

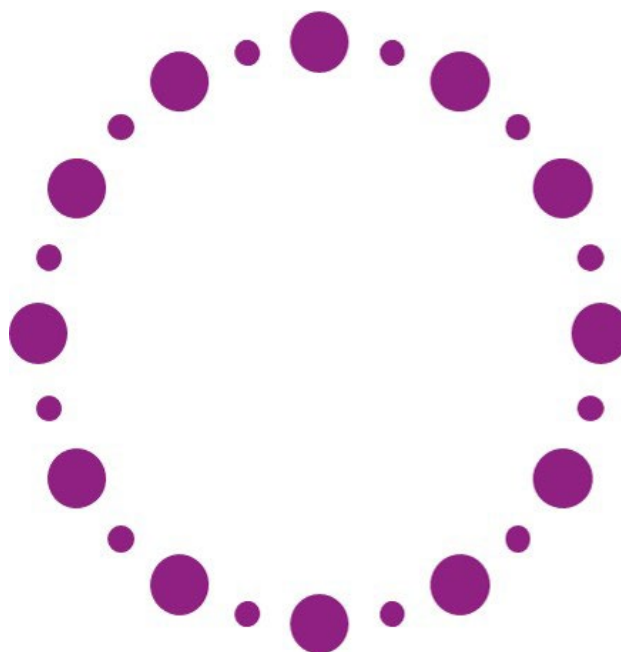
census
2021



Census 2021

Electoral Ward methodology paper

July 2024



www.nisra.gov.uk/census2021

1. Introduction

Census Office published a selection of [Census 2021 main statistics tables for Electoral Wards](#) on 30 November 2023. This paper gives details on the methodology used to create these statistics.

2. Electoral Wards 2014

Electoral wards are the spatial units used to elect local government councillors in Local Government Districts in Northern Ireland. There are 462 Electoral Wards (Wards2014) in Northern Ireland.

3. Methodology – Grid Square approximation

For Census 2021, Electoral Ward statistics have been produced using grid square approximation. Wards2014 were not considered to be suitable for creation from Data Zone approximation as not all areas met the five per cent accuracy requirement.

Since 1971, census statistics have been produced for 1km and/or 100m grids in Northern Ireland. The 100m grid has been used to approximate Wards2014 statistics. The approach taken was to publish statistics for the Wards2014 geography, rather than produce a grid square lookup. The reasons for this were to protect against disclosure by differencing and to minimise the effect of Cell Key Perturbation.

A number of rules were used in assigning 100m grid squares to Wards2014:

1. Where a grid square area is wholly located within the boundaries of a Ward, it is attributed to that Ward.
2. Where a grid square area is intersected by the boundaries of two or more Wards, it is attributed to the Ward containing the largest proportion of its Census 2021 usual resident population.

4. Exact count vs approximated count for Wards2014

More information is included in [Electoral Wards - exact count vs approximated count of usual residents for Census 2021 \(Excel, 38 KB\)](#), which shows the counts of Census 2021 usual residents both on an exact basis and resulting from the approximation methods outlined in this paper.