

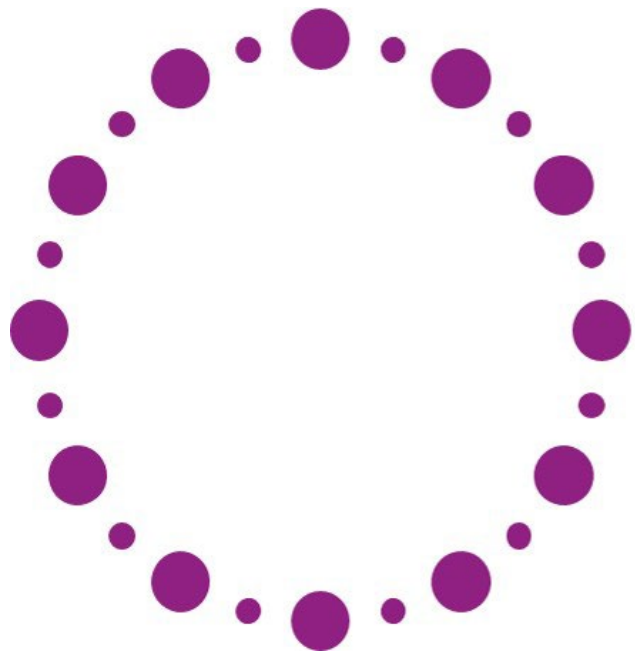
census
2021



Census 2021

**Population and household
estimates for Northern Ireland**

May 2022



Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is an executive agency within the Department of Finance.

Census Office within NISRA conducts the census of population and housing every 10 years, which every household in Northern Ireland must complete by law. It is used by central and local government, health and education authorities and other organisations to plan and provide future services.

National Statistics

In May 2022, following a full assessment, the United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#) and the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

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Further enquiries

The data included in this report is available online at www.nisra.gov.uk/census2021. All queries relating to its statistical or data content and requests for further information should be addressed to Customer Services at:

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Census 2021
Population and household estimates for Northern Ireland

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under:
Section 4(1) of the Census Act (Northern Ireland) 1969
by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

24 May 2022

A National Statistics Publication

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Introduction

This publication is the first report from the 2021 Census of population and housing for Northern Ireland. The report has been produced in accordance with the provisions of the [Census Act \(Northern Ireland\) 1969](#), the [Census Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#), and the [Census Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#). As a statutory report, it relates to the conduct of Census 2021 in Northern Ireland, which was taken with a reference date of 21 March 2021.

This report provides estimates of the usually resident population of Northern Ireland, on census day. The population estimates presented are by five-year age bands and sex. Complementary population estimates, disaggregated by age and sex, for each Local Government District, will be published and laid before the Assembly later in 2022.

The census day population estimates will be followed by the publication of key summary statistics for each of the main census topics for Northern Ireland and each of the 11 Local Government Districts within Northern Ireland. These statistics will also be laid before the Assembly in report form.

Further statistics will be published in a series of pre-defined tables, presenting more detailed data for all census topics. A timetable for the release of all census results is included in the [Census 2021 outputs prospectus](#).

This report was made possible by the co-operation of the public in responding to the census; the commitment of the census field and headquarter staff, and the assistance of many other people and organisations throughout all aspects of the census. The Registrar General for Northern Ireland, who is responsible for the planning, conduct and reporting of the census, would like to thank all of those who contributed to the census.

Conduct of the census

Results from Census 2021 relate to census day, 21 March 2021. The census placed a legal obligation on every householder, and all managers and residents in communal establishments, to make a census return. Obligations were also placed on owners of vacant properties.

Census returns could be made online, by a paper questionnaire, or via telephone. In 2021, for the first time the majority of the public made their census returns online.

The census was followed by a [Census Coverage Survey \(CCS\)](#), an independent enumeration of people in a sample of small areas throughout Northern Ireland. The results of the CCS were combined with data collected from the census in order to allow statistical estimates to be made of the small number of households and people missed by the census. The population estimates presented here, as with all forthcoming census outputs from Census 2021, are designed to reflect the full population of Northern Ireland.

Population base

Unless otherwise stated, all tables in this report relate to the usually resident population on census day, 21 March 2021.

Confidentiality

Census Office has taken steps to ensure that the confidentiality of respondents is fully protected. All published results from the census have been subject to statistical processes to ensure that individuals cannot be identified. For more information, please refer to the [statistical disclosure control methodology](#).

Rounding

The population estimates in this report have been presented in rounded form. This is because census returns will be subjected to further complex statistical processes to ensure respondent confidentiality in future releases. This may result in some marginal changes to numbers to protect confidentiality.

Any changes introduced by these processes are likely to be small and within the limits of the rounding applied. The numbers presented in this report may also not sum to the total as figures have been individually rounded.

Further information

A number of [supporting documents](#) are available on the census pages of the NISRA website. These documents describe the census methodology in more detail, the quality assurance processes applied, the paper questionnaire used in the census, and census outputs definitions.

More detailed results from Census 2021 will be published over the coming months. These will also be accompanied by supporting information, including coverage and quality reports, and an evaluation of the conduct of the census.

Census definitions

Key census outputs definitions on usually resident population, households and communal establishments are given below:

Usual resident of the UK

A usual resident of the UK is anyone who, on 21 March 2021:

- is in the UK and is staying in the UK for a period of 3 months or more; or
- has a permanent UK address and is outside the UK and is staying outside the UK for less than 12 months.

Household

A household is either:

- one person living alone; or
- a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room, sitting room or dining area.

Communal establishment

A communal establishment is an establishment providing managed residential accommodation. 'Managed' in this context means full-time or part-time supervision of the accommodation. The communal establishment resident figures also include people who were sleeping rough.

Population and household estimates tables

Table 1: Usually resident population by five year age bands and sex

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

	Persons	Females	Males
All usual residents	1,903,100	967,000	936,200
0-4 years	113,800	55,400	58,500
5-9 years	124,500	60,800	63,700
10-14 years	126,900	62,000	65,000
15-19 years	113,200	55,100	58,100
20-24 years	111,400	53,900	57,500
25-29 years	116,400	58,500	57,900
30-34 years	126,000	64,800	61,200
35-39 years	127,300	65,600	61,700
40-44 years	122,200	62,900	59,300
45-49 years	121,700	61,600	60,100
50-54 years	131,000	67,000	64,000
55-59 years	129,200	65,500	63,800
60-64 years	113,000	57,700	55,400
65-69 years	93,500	47,200	46,300
70-74 years	83,500	43,100	40,300
75-79 years	66,400	35,600	30,700
80-84 years	43,800	24,800	19,000
85-89 years	25,900	15,900	10,000
90+ years	13,500	9,600	4,000

Note: 'Age' is age at last birthday.

Table 2: Usually resident population by broad age bands and sex

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

	Persons	Females	Males
All usual residents	1,903,100	967,000	936,200
0-14 years	365,200	178,200	187,100
15-39 years	594,300	298,000	296,400
40-64 years	617,100	314,700	302,400
65+ years	326,500	176,200	150,300

Note: 'Age' is age at last birthday.

Table 3: Usually resident population by residence type

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

All usual residents	1,903,100
Usually resident population living in households	1,876,800
Usually resident population living in communal establishments	26,300

Table 4: Average household size

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

Usually resident population: Households	1,876,800
Households	768,900
Average household size	2.44

Note: Average household size is a calculation of the usually resident population living in households divided by the number of households.

Table 5: Population density

The number of usual residents is rounded to the nearest 100.

All usual residents	1,903,100
Area (hectares)	1,354,665
Population density	1.40

Note: Population density is a calculation of the usually resident population divided by the land area measurement – i.e. the number of usual residents per hectare.

Table 6: Usually resident population by broad age bands – 1851-2021

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 for Census 2021.

Year	All usual residents	Aged 0-14 years	Aged 15-39 years	Aged 40-64 years	Aged 65+ years
1851	1,440,835	511,583	570,080	293,151	64,941
1861	1,396,183	470,662	552,511	297,844	74,635
1871	1,359,190	475,868	515,242	282,578	84,861
1881	1,304,816	445,491	497,327	279,847	81,064
1891	1,236,056	391,495	488,994	278,698	76,543
1901	1,236,952	380,083	505,960	275,621	75,288
1911	1,250,531	380,162	491,759	267,660	110,950
1926	1,256,561	364,405	486,772	303,568	101,816
1937	1,279,745	346,905	499,340	317,872	115,628
1951	1,370,921	378,737	494,239	362,952	134,993
1961	1,425,042	412,134	476,647	392,402	143,859
1966	1,484,775	438,912	488,445	401,252	156,166
1971	1,536,065	456,997	512,242	400,842	165,984
1981 Census	1,481,959	384,306	547,147	372,367	178,139
1981 MYE	1,542,964	414,560	564,377	376,369	187,658
1991 Census	1,577,836	385,275	588,712	404,797	199,052
1991 MYE	1,607,295	391,749	597,360	409,912	208,274
2001	1,685,267	370,952	610,446	480,544	223,325
2011	1,810,863	354,703	618,452	573,988	263,720
2021	1,903,100	365,200	594,300	617,100	326,500

Note:

1. 'Age' is age at last birthday.
2. Up to 1971, the census statistics are the mid-year population estimates (MYEs) for the relevant census year. The MYEs for 1981 and 1991 differ from the census statistics to allow for estimated census under-enumeration. Accordingly, the information presented in these tables for 1981 and 1991 include the MYEs alongside the census results. From 2001, the census has included an estimate for under-enumeration in the published statistics and as such no MYE is presented.
3. Prior to 1926, the census was taken on an all-Ireland basis. The Northern Ireland census figures presented for 1851 to 1911 are a summation of the constituent counties, the Belfast County Borough and, where necessary, the separate statistics for Carrickfergus.

Table 7: Households, household residents and average household size – 1851-2021

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 for Census 2021.

Census year	Households	Usually resident population: Households	Average household size
1851	274,721	1,424,141	5.18
1861	277,557	1,386,260	4.99
1871	275,504	1,346,088	4.89
1881	263,340	1,288,577	4.89
1891	259,263	1,220,052	4.71
1901	265,184	1,218,799	4.60
1911	269,093	1,230,692	4.57
1926	262,940	1,192,887	4.54
1937	296,288	1,228,991	4.15
1951	329,050	1,320,863	4.01
1961	372,793	1,378,454	3.70
1966	399,149	1,441,709	3.61
1971	427,434	1,489,784	3.49
1981	462,319	1,461,153	3.16
1991	530,369	1,554,538	2.93
2001	626,718	1,658,813	2.65
2011	703,275	1,788,339	2.54
2021	768,900	1,876,800	2.44

Note:

1. Average household size is a calculation of the usually resident population living in households divided by the number of households.
2. The definition of a 'household' changes over time. 'Household' data for 1851 to 1911 relate to 'households' in all structures designed for habitation (including communal dwellings such as workhouses). For 1926 to 1951, 'household' data relate to inhabited houses, while for 1961 onwards 'household' data relate broadly to today's definition of a 'household'.
3. 'Household' data for 1851 to 1911 are taken from the 1951 Census General Report. Data for 1926 onwards are taken from each individual census report.
4. Prior to 1926, the census was taken on an all-Ireland basis. The Northern Ireland census figures presented for 1851 to 1911 are a summation of the constituent counties, the Belfast County Borough and, where necessary, the separate statistics for Carrickfergus.