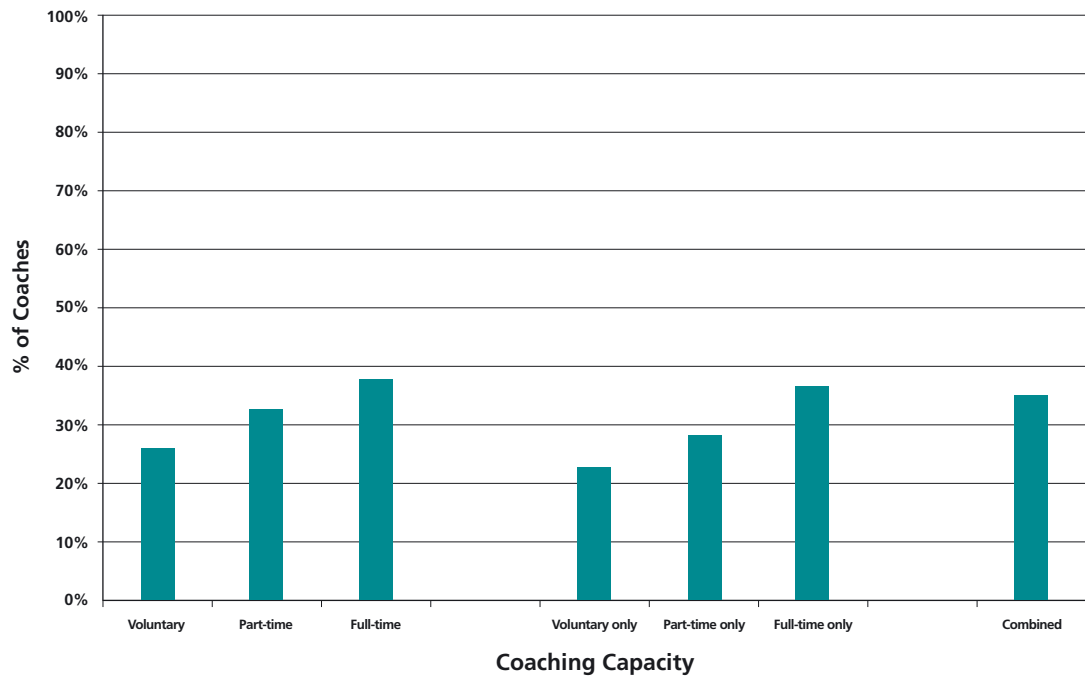
3.7.5.2 At area level, the proportion ranges from 19% in Armagh/Banbridge/Craigavon and Mid Ulster, to 33% in Derry City, and 31% in Newry/Mourne/Down (Figure 77). There is some evidence therefore that coaches in Newry are working to close the gap.

Figure 77 - Coaches Working Towards a Valid Coaching Qualification, by Area



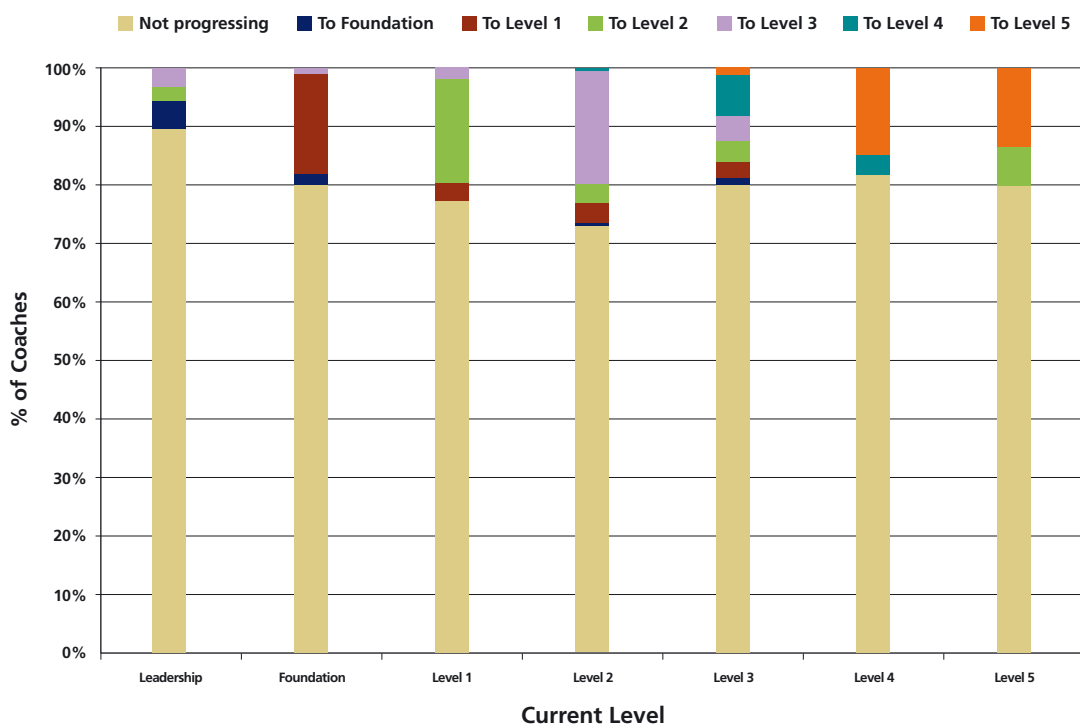
3.7.5.3 Nearly 40% of full-time coaches and over 30% of part-time coaches are working towards a qualification (Figure 78), while the percentage of voluntary coaches working towards a qualification matches the overall average of 26%.

Figure 78 - Coaches Working Towards a Valid Coaching Qualification, by Coaching Capacity



3.7.5.4 Figure 79 shows that at each rung on the coaching ladder, there are coaches who are aiming for the next level. Thus, 17% of Foundation Level coaches are working towards a Level 1 qualification. Eighteen per cent of Level 1 coaches are working towards Level 2, and 19% of Level 2 coaches are working towards Level 3. Even the most highly qualified coaches are working towards more advanced qualifications, with 7% of Level 3 and 14% of Level 4 coaches working towards the next level.

Figure 79 - Coaches Working Towards Another Level of Qualification, by Existing Qualification Level



3.7.5.5 Focus group participants expressed common concerns about the cost of coaching qualifications in particular, but also about the time needed to take qualifications and sometimes the distance needed to be travelled to attend the course delivery. The cost issue is particularly acute when the individual pays, and it reaches extremes in some sports for levels above Level 1. In addition, the hidden costs of coaching were highlighted by a number of participants (eg, overnight stays for course attendance, travelling costs, etc).

3.7.5.6 On a more positive note:

“If you have a coach who is keen, wants to learn, and expand their knowledge, there is any amount of courses out there available.”

3.7.5.7 However, other focus group participants concentrated on the problems:

“If you are paying this out of your own pocket and you are not getting anything back, this is going to put you off. I have two kids and one on the way in December so £900 isn't justifiable for the foreseeable future. While I want to get Level C and Level B, it just isn't going to happen.”

“They don't bring the courses this way, so you have to travel as well. You have to go down to Stranmillis, which is where they do their IFA coaching week. It's 9.00am-9.00pm for five days. To do it as a residential is actually £1,100 or £1,200.”

3.7.5.8 For at least one coach the problem is access to appropriate courses:

“We have a lot of Level 1 coaches but getting up to the next level and trying to find out who runs courses and getting organised is difficult. I find trying to become a Level 2 coach near impossible.”

3.7.5.9 Not all focus group participants saw the higher cost of coaching courses as a problem:

“It may be a positive factor that our courses are going up slightly in price as it will discourage the CV seekers and bring on those who actually want to be coaches actively.”

3.7.5.10 Two focus group participants pointed to the importance of a direct return from coach education:

“This is maybe a way that clubs can reward coaches in that ‘we'll pay your coaching qualification or half of it but you then give us 20/30 or 40 hours per season.”

“We've recently reviewed our process in the Southern area; we are only going to take coaches on to our courses now who are showing that they are willing to coach or have already agreed to coach.”

3.7.5.11 Whilst another uses references as 'leverage':

"It's a two-way thing. I would make sure that they come back. Because we have to give them a reference and the price of the reference is 'OK...', but when you have been on that course then, I want you back' and they have no chance to argue as I make sure that they would not get another reference if they didn't return."

3.7.5.12 The shift towards the UK Coaching Certificate framework in a number of sports is generally welcomed, though with some reservations regarding the balance between coaching theory and practice and concerns about the transition to UK Coaching Certificate from previous systems.

"I think the new UK Coaching Certificate qualifications are good; a lot better than the system we had in place. I think a Level 1 coach is coming out now with way more coaching knowledge than the system used to give. In those terms, I think they are good value for money."

"A lot of the criticism headed towards the UK Coaching Certificate is that there is too much 'how' and not enough of the 'what', so it's about getting the balance right."

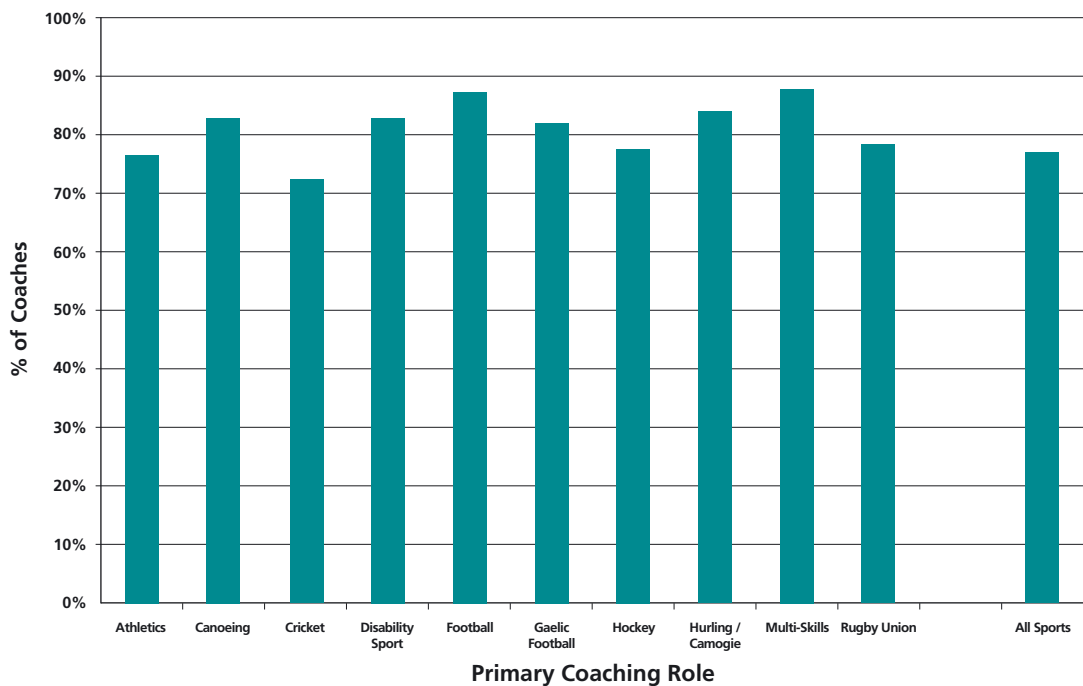
3.7.5.13 Some focus group participants were worried that coaching courses enhanced technical knowledge and skills but not people skills, particularly communications. Others suggested there were considerable deficiencies in strength and conditioning coaching. Another perception held by some coaches is that there is no specific course to take for multi-skills coaching. Some also mentioned that there was a need for specialist coaching in such areas as strength and conditioning, nutrition and coaching fundamentals for children.

"I can see a lot of sports now splitting everything; making it all separate so that you are nearly having to do three or four courses in order to get one full qualification. GAA is an example; now you have to do your fundamentals, your first aid, and another (youth or similar) and then you go into your Level 1. They accumulate to make your Level 1 and then somewhere there's a great 'Skills for Sports' one that Sport Northern Ireland do as well. It all adds to it as well."

3.7.6 FURTHER COACH DEVELOPMENT

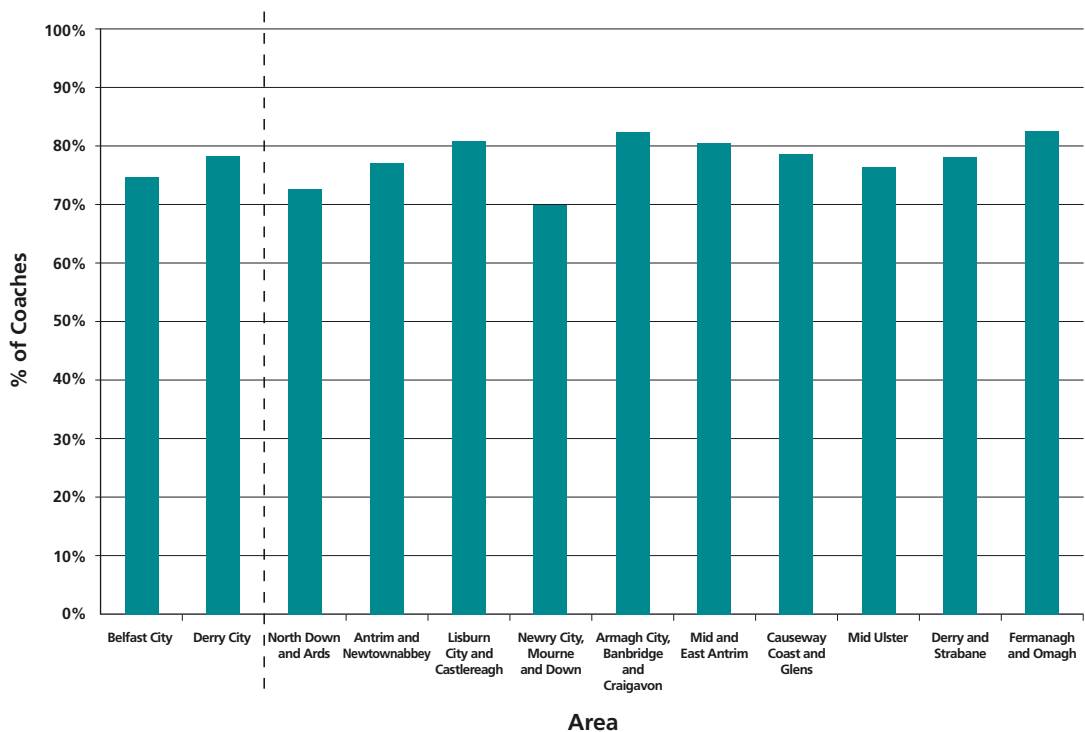
3.7.6.1 The proportion of coaches wishing to progress to a higher level of qualification, at 77%, is much higher than those actually taking concrete steps to do so. There may be a number of reasons for this, not least of which is the commitment in terms of time. It may also be a function of the perceived value of having a higher qualification. That said, 88% of football coaches and 83% of canoeing coaches expressed a wish to proceed further along the coaching continuum (Figure 80).

Figure 80 - Coaches Wishing to Progress Towards a Qualification by Sport



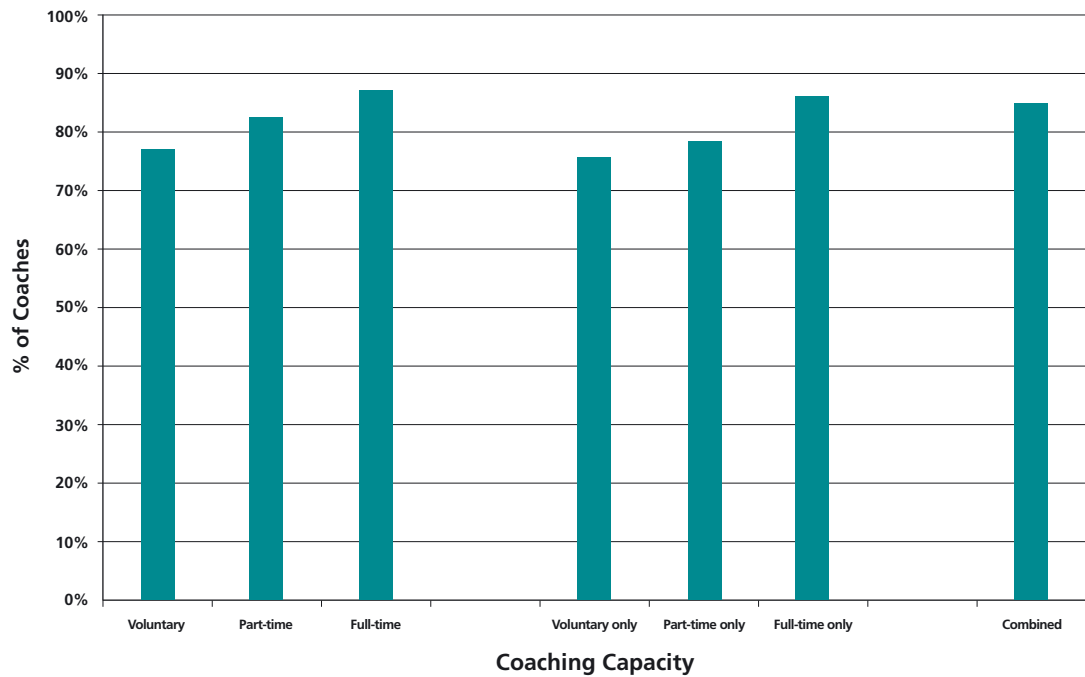
3.7.6.2 When analysed at city and consortium level (Figure 81), a more consistent picture emerges, with figures for intentions ranging from 70% in Newry/ Mourne/Down, 73% in North Down and Ards and 74% in Belfast to 82% in Armagh/Banbridge/Craigavon and 83% in Fermanagh/Omagh. This may be less of an issue in Belfast City, where 90% of coaches are already qualified, but more of a problem in Newry, where the proportion of qualified coaches is below average.

Figure 81 - Coaches Wishing to Progress Towards a Qualification, by Area



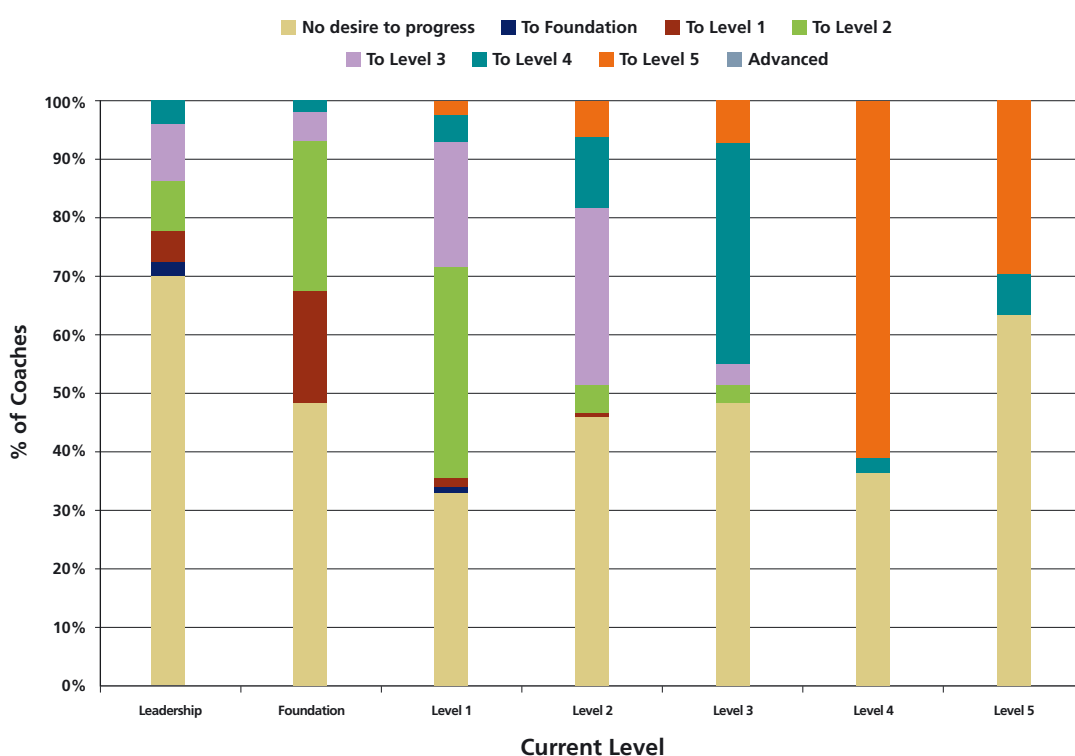
3.7.6.3 The percentage of full-time coaches wishing to progress to a higher level of coaching qualification is the highest of any group, at 86% (Figure 82).

Figure 82 - Coaches Wishing to Progress Towards a Qualification, by Coaching Capacity



3.7.6.4 In terms of the ultimate level of progression wanted by coaches, the results vary according to their current level of qualification. The greatest aspiration to reach higher levels is evident at Levels 1 and 4. The lowest aspiration level is at the leadership level (Figure 83).

Figure 83 - Coaches Wishing to Progress Towards a Qualification, by Coaching Qualification



3.7.6.5 In the focus groups, some coaches expressed the view that it is difficult to reach the highest coaching level of their respective sports.

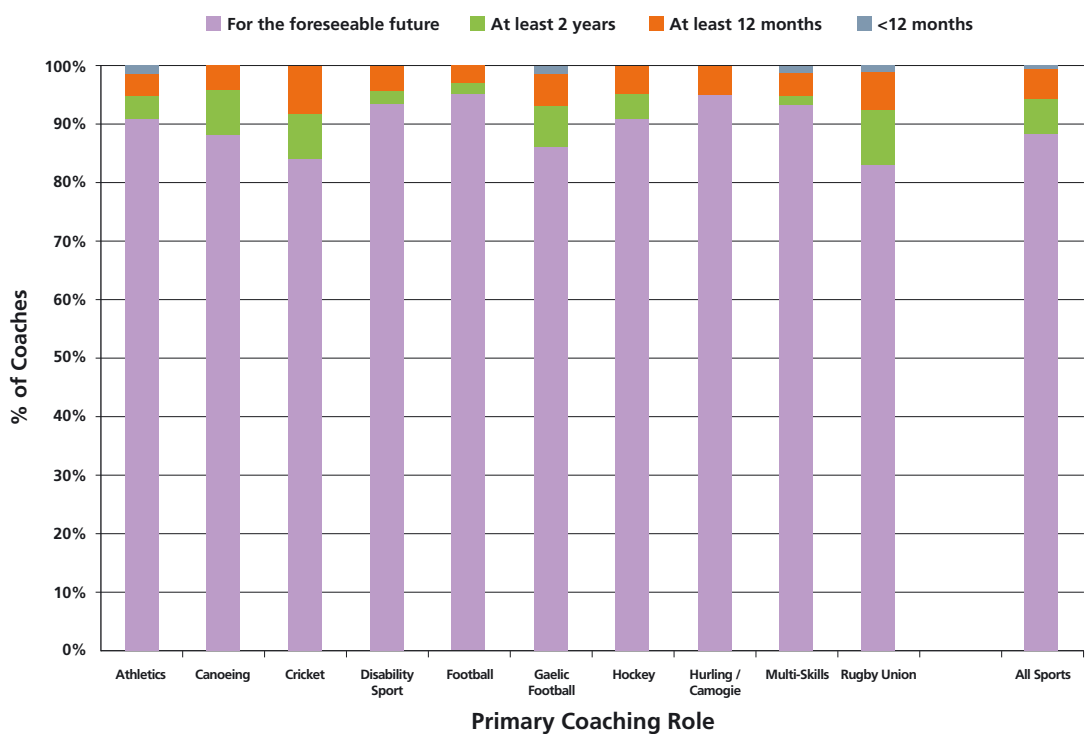
“You are clearly coaching at a good level at school level and the history is that the potential to coach at county level is there. But has anybody from county level ever invited you to join a development programme with them?”

“If you are coaching a top men’s club, your next level has to be something else, but at the moment it is just based on an offer from a different team. There is no structure in place for coach improvement before they can take on the next level of team.”

3.7.7 CONTINUING TO COACH

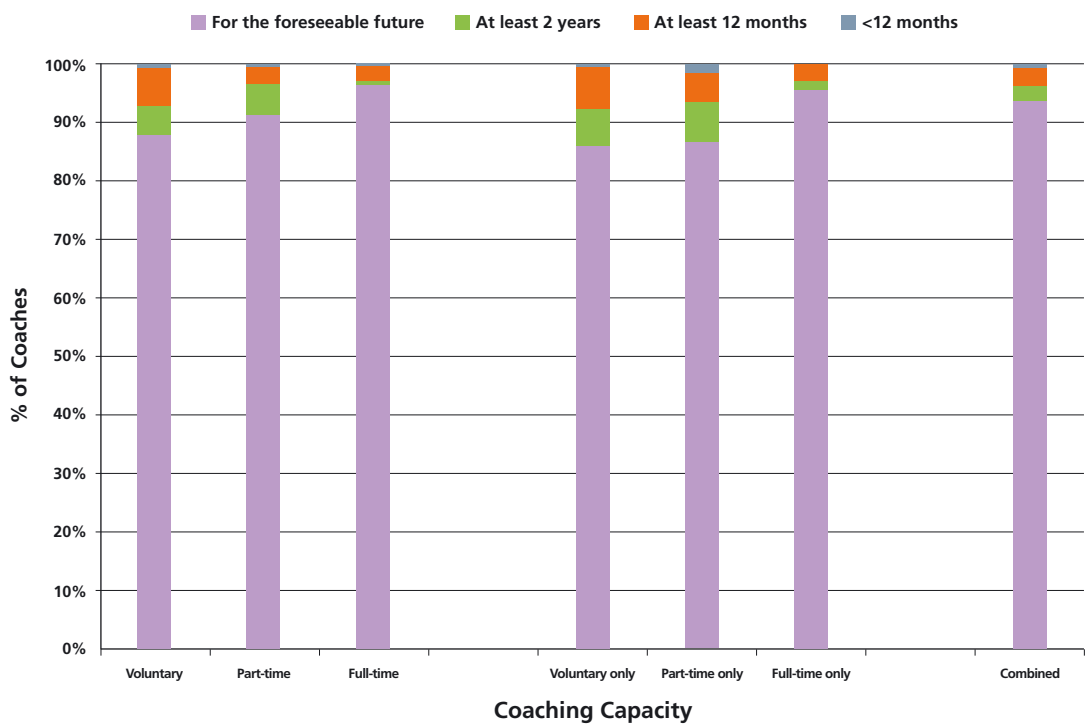
3.7.7.1 The overwhelming majority of coaches (89%) intend to continue for the foreseeable future, and, of the remainder, 5% intend to continue coaching for the next two years. There is little evidence therefore of a ‘ticking clock’ in terms of significant numbers of coaches wanting to retire or concentrate their efforts elsewhere. It is particularly reassuring in the sport of athletics, which has a much older workforce than any other sport, though the proportion of coaches who put a definite length of time on their coaching careers is higher than average in cricket (16%), Gaelic football (14%) and rugby union (16%). Nearly all football and hurling/camogie coaches intend to continue for the foreseeable future (Figure 84).

Figure 84 - Future Coaching Intent by Primary Coaching Role



3.7.7.2 Of full-time coaches in the survey, 96% intend to continue coaching for the foreseeable future. The figure for voluntary coaches is just below the overall average (at 88%), though a further 6% intend to continue for another two years (Figure 85).

Figure 85 - Future Coaching Intent by Coaching Capacity

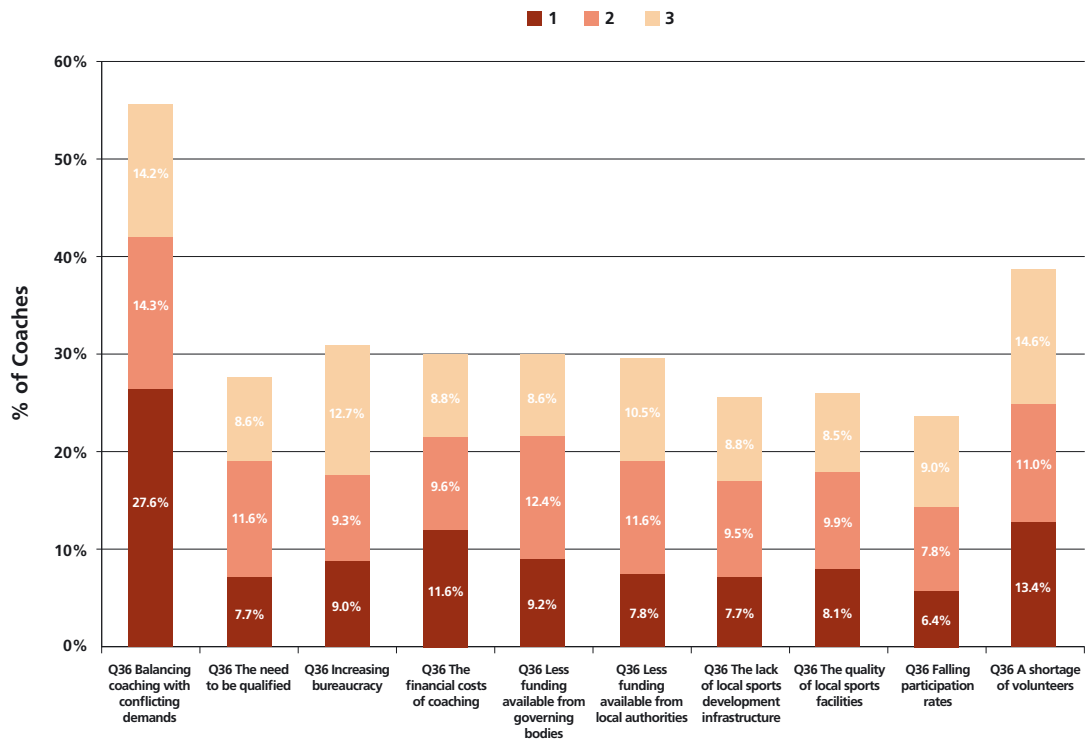


3.8 Challenges and Opportunities

3.8.1 When asked to identify challenges in their coaching careers (Figure 86), the most frequent response was balancing coaching with conflicting demands, selected by over 800 coaches (56%) in the survey. Time pressures arise from both within sport and other work and family responsibilities. Clearly many coaches are experts in multi-tasking! Attention was drawn particularly to the time commitments required of coaching outside the actual coaching activity, and the increases in communication required, particularly via the mobile phone. This issue is also related to problems of increasing bureaucracy (see later). Some paid coaches reported that they faced a conflict between the demands of their professional role and the expectations of their involvement in voluntary (club) sport.

3.8.2 The next most cited challenges were a shortage of volunteers (39%), followed by increasing bureaucracy (31%). Interestingly, 30% of coaches indicated that the financial cost of coaching was a barrier, while an almost identical number felt that there was less funding available from either governing bodies of sport or district councils.

Figure 86 - Significant Challenges Identified by Coaches



- 3.8.3** Focus group participants broadly agreed about a general excess of bureaucratic requirements, with two specific concerns: child protection and district council bureaucracy.

“Being employed as the talent development coach I don’t really feel that this amount of admin fits into my role, but within our organisation we just don’t have enough paid members of staff to take other things on. In an ideal world I could have an assistant to do that for me, but it doesn’t happen like this.”

“There is a lot of background work involved and it’s volunteers who are doing their nine to five and then going home to sit in front of a computer for four to five hours. Not every night or every week, but certainly having to put an awful lot of time in to have the paper work in place.”

- 3.8.4** Regarding child protection, the major issues are the need for multiple disclosures for different employers/situations and the changes in the legislation and consequent advice. All, however, recognised the need for child protection.

“I am a school teacher, this policy business has everybody choked ... it makes it very difficult to effectively coach within clubs or teach within schools.”

“We have to maintain a level of acceptance within society so we have to be seen to be doing the right thing, it’s been described as a sledge hammer to hit a nut, but it’s here to stay.”

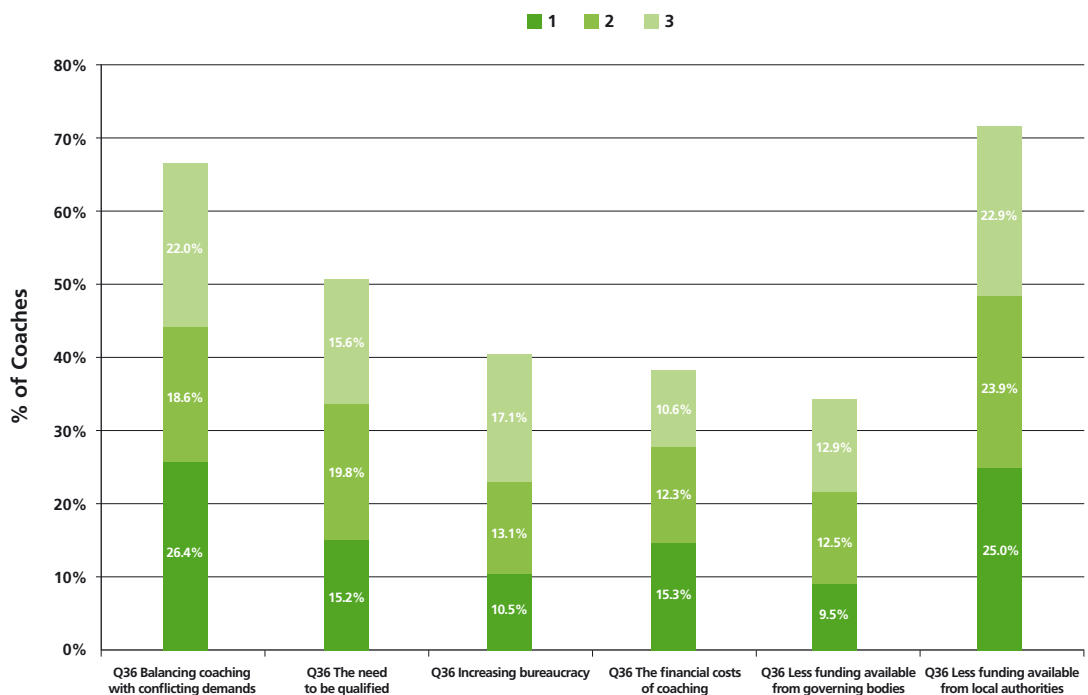
“I think it’s fear of a legal challenge, you must have i’s dotted, the t’s crossed, if the young fella comes back injured in three months time and says ‘I was not treated properly at the time’ then the investigation starts and if you haven’t got the a,b,c form, the accident report form, who was there, signatures, then you’re in trouble.”

3.8.5 The transferability of criminal record bureau checks between sports is an issue for some coaches.

It cannot be transferred between activities. One certificate accepted by all governing bodies would cut down on some of the bureaucracy.

3.8.6 Coaches felt that the promotion of sport as part of a healthy lifestyle represented the most significant opportunity for sports coaching in Northern Ireland (Figure 87), with 72% ranking this as one of their top three responses. Improvements to sporting facilities were highlighted by 67% of coaches, while just over half (51%) referred to increasing participation rates. It is notable that only 35% of coaches felt that the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games would have a positive effect in terms of generating increased interest in sport.

Figure 87 - Significant Opportunities Identified by Coaches



- 3.8.7** Some focus group participants are sceptical about future opportunities in sport especially with regard to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games legacy and the economic situation while some feel that a greater emphasis on the health benefits of sport could lead to an increase in participation. The SkillsActive report on the active leisure workforce suggested a high degree of optimism regarding 2012. This, however, appears to have waned somewhat. Secondly, there are now less than two years to go before the start of the Games, leaving only a short period of time to recapture some of the lost enthusiasm.

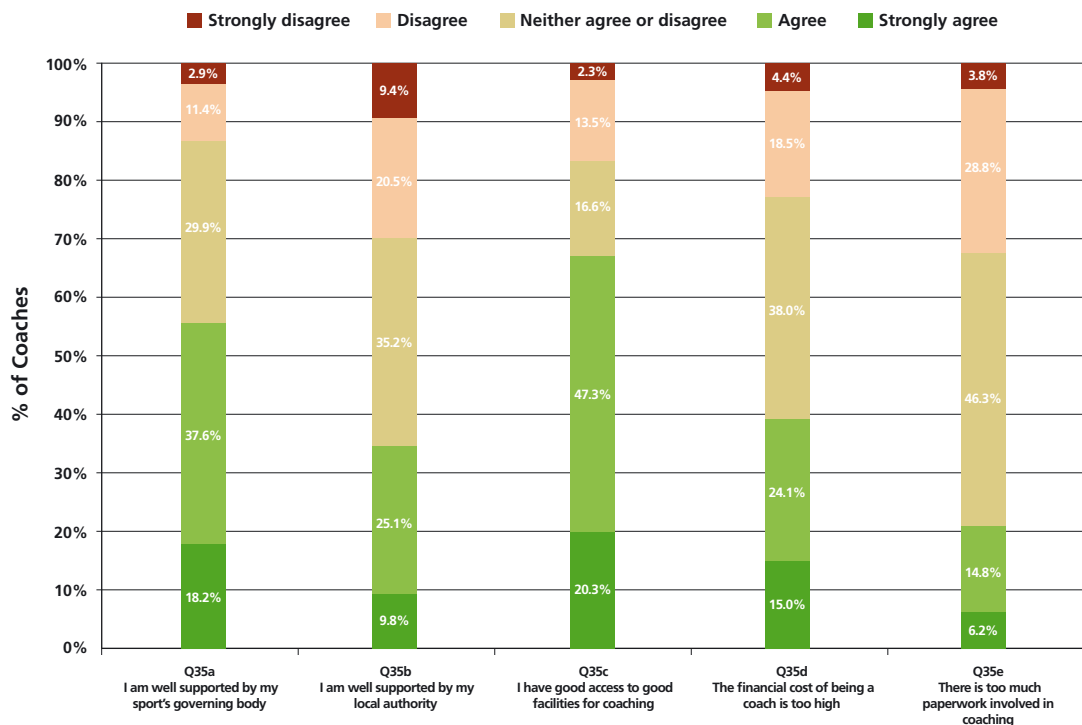
"I think there was a false hope that with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games there was going to be lots of money flying about, but obviously it hasn't come to anything really. There has been some funding but not really how people were expecting. It is disappointing because you would hope that there would be a legacy left behind following that, but it doesn't look this way."

"We've put in an application to become a pre-games training camp, and we've a couple of countries interested. We'll have them, hopefully in Lisburn, training before they go to London. And that will give our coaches a chance to see a top country operating I hope, and learn a bit from that."

"We wonder about this because our numbers have gone bananas. Literally we jumped from 50 people, which is quite a big group in a rural area, to approx 250 registered paying members in the space of about 18 months. This is staggering."

- 3.8.8** On balance, coaches are generally satisfied with most aspects of their coaching experience, though there are one or two notes of caution (Figure 88). While 56% agreed, or agreed strongly, that they were well supported by their governing body of sport, only 35% felt that their district council supported them in their coaching. Indeed, 30% of coaches felt that they were not supported by their district council.

Figure 88 - Levels of Satisfaction with Aspects of Coaching



3.8.9 Focus group participants agreed that district council support is inconsistent, with, on the one hand, complaints about increasing bureaucracy and the need for a better 'voice' for coaches, and, on the other hand, testimonies to very good support, including funding.

"We have never had a problem in fairness. Antrim is a brilliant council, really really good."

"I don't think the district councils do enough to be honest in terms of help, even for coaches. For my own club we are right on the border and nobody takes responsibility for us."

3.8.10 Some felt that collaboration between governing bodies of sport and district councils may help to improve the funding opportunities and level of funding for clubs and coaches.

"We are setting up a canoe club with some support from the council in the form of a very small grant to cover advertisement in the paper. In financial terms it is a minimal amount of money. We have quite a lot of support from the development officer of CANI the national governing body. He was the one who brokered the support that we got from the council."

- 3.8.11** One person felt that the governing body should help people deal with the issue of funding.

"That's why it has to be a governing body because you have so many different groups and sources of funding, individual people can't keep up with that."

- 3.8.12** Over two thirds of coaches (68%) felt that they had access to good facilities for coaching, though it should be noted that this is not the same as having good access to facilities. Although a couple of focus groups' participants applauded excellent facilities in their areas, others expressed concerns about the shortage of local provision in some areas, particularly for indoor facilities and outdoor synthetic pitches.

"Facilities I think are just as important as coaching ... It's the practice in between the lessons that makes you learn, and you don't get that with lack of facilities."

"We're expected to produce athletes with bad equipment and bad venues, and you can't do it. It just doesn't work that way."

"There are huge amounts of football in Coleraine and they are crying out for training facilities as well, especially at night using floodlit facilities, so if an astro-turf was there - based on where the town is - it would be filled every night."

- 3.8.13** Other problems include difficult facility access/time, sometimes with only early morning or late evenings being available. There is a sense that coaching activity is a low priority compared with other forms of participation (eg, pay and play) for many facility managers.

"The problem with facilities is the demand's mainly in evenings, Saturdays. And people all want to go at the same time. You go in a leisure centre at 10 on a Monday morning; the place'd be lying empty. But if you try and get a slot there at say, Tuesday evening at 7.00pm, you're on a long waiting list."

"You do have quite a lot, like schools who'll class themselves as community schools. But try and get in them in the evening and it's a nightmare."

3.8.14 And sometimes it's a human resources problem.

"The biggest thing...the biggest thing in that, is the bloody caretaker! [Laughter] I've had badminton matches on, and the caretaker's come on and taken the nets down while the matches were still on."

3.8.15 Of more concern however, is the fact that 39% of coaches feel that the financial cost of being a coach is too high, while 21% feel that there is too much paperwork involved in coaching. Almost 33% of coaches disagree that paperwork is a significant issue however, suggesting that the level of bureaucracy is not uniform across sports and areas. The main source of paperwork appears to be district councils.

"In terms of barriers, paperwork is horrendous, especially working for councils. When you go to do a session you hand in about six forms by the time you are finished. It is even the same now with the voluntary work."

"I think it is quite possible to stay within the guidelines and actually produce a fairly minimal amount of paperwork. I think there is a problem with councils and district councils producing far too much."

3.9 Mentoring and Monitoring

3.9.1 A recurring theme which coaches spoke of during the focus groups was the need for a formal mentoring or monitoring process for coaches. This was perceived to be an area in which some sports were particularly weak, with some coaches feeling isolated. There was a clear appreciation of the fact that mentoring would help to develop coaches as they continue through their careers, and that the process of education does not end with the award of a certificate.

3.9.2 Whilst mentoring is perceived as good in principle, in practice it is unlikely in a formal sense; most mentoring is informal and ad hoc. Many coaches believe that establishing a coach mentoring network is the responsibility of their governing body.

"We give them the badge and let them go off and the rest of it, and there's no ongoing process for evaluating those skills or pointing out deficits or anything like that."

"We don't feel that there is enough in-situ coach assessment and then invitation to attend further courses based on performance."

3.9.3 Most agreed that there was not enough of this type of coach development (if any) and that the governing bodies of sport should be responsible for building a mentoring network within the exiting qualification structure.

"When you've qualified level, which is entry just volunteer level and Level 2, as soon as you get the qualification there's nobody who comes along and carries out any checks on you over a period of time. You're left to get on with it."

- 3.9.4** One coach compared how referees are formally assessed and monitored. He felt this had improved the standard of refereeing and could be replicated for sports coaching.

"I coach and referee in rugby. The refereeing has a very strong support service with a lot of mentoring, regular training, and regular assessment which is very important. I don't see that in the coaching at all. I don't see why coaches couldn't be assessed regularly, why they couldn't be mentored, have regular training sessions, etc. I think that would bring the standard up enormously; it certainly does with referees."

- 3.9.5** While many people agreed that there was a need for one-to-one support to improve the quality of coaches and coaching, many were unable to see how this could be achieved in a formal sense, due to a lack of funding and time.

"Just looking at cricket...if you do your Level 2 (not necessarily a UK Coaching Certificate Level 2) you have to complete a log of coaching activity that is supervised by a Level 3 coach. What they are doing is moving people into the regional squads, saying "you will be coaching the regional squad where we can see what you are doing, how you get on with under age kids and things like that". That's one way they approach it which I think makes a big difference."

"...meeting up with a mentor three to four times a year would be great, and then to have email or online contact with them for interim questions."

"I think mentoring happens quite informally, without us actually noticing."

- 3.9.6** Other coaches talked of this process already being utilised in certain sports both formally and informally.

"What I find is that there is an abundance of people out there within football particularly within the higher levels of coaching who will make themselves available and will help, because they've all been through it."



4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.0.1 The report gives information on the state of the sports coaching workforce in 2010. 1,467 coaches took part in the survey and around 50 of these attended a series of focus groups staged around the country. It is important to note however, that the number of respondent coaches varies by sport and by area. In particular, coaches from the sports of football, Gaelic football and rugby union account for 42% of the overall sample. Similarly, coaches resident in the east of the country and in the Greater Belfast area are well represented. Thus overall averages for the remaining sports and areas may need to be interpreted with care, as these will depend on both the numbers of coaches responding and how representative those coaches are. Because of the way the survey was distributed it is likely that those coaches who have at least some level of engagement with their governing body of sport or district council might be over represented in the sample compared with coaches who operate in isolation.

4.1 Coaching Data

4.1.1 With respect to what is already known about sports coaching in Northern Ireland, it is clear from the deliverers' audit that the amount and quality of data varies from stakeholder to stakeholder. Some organisations, mainly governing bodies, collect and store the full range of information about coaches and coaching and update this on a regular basis. District councils are less inclined to collect the full range of data, perhaps reflecting the view that it is the role of the governing body of sport to maintain records of qualifications, etc. The maintenance of good quality data is somewhat hampered by the continued use of paper records in some organisations, while others have to deal with the additional complication of data being collected and processed from more than one source. Coaches understand both the need for this data to be collected and how it can be used to improve the administration of coaching in their sport(s), but are somewhat sceptical of the quality of the databases used by stakeholders.

4.2 The Coaching Workforce

- 4.2.1** The results of the survey suggest that the outlook for coaching in Northern Ireland is generally positive, although there are some issues which coaches feel could be significantly improved upon. The coaching workforce is young and well educated with over half of all coaches in the survey being educated to undergraduate degree level or higher. There is a good balance of coaches from the various communities of Northern Ireland and the level of commitment is evident from the high proportion of coaches in the sample who give their time as volunteers, frequently in tandem with holding down a full-time job.
- 4.2.2** Coaches are not just coaches. The majority also participate in their chosen sport, and many also have additional roles within clubs and governing bodies. This often means that coaches have to deal with conflicts of interest between a variety of stakeholders. Over a third of coaches also deliver coaching across more than one sport. Club coaching forms the backbone of sports coaching in Northern Ireland, with 84% of coaches delivering coaching in a club setting. The experience of coaches working in schools seems to vary from place to place, with some local authorities doing more to facilitate coaching in a school environment than others.
- 4.2.3** Half of all coaches work with under 10-year-olds, and 71% deliver to children in the 11 to 16 age group. This is despite the legitimate concerns expressed by many coaches that child protection and vetting and barring procedures are prohibitively bureaucratic. There is a significant drop in the number of coaches delivering to young adults and older age groups, which reflects the general age profile of sports participation in the country.

- 4.2.4** The commitment of coaches in terms of time is impressive, particularly in view of the high proportion of voluntary coaches in the survey. More than half of all coaches work more than once a week, with fewer than 10% involved in coaching less than once a week. The main concern regarding time is not so much that coaching delivery takes place so frequently, but that the level of administration required to maintain that delivery is so extensive.
- 4.2.5** Traditional pathways into coaching are very much in evidence, with more than half of all coaches beginning to coach younger participants while still playing. This is a common way in which sports clubs identify and develop potential coaches. Becoming a coach while also participating allows players to gain experience of the coaching role, so much so that 54% of coaches in the survey have been coaching for five years or more.
- 4.2.6** The subject of coaching qualifications is complicated, with a wide range of views being expressed in the focus groups. Almost 90% of coaches have a valid coaching qualification, and more than three quarters wish to progress to a higher level of qualification, but only a quarter of coaches are actively doing so. Cost was identified as the single most significant barrier to achieving higher qualifications. This is not limited to the upfront financial costs of the courses, but includes the hidden costs of time and additional expenditure in terms of travel and accommodation.
- 4.2.7** There is little evidence to suggest that the workforce is likely to shrink significantly in the near future, though this is no reason for stakeholders to become complacent. Coaches frequently spoke of being under-appreciated by their governing bodies of sport. The increasing levels of bureaucracy involved in sports coaching are a common source of disquiet, with many citing complex paperwork for things like vetting and barring procedures, funding applications and monitoring and evaluation.

- 4.2.8** The most significant challenge faced by sports coaches is having to balance conflicting demands. This came out consistently through the responses to the survey and through the focus groups, in which many coaches spoke of their frustration at how stakeholders often pull in different directions. There is also evidence of duplication, with some coaches highlighting the need to complete several sets of paperwork (for school, district council and governing body of sport) just to be able to deliver one coaching session.
- 4.2.9** The majority of coaches felt that the promotion of sport as part of a healthy lifestyle represented the best opportunity for sports coaching in Northern Ireland. There was some frustration that the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games has not been used as more of a springboard in terms of identifying and developing new opportunities for coaching, although most believed that this was more likely to occur in the run up to the 2012 Games.
- 4.2.10** Coaches are generally satisfied with their experience of governing body of sport support, though it is perhaps of some concern that 30% of coaches do not feel well supported by their district council. While the majority feel that they have access to good facilities, this does not necessarily mean that they have *good* access to those facilities, since access is frequently restricted to evenings and weekends by the use of sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor pitches by schools during the day.
- 4.2.11** Coaches and the organisations which engage with them frequently find innovative ways of addressing the issues of bureaucracy and access, and there were many good examples which emerged during the research. These included reducing conflicting demands on parents by enlisting parents as coach support workers, so that they become more involved in their children's sports coaching. Other coaches cited good examples of governing bodies of sport and district councils coming together to develop a common approach to funding and administrative support, thereby reducing the burden on individual coaches.

- 4.2.12** One theme to emerge from the focus group discussions was that of mentoring, with many of the coaches suggesting that this would be a very positive contribution to coaching development. Most felt that it was the role of governing bodies of sport to develop and implement a mentoring scheme, and there were good examples from other contexts (eg, refereeing) of how this had been done to good effect
- 4.2.13** The report confirms the critical contribution of coaches to sports participation and development in Northern Ireland. The workforce is relatively young, well-educated and ambitious, and is - in the main - prepared to coach on a voluntary basis. The report provides an overview of the characteristics of these coaches to inform Sport Northern Ireland and its partners in their role of providing collective representation and advocacy.

References

1. **MORI (2004)**, *Sports Coaching in the UK*, Sports Coach UK, Leeds, September.
2. **Townend and North (2007)**, *Sports Coaching in the UK II*, Sports Coach UK.
3. **Larkin, Duffy and O'Leary (2006)**, *Tracing the Development Process and Needs of Irish Coaches*, Coaching Ireland, Limerick.



Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) is working in close collaboration with governing bodies, local authorities and other key stakeholders to find out more about sports coaches and sport coaching across the country. By completing this survey, you will be providing invaluable information to support the planning and delivery of sports coaching in Northern Ireland.

The survey is being administered for Sport Northern Ireland by the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University. If you have any queries about the survey, please telephone David Barrett on +44 (0)114 225-2298; or e-mail d.barrett@shu.ac.uk.

As an incentive to take part in the research, Sport Northern Ireland will enter completed surveys into a **prize draw** to win either an **iPod**, **£200 worth of sports equipment vouchers** or a **2 night hotel break**. All your responses will be treated as confidential so please answer as honestly as you can. Most questions require you to CROSS BOXES from lists, write in boxes or express opinions in the spaces provided. If you are happy to proceed, thank you for agreeing to help.

1. Have you actively coached sport in the last 12 months? Yes (go to question 2) No (go to question 21)

2. Are you a... (Please select **one** answer only)

- Head Coach? Assistant Coach? Informal Coach? Other (please specify)
- Coach? Leader? Don't know

3. What other role(s) do you undertake in relation to sport? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- Parent / Helper Player
- Activity supervisor No other role
- Umpire / Referee / Official Other (please specify)
- Coach support workforce

4. Are you a member of a sports club (Please select **one** answer only)

- No Yes (please state which) _____

5. Which sports have you coached in the last 12 months? (Please cross **all** answers that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archery | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Hurling/Camogie | <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing/Yachting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Squash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badminton | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability sport | <input type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball/Softball | <input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Table Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Football | <input type="checkbox"/> Netball | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Billiards/Snooker | <input type="checkbox"/> Gaelic Football | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Pursuits | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowls | <input type="checkbox"/> Golf | <input type="checkbox"/> Rounders (GAA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Polo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boxing | <input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics | <input type="checkbox"/> Rowing | <input type="checkbox"/> Weightlifting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing | <input type="checkbox"/> Handball (GAA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Rugby League | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cricket | <input type="checkbox"/> Hockey | <input type="checkbox"/> Rugby Union | |

6. Which of these sports is your **primary** or most important coaching role?

7. In which capacity have you coached during the last 12 months? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- Voluntary Paid part-time Paid full-time

2331

Please turn over...

8. On behalf of which **type** of organisation have you coached in the last 12 months? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A sports club | <input type="checkbox"/> A community group | <input type="checkbox"/> A university |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A governing body | <input type="checkbox"/> A private company | <input type="checkbox"/> An individual / a number of individuals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A local authority | <input type="checkbox"/> A school / college | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

Who do you coach?

9. What is the age group of the participants that you coach? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- Under 11 12-16 17-20 21-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75+

10. What is the gender group of the participants that you coach? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Male Female Both

11. Do you coach individuals with any form of disability? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Yes No

12. What sporting level are the participants that you coach? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beginner | <input type="checkbox"/> County / Regional Squad | <input type="checkbox"/> Elite / International |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational | <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Squad | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club | <input type="checkbox"/> National Competition | |

13. On average, how often have you coached in the last 12 months? (Please select **one** answer only)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Almost every working day | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once every 3 months |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Several times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> At least once a month | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than once every 3 months |

14. During a typical week, when do you do your coaching? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Mornings (before 6am) | <input type="checkbox"/> Afternoons (12pm-6pm) | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekdays | <input type="checkbox"/> Term time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mornings (6am-12pm) | <input type="checkbox"/> Evenings (6pm onwards) | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekends | <input type="checkbox"/> School Holidays |

15. During a typical week, how many hours do you spend on each of the following? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Preparing coaching sessions | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Reviewing coaching sessions | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Travelling to coaching sessions |
| <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Delivering coaching sessions | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Administration and planning | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Promoting coaching sessions |

16. In which of the following settings have you coached in the last 12 months? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club | <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial squad | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sports Facility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School - before school | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Ireland Squad | <input type="checkbox"/> Home (private coaching) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School - curriculum time | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Britain Squad | <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace (private coaching) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School - lunchtime | <input type="checkbox"/> ROI/All Ireland Squad | <input type="checkbox"/> Community setting / youth club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School - after school | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Sports Centre / Pool | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County Squad | <input type="checkbox"/> University / College | |

17. Please state the number of minutes you typically coach per week for each of the groups you identified in question 16.

<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Club	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	ROI/All Ireland Squad
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	School - before school	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Public sports centre / pool
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	School - curriculum time	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	University / college
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	School - lunchtime	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Private Sports Facility
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	School - after school	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Home (Private Coaching)
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	County Squad	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Workplace (Private Coaching)
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Provincial Squad	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Community Setting / Youth Club
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	N. Ireland Squad	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Other (please specify)
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Great Britain Squad		

Where do you coach?

18. How many venues do you coach at during a typical week?

19. Where do you do the majority of your coaching during a typical week?

Venue Name	Hours of coaching delivered at this venue in a typical week
_____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

20. At which other locations do you coach?

Venue Name	Hours of coaching delivered at this venue in a typical week
_____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Venue Name	Hours of coaching delivered at this venue in a typical week
_____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Venue Name	Hours of coaching delivered at this venue in a typical week
_____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Venue Name	Hours of coaching delivered at this venue in a typical week
_____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Venue Name	Hours of coaching delivered at this venue in a typical week
_____	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

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What coaching experience do you have?

21. How long (in years) have you been a coach? years

22. How did you become involved in coaching? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- Coached younger participants while still playing Qualified as a non-PE teacher
 Coached team mates while still playing Progressed from existing paid employment within the sport
 Began coaching after playing Opportunity arose through education (e.g. work experience)
 As a result of child's involvement in the sport Progressed from volunteering (sport/youth programme, e.g. scouts)
 As a result of a coaching vacancy at my local club I set up my own business
 Qualified as a PE teacher Other (please specify) _____

23. Do you have an accredited coaching qualification (i.e. a qualification from the NGB for your sport, or from an officially recognised body such as ISRM, ISPAL, Sportscoach UK, etc.)? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Yes (go to question 24) No (go to question 20)

24. What is the highest level of valid coaching qualification that you currently hold?

Sport	Awarding Body	Qualification	Year obtained
_____	_____	_____	_____

25. What other valid coaching qualifications (if any) do you currently hold?

Sport	Awarding Body	Qualification	Year obtained
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

26. Are you currently studying for a qualification? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Yes (go to question 27) No (go to question 28)

27. What is the coaching qualification that you are currently studying for?

Sport	Awarding Body	Qualification
_____	_____	_____

28. Would you like to achieve a higher level of qualification? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Yes (go to question 29) No (go to question 30)

29. What coaching qualification would you ultimately like to achieve?

Sport	Awarding Body	Qualification
_____	_____	_____

30. Have you undertaken any coaching education / development in the last 12 months? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Yes (go to question 31) No (go to question 32)

31. How many hours have you spent on coach education / development in the last 12 months? hours

What coaching would you like to do in the future?

32. Do you intend to continue coaching? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Yes (go to question 33) No (go to question 34)

33. For how long do you intend to continue coaching? (Please select **one** answer only)

- Less than 12 months At least another 12 months At least another 2 years For the foreseeable future

34. If you intend to stop coaching, what are the reasons why? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- No longer have enough time Increased work commitments Cannot afford costs
 Lost motivation Increased family commitments Do not have the right qualifications
 Declining/poor health Poor rewards/insufficient pay The project I was working on ended
 Other (please specify) _____

35. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your experience of coaching.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) I am well supported by my sport's governing body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) I am well supported by my local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) I have access to good facilities for coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) The financial cost of being a coach is too high	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) There is too much paperwork involved in coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

36. In your opinion, which are the most significant challenges for coaching in Northern Ireland? (Please select **three** answers)

- Falling participation rates The financial costs of coaching Poor sports development infrastructure
 The need to be qualified Reduced funding from governing bodies Balancing coaching with conflicting demands
 Increasing bureaucracy Reduced funding from local government The quality of local sports facilities
 Other (please specify) _____

37. In your opinion, which are the most significant opportunities for coaching in Northern Ireland? (Please select **three** answers)

- Rising participation rates More paid coaching opportunities Increased interest in sport due to 2012
 Better coaching qualifications Improvements to sporting facilities Promotion of sport as part of a healthy lifestyle
 Other (please specify) _____

38. Please use this space to make any other comments about sports coaching in Northern Ireland

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To help us identify responses from different types of people, please answer the questions in this section

38. What is your gender? (please select **one** answer only)

- Male Female

40. How old are you? (please select **one** answer only)

- Under 16 16-19 20-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

41. What ethnic group do you consider yourself to be from? (please select **one** answer only)

- White Bangladeshi Black African Mixed ethnicity
 Irish Traveller Pakistani Black Other Other ethnicity
 Indian Black Caribbean Chinese Prefer not to say

42. What is your marital status? (please select **one** answer only)

- Single In a civil partnership Divorced / separated
 Married / living as married Widowed Prefer not to say

43. Do you consider yourself to be disabled? (Please select **one** only)

- Yes (go to Q.44) No (go to Q.47)

44. What is the nature of your disability? (Please select **all** answers that apply)

- Sensory impairment Mental health difficulty Multiple impairments
 Physical impairment Learning disability Prefer not to say

45. Do you require additional support to access facilities?

- Yes No

46. Do you require additional support to access training?

- Yes No

47. What is your employment status? (please select **one** answer only)

- Employed (over 30hrs/week) Employed (under 8hrs/week) Unemployed Student
 Employed (8-29 hrs/week) Retired Full-time in the home Prefer not to say

48. What is your highest level of educational qualification? (please select **one** answer only)

- GCSE/NVQ Level 2, O-Level/CSE Grade 1, Senior Cert, BTEC, BEC Bachelor degree or equivalent
 GCSE or equivalent, including English and Maths Masters/PhD or equivalent
 BTEC (National), TEC (National), BEC (National), ONC, OND Vocational qualifications
 GCE A-Level (inc. NVQ Level 3) No formal qualifications
 BTEC (Higher), BEC (Higher), TEC (Higher), HNC, HND Other (please specify)

49. What is your religious denomination? (please select **one** answer only)

- Protestant Muslim Other
 Catholic Hindu None
 Jewish Sikh Prefer not to say

50. Are you happy to be contacted by SNI and its research partner for the purpose of further research into coaching?

- Yes No

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Focus Group Questions

1. **Coaches in Northern Ireland have highlighted ‘balancing coaching with conflicting demands’ as a significant issue which affects individual’s coaches. What are these demands? How do these conflicting demands impact on your ability to coach?**
 {Prompts: Work/life balance (family, social life)? Other coaching role(s)/job(s)?
Bureaucracy – Has it increased? Who creates this (club, governing body, local authority, etc.)?
Future Opportunities – How will more paid coaching opportunities affect this? Is there anything that can be done to lessen such demands?}
2. **How does the financial cost of coaching affect your coaching role?**
 {Prompts: Funding cuts? Cost of training/renewal of qualifications/equipment/expenses?
 Funding from local authority, governing body etc? Do coaches earn enough? Is it proportional to the cost of coaching?}
3. **Do you think there is a shortage of volunteers/coaches? How does this impact on sport coaching in your area?**
 {Prompts: Lack of support/interest? Is there a need for more paid coaching opportunities?
 How can more volunteers be recruited? Volunteers not suitably qualified? How will the current financial climate affect this?}
4. **Do you perceive the majority of coaches/volunteers to be suitably qualified?**
 {Prompts: Are coaching courses readily available? Does suitable training and development exist?
 Are there any skills gaps? How can the standard of coaching be improved?}
5. **How would you describe the provision and quality of sports facilities in your area? Are there enough facilities? Do they require improvements?**
 (Prompts: Are you able to access good facilities? Do these facilities cater for your sport? How do such issues affect your ability to coach? Can anything be done to improve this in the current financial climate?)
6. **How would you describe the support you receive from governing bodies and local authorities?**
 {Prompts: Do you receive any/enough support (financial or other support for coaching)? Do you expect to receive more support – if so why? What do you expect from your governing body or local authority? How will you deal with potentially less financial support in future?}
7. **What are the opportunities for coaching and coaches in the future, particularly in the current financial climate?**
 {Prompts: Increasing participation rates? More paid coaching opportunities? Increased interest in sport as a result of 2012? Promotion of sport as a part of a healthy lifestyle – initiatives linked to this? Better qualifications?}
8. **What are the critical issues which determine your continuation as a coach in future? Do you intend to continue coaching?**
 {Prompts: Pay? CPD? Funding? Better qualifications?}

The Project Steering Group

Sport Northern Ireland would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Project Steering Group members who have invested considerable time and effort into ensuring that The Coaching Workforce Survey is the most comprehensive and robust piece of research on coaching ever conducted in Northern Ireland.

Sport Northern Ireland

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About Sport Northern Ireland

Sport Northern Ireland is the leading public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland. Its corporate vision is: *“a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport which contributes to a peaceful, fair and prosperous society”*.

This document is available in other accessible formats on request, and online at www.sportni.net

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

