

census
2021

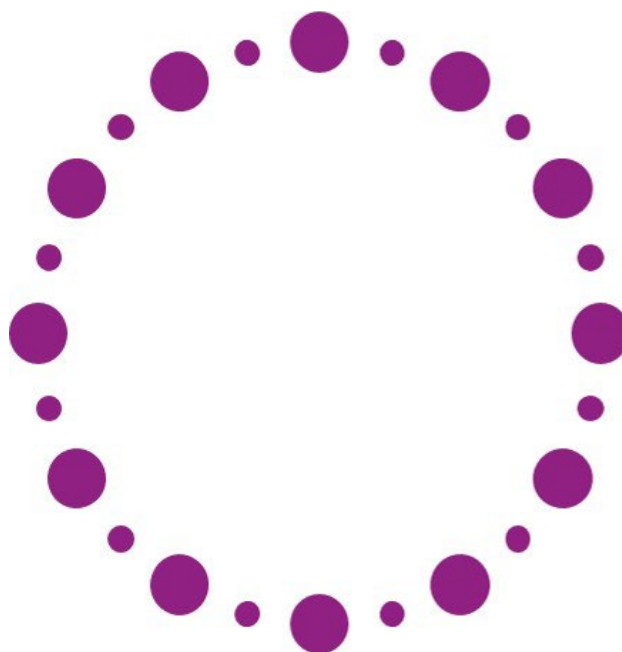


Main statistics for Northern Ireland

Statistical bulletin

Household spaces and accommodation

15 December 2022



[nisra.gov.uk/Census2021](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/Census2021)

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1. Introduction

On 15 December 2022, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) released further results from Census 2021, held on 21 March 2021. The statistics released provide a profile of the Northern Ireland population covering:

- **Housing:** vacant housing, type of accommodation, household adaptations, type of central heating, renewable energy systems, housing tenure and car ownership; and
- **Health, disability and unpaid care:** general health, limiting long term illness, types of condition and provision of unpaid care

The information covers Northern Ireland and the 11 Local Government Districts (LGDs).

This **household spaces and accommodation** report covers the topics, household spaces (occupied or vacant), accommodation type (for example, detached, semi-detached), housing adaptations (for example, adapted for wheelchair use), type of central heating available to household (for example, oil, gas etc.) and renewable energy systems available to the household (for example, solar panels etc.).

For display purposes figures are appropriately rounded, however, full figures are available in the [Census 2021 tables](#) on the NISRA website.

2. Key points

The key points relating to the **household spaces and accommodation** topic are as follows:

2.1. Household spaces

- On census day 2021, there were 768,800 occupied households across Northern Ireland. There were a further 52,300 vacant households, giving a total of 821,100 household spaces in Northern Ireland.
- Census 2021 shows that the overall Northern Ireland level of vacant households stood at 6.4%.
- The highest vacancy level across Northern Ireland was in the Causeway Coast & Glens Local Government District at 13.5% or 9,000 vacant households.

2.2. Accommodation type

- For the first time in a Northern Ireland census, more than 500,000 occupied households were recorded as living in detached or semi-detached accommodation.
- The number of households living in a flat, maisonette or apartment has risen markedly over the decade. In 2021, 77,300 households lived in a flat, maisonette or apartment (10.0% of all households), compared to 62,600 households (8.9%) in 2011 – an overall increase of 23.5%.

2.3. Household adaptations

- Around one household in six (17.2% or 132,400 households) was designed or adapted to cater for a person with a health problem or disability.
- Internal wheelchair use was the most common type of adaptation, at 9.0% of all households (69,200 households).

- The number of households with an adaptation has increased from 84,700 in 2011 to 132,400 in 2021, an overall increase of over 50%.

2.4. Central heating

- The most common type of central heating system is oil heating with 480,600 households (or 62.5%) having access to this type of central heating system (either solely or in combination with another system).
- Second to that is mains gas heating with 256,500 households (or 33.4%) having access to this heating system (solely or in combination with another system).
- In total 2,400 households in the 2021 Census (0.3% of all households) had no access to a central heating system. The 2021 Census continues the downward trend in this statistic. For comparison in 1991, 17.3% of households had no access to a central heating system.
- There is variation across Local Government Districts (LGDs) in the type of systems available. For example, of the 256,500 households with access to a mains gas system, 111,000 (or 43.3%) are in Belfast LGD.

2.5. Renewable energy systems

- This is the first time a question on renewable energy systems has been asked in the Census. In total over 5% of households had one or more renewable energy systems installed.
- In total around 47,800 renewable energy systems are installed in 40,400 households across Northern Ireland.
- The most common systems are solar panels for electricity (24,200 households) and solar panels for heating water (18,600 households).
- Access to renewable energy systems varies by Local Government District. The highest levels of installation were in Fermanagh & Omagh and Newry, Mourne & Down, where around 7.5% of households had one or more

renewable energy systems. The lowest levels were in Belfast, where 3.3% of households had one or more renewable energy systems

3. Household spaces

Census 2021 is a census of both population and housing. Therefore information was collected for individuals and household spaces. It is important to fully understand how household spaces are defined and how this relates to the terms 'occupied households' and 'vacant households' used in this bulletin. This is described in the box below.

Definition of Household spaces, occupied and vacant households

A **household space** is the accommodation used or available for use by a household. It is the combination of occupied household spaces and unoccupied household spaces.

Occupied household spaces are those with usual residents. In this bulletin they are referred to as '**occupied households**'.

Unoccupied household spaces are those with no usual residents. In this bulletin they are referred to as '**vacant households**'. It should be noted that some vacant households may have short-term visitors living there (visitors are people who are not usually resident).

3.1. Household spaces – Census 2021

On census day 2021, there were 768,800 occupied households across Northern Ireland. There were a further 52,300 vacant households, giving a total of 821,100 household spaces in Northern Ireland. This is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Number and percentage of household spaces by type (Census 2021)

Type of household space	Total	Percentage
Occupied households	768,800	93.6%
Vacant households	52,300	6.4%
All household spaces	821,100	100.0%

In total 6.4% of all household spaces are vacant households (i.e. have no usual residents). A small number of vacant households will have short-term visitors staying in them but the majority will be wholly unoccupied.

The census does not collect information on the nature of vacant accommodation – whether it is a holiday home or other form of second home, rental to visitors, unoccupied due to the death of the previous occupant, for sale etc.

3.2. Household spaces by Local Government District – Census 2021

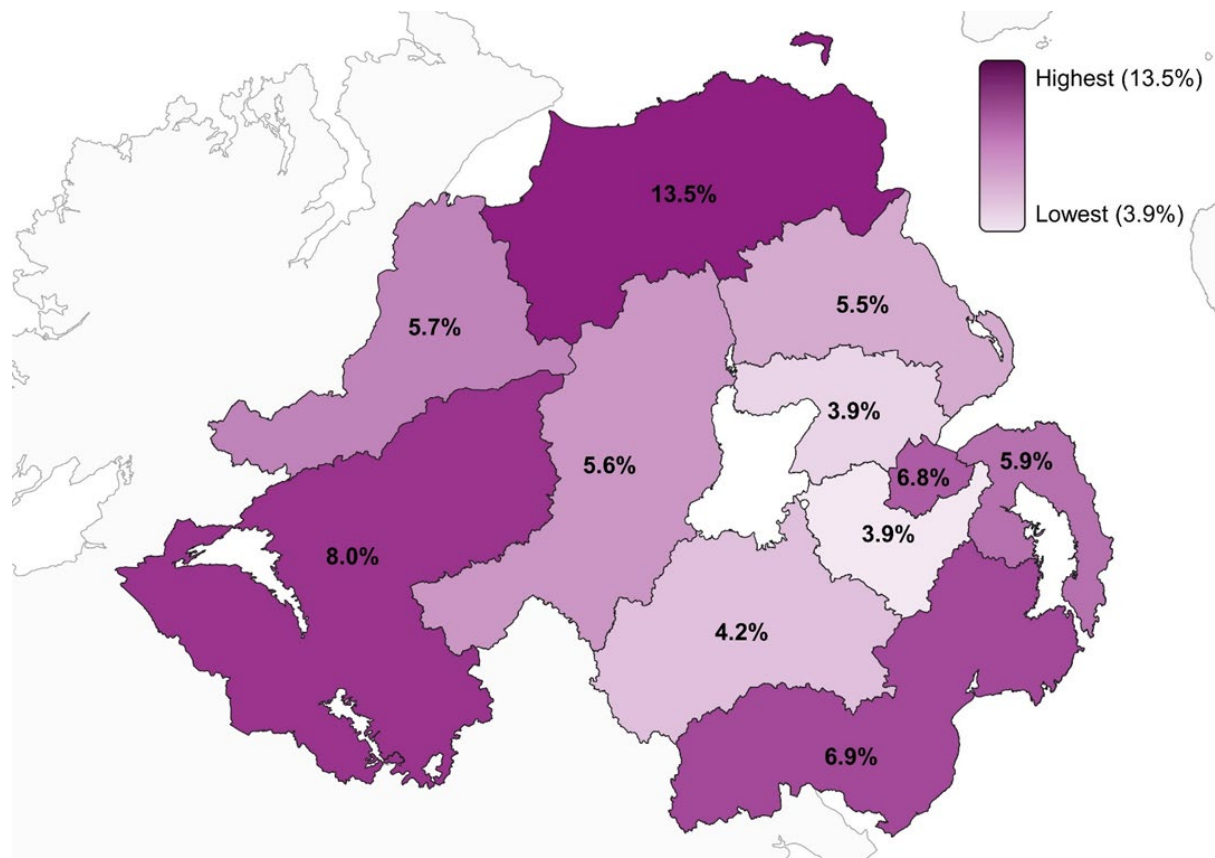
Table 2 shows the distribution of vacant households across all 11 Local Government Districts (LGDs).

Table 2: Household spaces, vacant households and percentage vacant by LGD (Census 2021)

Geography	Total household spaces	Vacant households	Percentage vacant
Antrim & Newtownabbey	61,900	2,400	3.9%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	88,400	3,700	4.2%
Belfast	160,200	10,900	6.8%
Causeway Coast & Glens	66,500	9,000	13.5%
Derry City & Strabane	64,600	3,700	5.7%
Fermanagh & Omagh	49,700	4,000	8.0%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	62,600	2,400	3.9%
Mid & East Antrim	61,700	3,400	5.5%
Mid Ulster	57,200	3,200	5.6%
Newry, Mourne & Down	73,500	5,100	6.9%
Ards & North Down	74,800	4,400	5.9%
Northern Ireland	821,100	52,300	6.4%

The percentage of vacant households is also shown in Figure 1. The map points to areas associated with tourism namely Causeway Coast & Glens (13.5%) and Fermanagh & Omagh (8.0%) LGDs having the largest percentage of vacant households.

Figure 1: Percentage of household spaces that are vacant households by LGD (Census 2021)



4. Accommodation type (occupied households)

4.1. Questions asked

Census 2021 included questions on accommodation type (type of property – detached, terrace, flat etc.). The questions are presented in Figure 2 (online) and Figure 3 (paper).

Figure 2: Census 2021 online questionnaire – accommodation type

What type of accommodation is this?

- Whole house or bungalow
- Flat, maisonette or apartment
Including purpose-built flats and flats within converted and shared houses
- Caravan or other mobile or temporary structure

Which of the following is your house or bungalow?

- Detached
- Semi-detached
- Terraced
Including end-terrace

Where is your flat, maisonette or apartment?

- In a purpose-built block of flats
- Part of a converted or shared house
Including bedsits
- In a commercial building
For example, in an office building, hotel, or over a shop

Figure 3: Census 2021 paper questionnaire – accommodation type

H7 What type of accommodation is this?

A whole house or bungalow that is:

- detached
- semi-detached
- terraced (including end-terrace)

A flat, maisonette or apartment that is:

- in a purpose-built block of flats
- part of a converted or shared house (including bedsits)
- in a commercial building (for example in an office building, hotel, or over a shop)

A mobile or temporary structure:

- a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure

4.2. Accommodation type – Census 2021

Table 3 shows that in Census 2021, detached properties were the largest group - with 290,000 occupied households living in detached properties, or 37.7% of all occupied households in Northern Ireland.

Table 3: Number and percentage of occupied households by accommodation type (Census 2021)

Accommodation type	Occupied households	Percentage
Detached	290,000	37.7%
Semi-detached	228,500	29.7%
Terraced	171,900	22.4%
Flat, maisonette or apartment	77,300	10.0%
Caravan or mobile structure	1,100	0.1%
Total	768,800	100.0%

4.3. Accommodation type by Local Government District – Census 2021

The statistics show variation of accommodation type across Local Government Districts (LGDs) in Northern Ireland. A couple of examples are:

- while just under 38% of occupied households across Northern Ireland are detached houses, this varies from 12.3% of households in Belfast LGD to 61.1% of households in Fermanagh & Omagh LGD; and
- in contrast, while 10% of occupied households across Northern Ireland are flats, maisonettes or apartments, this varies from as little as 4.4% of households in Mid Ulster LGD to 19.7% of households in Belfast LGD.

4.4. Accommodation type – change over time

Over the last decade, Census 2011 to Census 2021, there has been a 23.5% increase in the number of flats, maisonettes or apartments in Northern Ireland (up by 14,700 occupied households in ten years). This is shown in Table 4. In contrast, the number of occupied terraced properties has fallen by 1.7% (fall of 2,900 occupied households) over the last decade.

Table 4: Occupied households by accommodation type (Census 2011 and 2021)

Accommodation type	Census 2011	Census 2021	Percentage change
Detached	264,300	290,000	+9.7%
Semi-detached	200,600	228,500	+13.9%
Terraced	174,900	171,900	-1.7%
Flat, maisonette or apartment	62,600	77,300	+23.5%
Caravan or mobile structure	900	1,100	+16.8%
All occupied households	703,300	768,800	+9.3%

A question on accommodation type has been included in each census since 1991. The change over the last thirty years is shown in Table 5a (number), and Table 5b and Figure 4 (percentage) below.

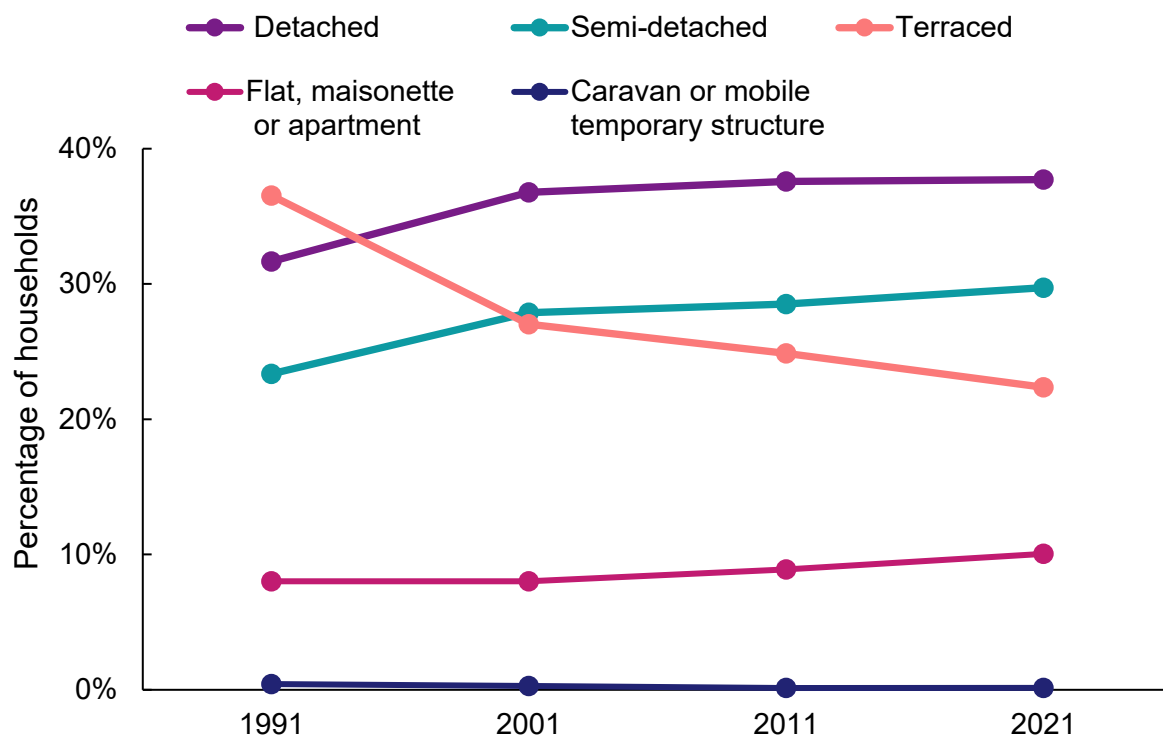
Table 5a: Occupied households by accommodation type (1991-2021 Censuses)

Accommodation type	Census 1991	Census 2001	Census 2011	Census 2021
Detached	167,900	230,400	264,300	290,000
Semi-detached	123,900	174,800	200,600	228,500
Terraced	193,800	169,400	174,900	171,900
Flat, maisonette or apartment	42,500	50,300	62,600	77,300
Caravan or mobile structure	2,300	1,800	900	1,100
All occupied households	530,400	626,700	703,300	768,800

Table 5b: Percentage of occupied households by accommodation type (1991-2021 Censuses)

Accommodation type	Census 1991	Census 2001	Census 2011	Census 2021
Detached	31.7%	36.8%	37.6%	37.7%
Semi-detached	23.4%	27.9%	28.5%	29.7%
Terraced	36.5%	27.0%	24.9%	22.4%
Flat, maisonette or apartment	8.0%	8.0%	8.9%	10.0%
Caravan or mobile structure	0.4%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
All occupied households	530,400	626,700	703,300	768,800

Figure 4: Percentage of occupied households by accommodation type (1991-2021 Censuses)



The data points to a marked change in the nature of the housing stock over the last thirty years. The figures also suggest a move over the longer term towards living in detached or semi-detached houses.

5. Adaptation of accommodation (occupied households)

5.1. Questions asked

Census 2021 included a question on adaptations of accommodation. The question is presented in Figure 5 (online) and Figure 6 (paper).

Figure 5: Census 2021 online questionnaire – adaptation of accommodation

Has this accommodation been designed or adapted to help people with special requirements?

Select all that apply

Internal wheelchair usage
For example a downstairs bathroom

External wheelchair access
For example a ramp

Other physical or mobility difficulties

Visual difficulties

Hearing difficulties

Other

or

None of these

Figure 6: Census 2021 paper questionnaire – adaptation of accommodation

H8 Has this accommodation been designed or adapted for:

↻ Tick all that apply.

internal wheelchair usage (for example a downstairs bathroom)?

external wheelchair access (for example a ramp)?

other physical or mobility difficulties?

visual difficulties?

hearing difficulties?

other, write in

no adaptations

5.2. Adaptation of accommodation – Census 2021

The question on adaptations to accommodation in the census was a multi-tick question, therefore households could indicate one or more adaptations.

Table 6 below shows the reported number of adaptations made to the accommodation for all occupied households in Northern Ireland.

Table 6: Occupied households by number of adaptations (Census 2021)

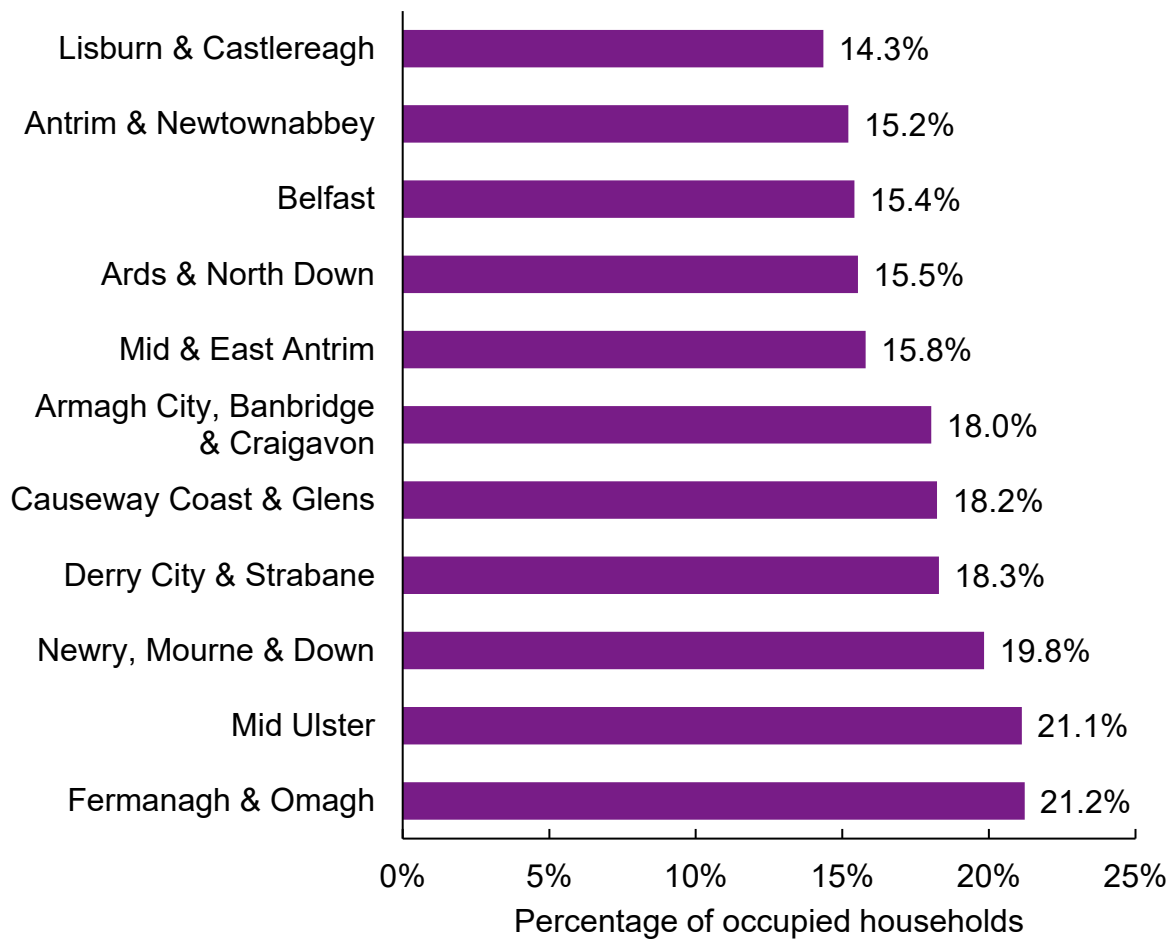
Number of adaptations made	Occupied households	Percentage
No adaptations	636,400	82.8%
1 or more adaptations	132,400	17.2%
1 adaptation	87,200	11.3%
2 adaptations	34,700	4.5%
3 adaptations	8,800	1.1%
4 or more adaptations	1,700	0.2%
Total	768,800	100.0%

The majority of occupied households have no reported adaptations (82.8% of all households). In contrast, 17.2% of all households have reported one or more types of adaptation. Within this, nearly 6% of households had two or more adaptations (45,200 households). The figures point to accommodation that is adapted tending to have had a number of adaptations made (with around one-third of all households with an adaptation having more than one made).

5.3. Adaptation of accommodation by Local Government District – Census 2021

Figure 7 shows the percentage of occupied households in each Local Government District (LGD) that have one or more adaptations to their accommodation. The figure shows that six LGDs have levels higher than the Northern Ireland average (17.2%), with Fermanagh & Omagh having the highest level, at 21.2%. The LGD with the lowest percentage was Lisburn & Castlereagh with 14.3%.

Figure 7: Percentage of occupied households with adaptations to their accommodation by LGD (Census 2021)



5.4. Adaptations to accommodation – Change over time

A household adaptation question was also asked in the 2011 Census, however the form of the question changed for the 2021 Census. Therefore the only comparable statistics relate to the number and percentage of households that have any type of adaptation.

Table 7 shows the total number of occupied households with an adaptation in Census 2011 and Census 2021.

Table 7: Number and percentage of households with an adaptation (Census 2011 and 2021)

Adaptations made	Households 2011	Percentage	Households 2021	Percentage
No adaptation	618,600	88.0%	636,400	82.8%
Some adaptation (one or more)	84,700	12.0%	132,400	17.2%
Total	703,300	100.0%	768,800	100.0%

The figures show that the number of households with an adaptation has increased by 56.4%, from 84,700 households in 2011 to 132,400 households in 2021. The percentage of households with an adaptation has increased from 12.0% in 2011 to 17.2% in 2021.

The scale of this change points to a marked improvement in housing stock on this measure over the last decade.

5.5. Types of adaptations of accommodation – Census 2021

As mentioned, the question on adaptations of accommodation in the census was a multi-tick question, therefore households could indicate one or more adaptations. The analysis below presents statistics for adaptations, whether they exist solely or in combination with others.

Table 8 below shows the individual types of adaptations made to the accommodation for all occupied households in Northern Ireland.

**Table 8: Occupied households by type of adaptation of accommodation
(Census 2021)**

Type of adaptation	Households with this adaptation	Percentage of all households with this adaptation
Internal wheelchair use	69,200	9.0%
External wheelchair access	55,300	7.2%
Other physical or mobility difficulties	55,200	7.2%
Visual difficulties	3,600	0.5%
Hearing difficulties	5,600	0.7%
Other types of adaptation	1,900	0.2%

‘Internal wheelchair use’ is the most prevalent type of adaptation of all occupied households, at 9.0% of all households (69,200). In addition, 55,300 households have been adapted for ‘External wheelchair access’.

6. Central heating (occupied households)

6.1. Questions asked

Census 2021 included a question on central heating systems available. The question asked is presented in Figure 8 (online) and Figure 9 (paper).

Figure 8: Census 2021 online questionnaire – central heating

What type of central heating does this accommodation have?

Include central heating systems that generate heat for multiple rooms whether or not you use them

Select all that apply

- Oil
- Mains gas
- Tank or bottled gas
- Electric
For example storage heaters
- Wood
For example logs or waste wood
- Solid fuel
For example coal
- Renewable heating system
- Other central heating

Or

- No central heating

Figure 9: Census 2021 paper questionnaire – central heating

H9 What type of **central heating** does this accommodation have?

➤ Tick all that apply, whether or not you use it.

➤ Central heating is a central system that generates heat for multiple rooms.

- Oil
- Mains gas
- Tank or bottled gas
- Electric (for example storage heaters)
- Wood (for example logs or waste wood)
- Solid fuel (for example coal)
- Renewable heating system
- Other central heating
- No central heating

The analysis of the central heating question can produce statistics in two different ways. This is because households can have more than one type of central heating system available to them.

The first analysis is how many households have access to a type of central heating system, irrespective of whether they also have another form of central heating system. These statistics are entitled **Central heating (system based)** and in this classification a household can be counted in more than one group.

The second analysis is the exact nature of central heating that a household has. As an example if the household only has oil fired central heating then this is labelled 'oil only'. These statistics are entitled **Central heating (household based)**.

6.2. Central heating (system based) – Census 2021

This section outlines the main statistics for the system based measure, with figures shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Central heating systems available to the household (system based) (Census 2021)

Central heating (system based)	Occupied households
Oil	480,600
Mains gas	256,500
Solid fuel (for example coal)	80,700
Wood (for example logs or waste wood)	42,900
Electric (for example storage heaters)	29,200
Tank or bottled gas	14,800
Renewable heating system	5,600
Other central heating types	4,300

Table 9 shows that the most common type of central heating system available to households in Northern Ireland is oil, with 480,600 (or 62.5%) having this central heating system.

6.3. Central heating (system based) by Local Government District – Census 2021

The Local Government District (LGD) statistics show that there is variation in the type of central heating systems available. This is shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Percentage of NI households by LGD with selected central heating systems (Census 2021)

Geography	Percentage of NI households	Percentage of oil heating systems	Percentage of mains gas heating systems
Antrim & Newtownabbey	7.7%	7.0%	9.3%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	11.0%	14.2%	5.1%
Belfast	19.4%	6.8%	43.3%
Causeway Coast & Glens	7.5%	10.0%	2.6%
Derry City & Strabane	7.9%	9.1%	5.9%
Fermanagh & Omagh	5.9%	8.8%	0.3%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	7.8%	6.7%	10.1%
Mid & East Antrim	7.6%	7.7%	7.4%
Mid Ulster	7.0%	10.5%	0.4%
Newry, Mourne & Down	8.9%	12.3%	2.1%
Ards & North Down	9.2%	6.9%	13.5%
Northern Ireland	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

These statistics show the extent of the differences in central heating across Northern Ireland. For example, taking Tables 9 and 10 together shows that across Northern Ireland 256,500 households have a mains gas central heating system and 43.3% of these (111,000 households) are in the Belfast LGD – despite Belfast LGD making up 19.4% of all households in Northern Ireland.

However, to get a more complete picture, the second set of statistics shows the results from this question using the mutually exclusive Central Heating (household based) approach.

6.4. Central heating (household based) – Census 2021

Table 11 below shows the alternative statistics which classify the exact nature of central heating that a household has. Thus in the table below, if the household has oil fired central heating only then this is labelled 'oil only'. The statistics are entitled central heating (household based).

Table 11: Occupied households by central heating (household based) (Census 2021)

Central heating (household based)	Occupied households	Percentage
1 type of heating system	651,100	84.7%
Oil only	380,500	49.5%
Mains gas only	242,800	31.6%
Electric only	12,200	1.6%
Other <u>single</u> types of central heating system available	15,600	2.0%
2 or more types of heating system	115,300	15.0%
No central heating system	2,400	0.3%
Total	768,800	100.0%

Across Northern Ireland only 2,400 households in Census 2021 (0.3% of all households) had no access to any type of central heating system. There has been a marked change in this indicator over time.

In the 1991 Census, 91,700 households had no access to central heating (17.3% of households), by the 2001 Census 30,600 households had no access to central heating (4.9% of households) and by 2011 this had fallen to 3,800 households (0.5%). The 2021 Census continues this long-term downward trend. Again this shows the marked improvement in our housing stock over the last thirty years.

6.5. Central heating (household based) by Local Government Districts – Census 2021

Census 2021 data allows us to consider the importance of ‘oil only’ or ‘mains gas only’ central heating across the Local Government Districts (LGDs) in Northern Ireland. This is shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Percentage of occupied households with ‘oil only’ and ‘mains gas only’ central heating by LGD (Census 2021)

Geography	Occupied households	Oil only	Mains gas only
Antrim & Newtownabbey	59,500	47.4%	38.1%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	84,600	65.2%	14.5%
Belfast	149,200	20.2%	70.9%
Causeway Coast & Glens	57,600	62.9%	11.0%
Derry City & Strabane	60,900	54.4%	23.7%
Fermanagh & Omagh	45,700	65.0%	1.4%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	60,200	44.8%	41.0%
Mid & East Antrim	58,300	50.1%	30.8%
Mid Ulster	54,000	69.6%	1.6%
Newry, Mourne & Down	68,400	67.7%	7.5%
Ards & North Down	70,400	39.6%	45.6%
Northern Ireland	768,800	49.5%	31.6%

At the Northern Ireland level, 49.5% of occupied households (380,500) had ‘Oil only’ central heating. In comparison, 31.6% of occupied households (242,800) had ‘Mains gas only’ central heating.

Expressing the percentage of ‘Oil only’ households over ‘Mains gas only’ households gives a ratio which indicates the number of ‘Oil only’ households there are per ‘Mains gas only’ households. This gives a ratio of 1.6 ‘Oil only’ households to every 1 ‘Mains gas only’ household in Northern Ireland.

This ratio varies across the LGDs. In Fermanagh & Omagh there are 48 ‘Oil only’ households to every 1 ‘Mains gas only’ household, and in Belfast there are 0.3 ‘Oil only’ households to every 1 ‘Mains gas only’ household. This shows the relative importance of different systems across Northern Ireland.

7.2. Renewable energy systems – Census 2021

The Census 2021 question on renewable energy systems was a multi-tick. Therefore respondents could tick a number of options to indicate the types of renewable energy systems their household had access to.

Table 13 below shows statistics on occupied households categorised into whether they reported having a renewable energy system or not, irrespective of the number of systems.

The statistics show that across Northern Ireland, 5.3% of all households (or one household in nineteen) had a renewable energy system.

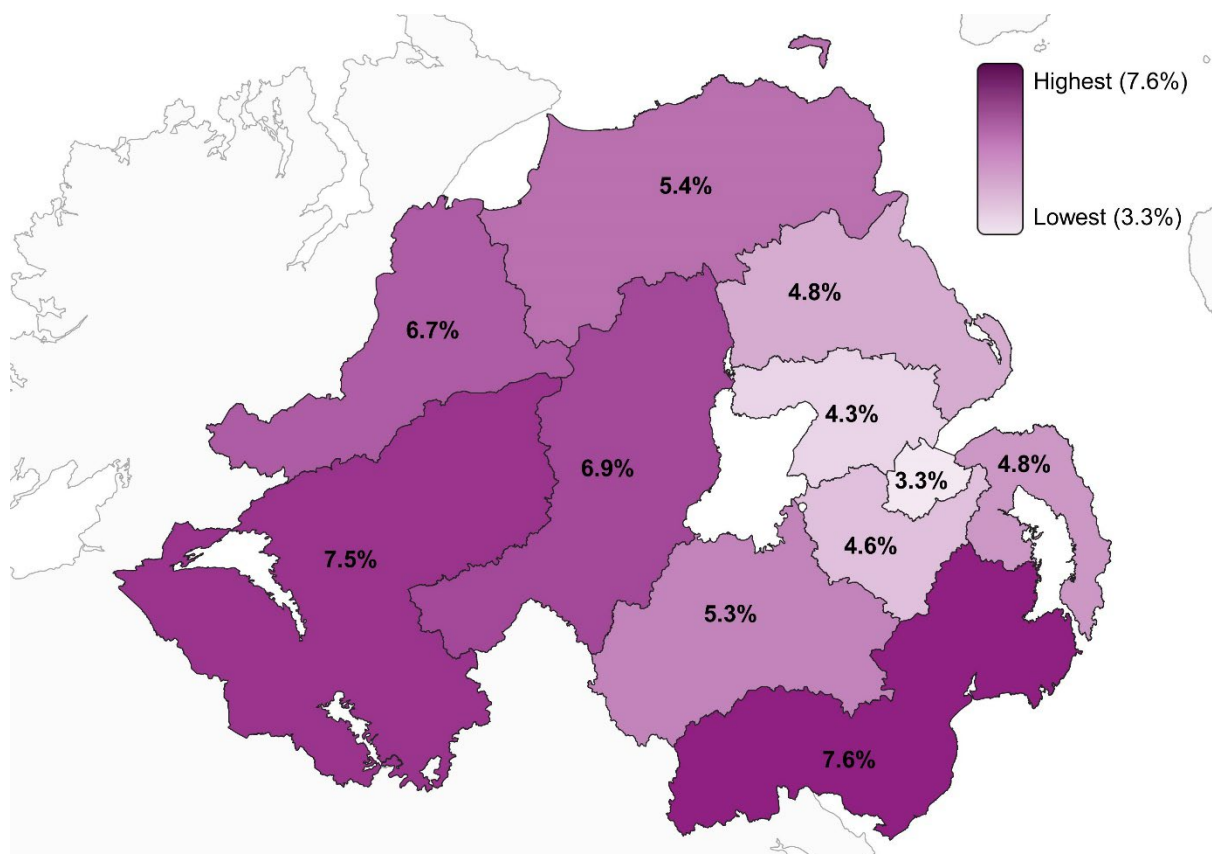
Table 13: Renewable energy systems available to the household (Census 2021)

Number of renewable energy systems available	Occupied households	Percentage
No renewable energy system	728,400	94.7%
1 or more renewable energy systems	40,400	5.3%
Total	768,800	100.0%

7.3. Renewable energy systems by Local Government District – Census 2021

Figure 12 shows how the percentage of occupied households with a renewable energy system varies across the Local Government Districts (LGDs) in Northern Ireland.

Figure 12: Percentage of households with renewable energy systems by LGD (Census 2021)



The presence of a renewable energy system varies markedly by LGD, with around 7.5% of households in Newry, Mourne & Down LGD and Fermanagh & Omagh LGD having a renewable energy system (one household in 13). In contrast, 3.3% of households in Belfast LGD (one household in 31) have a renewable energy system.

7.4. Types of renewable energy systems – Census 2021

As mentioned, the Census 2021 question on renewable energy systems was a multi-tick (i.e. respondents could tick a number of options to indicate the types of renewable energy systems their household had access to). In this section access to each system is reported individually, even if in combination with other systems.

Table 14 below shows the overall level of different types of system across Northern Ireland. In total, around 48,000 renewable energy systems are installed in households across Northern Ireland.

Table 14: Renewable energy systems available to the household (Census 2021)

Type of renewable energy system	Households with access
Solar panels for electricity	24,200
Solar panels for heating water	18,600
Biomass	1,300
Wind turbine	900
Air source	700
Geothermal	600
Other renewable energy system(s)	1,500
Total systems	47,800

The table above shows that the most common renewable energy systems are ‘solar panels for electricity’ and ‘solar panels for heating water’.

8. Associated outputs

[Census 2021 outputs on housing and accommodation](#) are available to download from the NISRA website, they include:

- MS-E04 Household spaces
- MS-E05 Accommodation type - usual residents
- MS-E06 Accommodation type - households
- MS-E07 Accommodation type - household spaces
- MS-E08 Number of adaptations to accommodation
- MS-E09 Adaptation of accommodation
- MS-E10 Car or van availability
- MS-E11 Central heating (household based) - (classification 1)
- MS-E12 Central heating (system based) - (classification 2)
- MS-E13 Renewable energy systems
- MS-E14 Tenure - usual residents
- MS-E15 Tenure – households

A series of [commissioned tables from the 2011 Census](#) have also been produced to support the commentary for Census 2021 outputs on housing and accommodation.

9. Further information

Census statistics are produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency free from political influence. 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](#). National Statistics status means that the statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The census plays a fundamental role in the provision of official statistics – census data are used to inform key policies, plan key services and allocate public funds.

9.1. Quality of the results

The census data collection operation was supported by an independent [coverage survey](#). The coverage survey along with administrative data and information from the field operation were combined to allow statistical estimates to be made of the small proportion of people who did not make a return. The statistical estimates discussed here, as with all Census 2021 outputs, reflect the full population of Northern Ireland.

Further information on accuracy, coverage and imputation is provided on the NISRA website in the [Census 2021 quality assurance report \(PDF 275 KB\)](#).

9.2. 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](#). These processes may result in very marginally different results between tables for the same statistic.

9.3. Comparability with previous censuses

The census is designed to provide the most accurate possible picture of the population on the day the census is taken. Whilst this report contains a small number of historical tables that give comparisons at the Northern Ireland level of some key statistics, users should be aware that comparisons may be affected by other differences, in particular, between the census questionnaires, impacts of issues of the day, etc.

As the last three censuses (2001, 2011 and 2021) were all adjusted for under-enumeration and reflect the Northern Ireland population on census day, this supports comparisons between those censuses.

9.4. Supporting material

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 a full list of definitions and output classifications.

9.5. More details

Further information on the statistics provided in this publication can be obtained from Census Customer Services at:

Telephone: 028 9025 5156
Email: census@nisra.gov.uk
Responsible Statistician: Dr David Marshall

This report was made possible by the co-operation of the public in responding to the census, the commitment of the census field and headquarters 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.

9.6. Copyright

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