



# NISRA Geography Fact Sheet

December 2024

[www.nisra.gov.uk/geography](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/geography)

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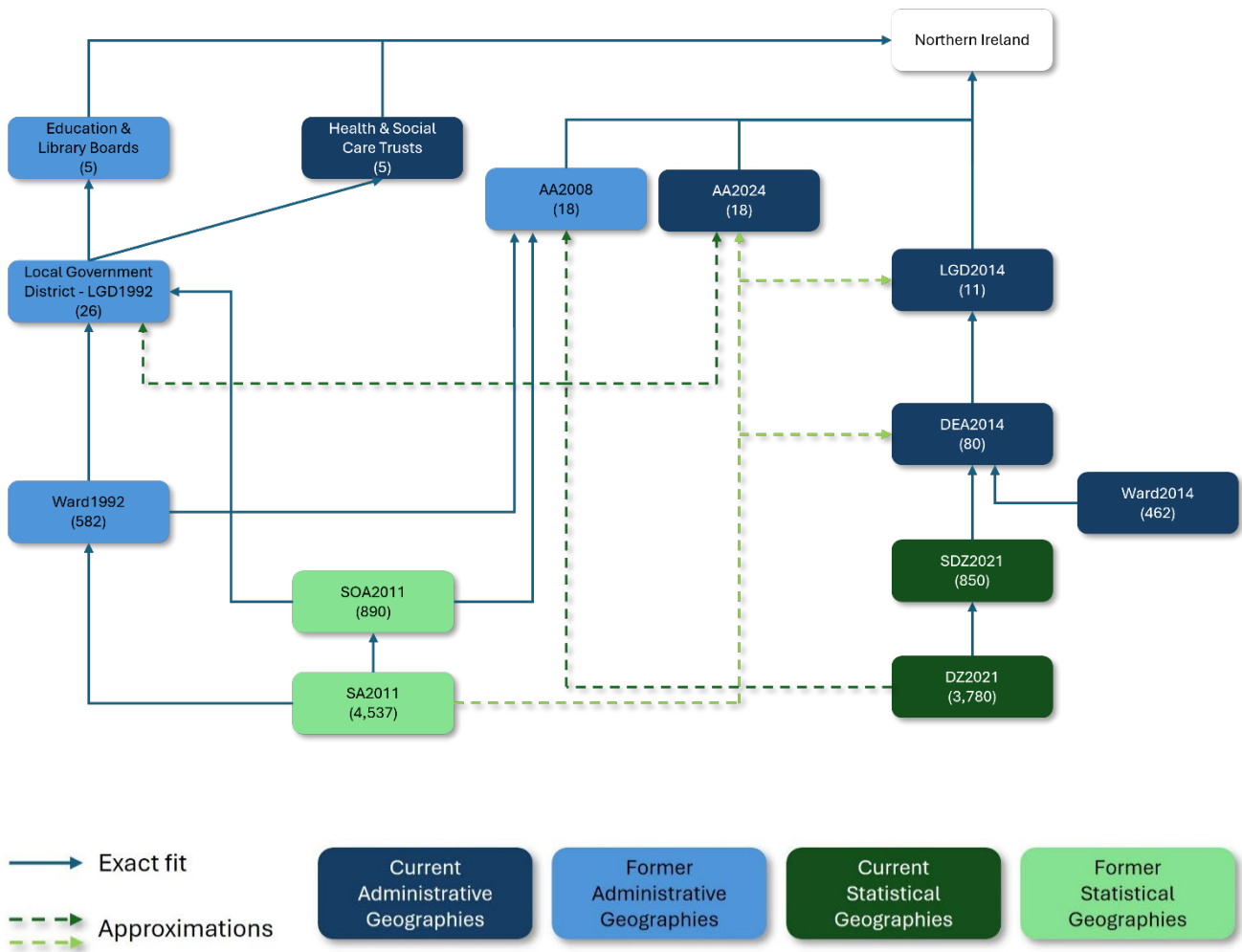
## 1. Introduction

Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency (NISRA) produce statistical outputs for a variety of geographies within Northern Ireland. These geographies range in size from small statistical output geographies such as Data Zones to large administrative geographies such as Local Government Districts.

Administrative geographies are hierarchies of areas relating to national and local government in the UK. This hierarchy is complicated because there are several layers, with a different structure in each constituent country of the UK. In addition, the boundaries of many of the layers in the hierarchy are subject to periodic or occasional change. In Northern Ireland, as with other UK countries smaller units have been created below the administrative areas for statistical purposes.

The diagram in Figure 1 shows how the statistical geographies fit within current and former administrative geographies in Northern Ireland.

**Figure 1:** How the statistical geographies fit within the administrative geographies in Northern Ireland



The two current statistical output geographies - Data Zone (DZ2021) and Super Data Zone (SDZ2021) were created to support the release of Census 2021 statistics. There are 3,780 Data Zones across Northern Ireland, which nest within the 850 Super Data Zones. These in turn nest within the 80 District Electoral Areas (DEA2014) and 11 Local Government Districts (LGD2014). This creates a four-level output geography hierarchy, which was used for the release of Census 2021 outputs.

Whilst Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT), Assembly Area (AA2024)/Parliamentary Constituency (PC2024), former Assembly Area (AA2008)/Parliamentary Constituency (PC2008) and former Local Government Districts (LGD1992) nest within Northern Ireland, Data Zones don't nest exactly within the HSCT, AA2024, former AA2008 and former LGD1992 areas. However, a Data Zone approximation can be used between Data Zone and HSCT, AA2024, former AA2008 and former LGD1992 areas. More information on the Data Zone approximation method and relevant lookups can be found on the [Census 2021 output geography information papers](#) webpage.

The two former statistical output geographies - Small Area (SA2011) and Super Output Area (SOA2011) were created to support the release of Census 2011 statistics. There are 4,537 Small Areas across Northern Ireland, which nest within the 890 Super Output Areas. These in turn nest within the 26 former Local Government Districts (LGD1992) and 18 former Assembly Areas (AA2008)/Parliamentary Constituencies (PC2008). Small areas also nest within the former Wards (Ward1992), which in turn nest within the 26 former Local Government Districts (LGD1992) and 18 former Assembly Areas (AA2008)/Parliamentary Constituencies (PC2008).

Whilst Small areas don't nest within the following, an approximation can be used between Small Area and each of them: AA2024, LGD2024, DEA2014 areas. An approximation can also be used between SOA2011 and LGD2014. More information on the Data Zone approximation method and relevant lookups can be found on the [Census 2011 output geography information](#) webpage.

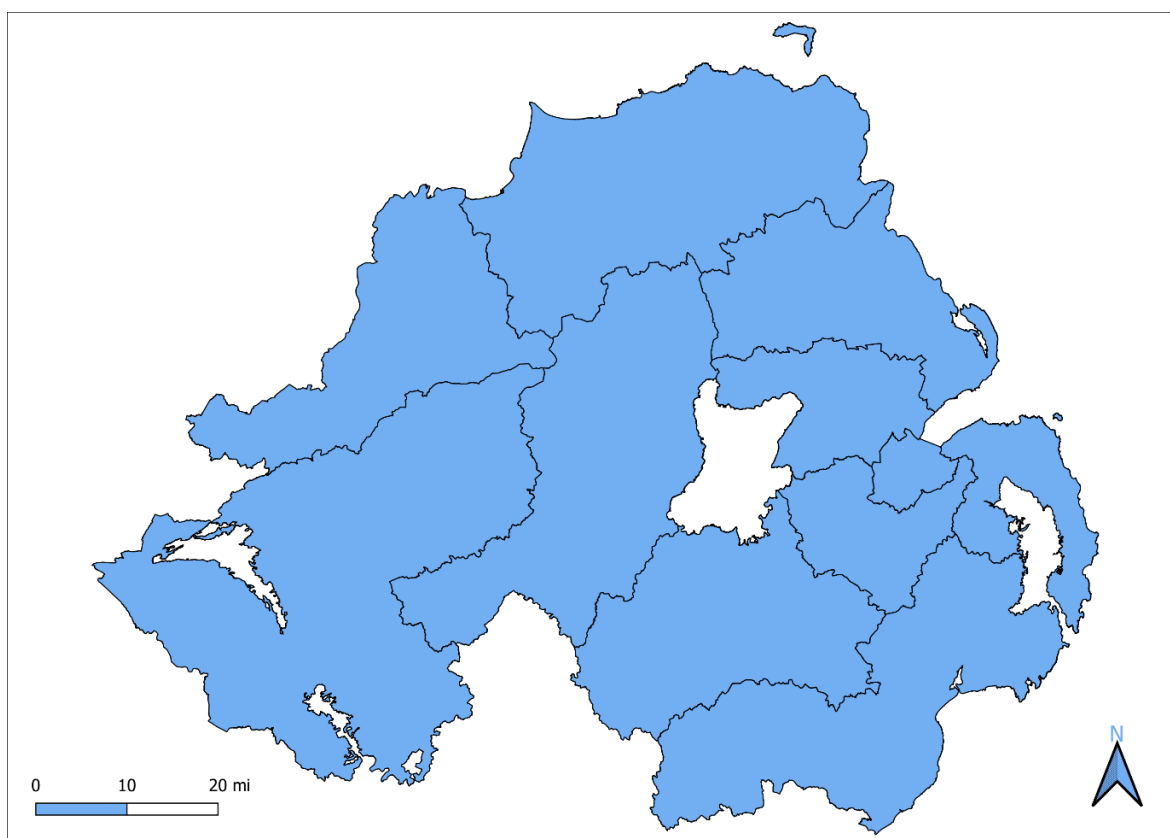
The next section of this paper comprises a factsheet including a boundary map for each of the geographies featured in Figure 1.

## 2. Individual fact sheets

### 2.1. Local Government Districts (LGD2014)

**Description:** In 2008, the Northern Ireland Assembly approved the reform of Local Government. The change moved Local Government from the old 26 Districts (LGD1992) to 11 new Districts (LGD2014), as well as making changes to the powers of Local Government. The 11 new Districts became operational in April 2015. Map 1 shows the Local Government District boundaries.

**Map 1:** Northern Ireland Local Government District 2014 (LGD2014) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 11

**Codes:** N09000001, N09000002, ....., N09000011

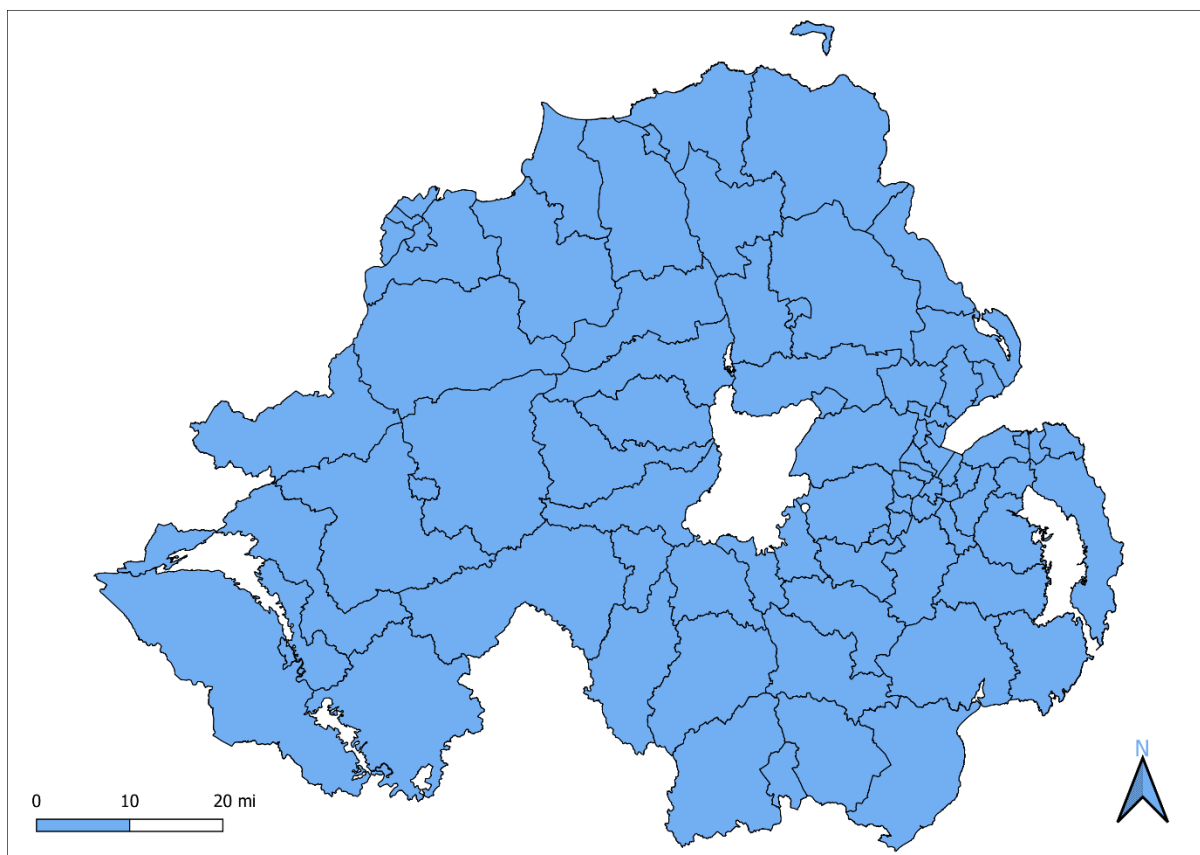
**Average population:** 173,020 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 69,890 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.2. District Electoral Areas (DEA2014)

**Description:** District Electoral Areas are used for the election of councillors in Proportional Representation elections. Their boundaries are determined by the District Electoral Areas Commissioner and reviewed every 8-10 years. Northern Ireland is divided into 80 District Electoral Areas which nest within the 11 Local Government Districts (LGD2014). Map 2 shows the District Electoral Area boundaries.

**Map 2:** Northern Ireland District Electoral Area 2014 (DEA2014) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 80

**Codes:** N10000101, N10000102, ....., N10001107

(3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> last digits are the last 2 digits of its LGD2014).

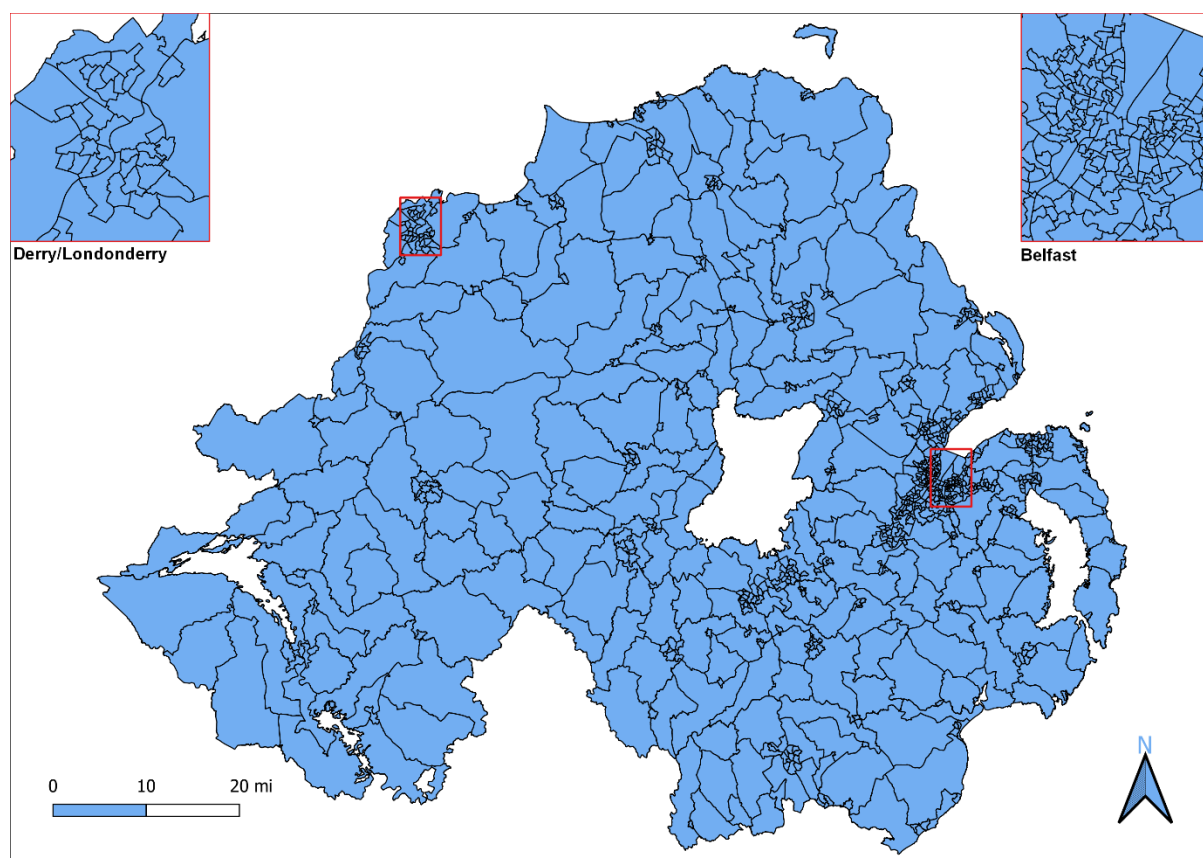
**Average population:** 23,790 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 9,610 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.3. Super Data Zones (SDZ2021)

**Description:** Super Data Zones are a statistical output geography, developed by NISRA to support the dissemination of Census 2021 statistics. There are 850 Super Data Zones across Northern Ireland and the 3,780 Data Zones (DZ2021) nest within this geography. These two geographies nest within the 80 District Electoral Areas (DEA2014) and 11 Local Government Districts (LGD2014). Map 3 shows the Super Data Zone boundaries.

**Map 3:** Northern Ireland Super Data Zone 2021 (SDZ2021) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 850

**Codes:** N21000001, N21000001, ..., N21000850

**Average population:** 2,240 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

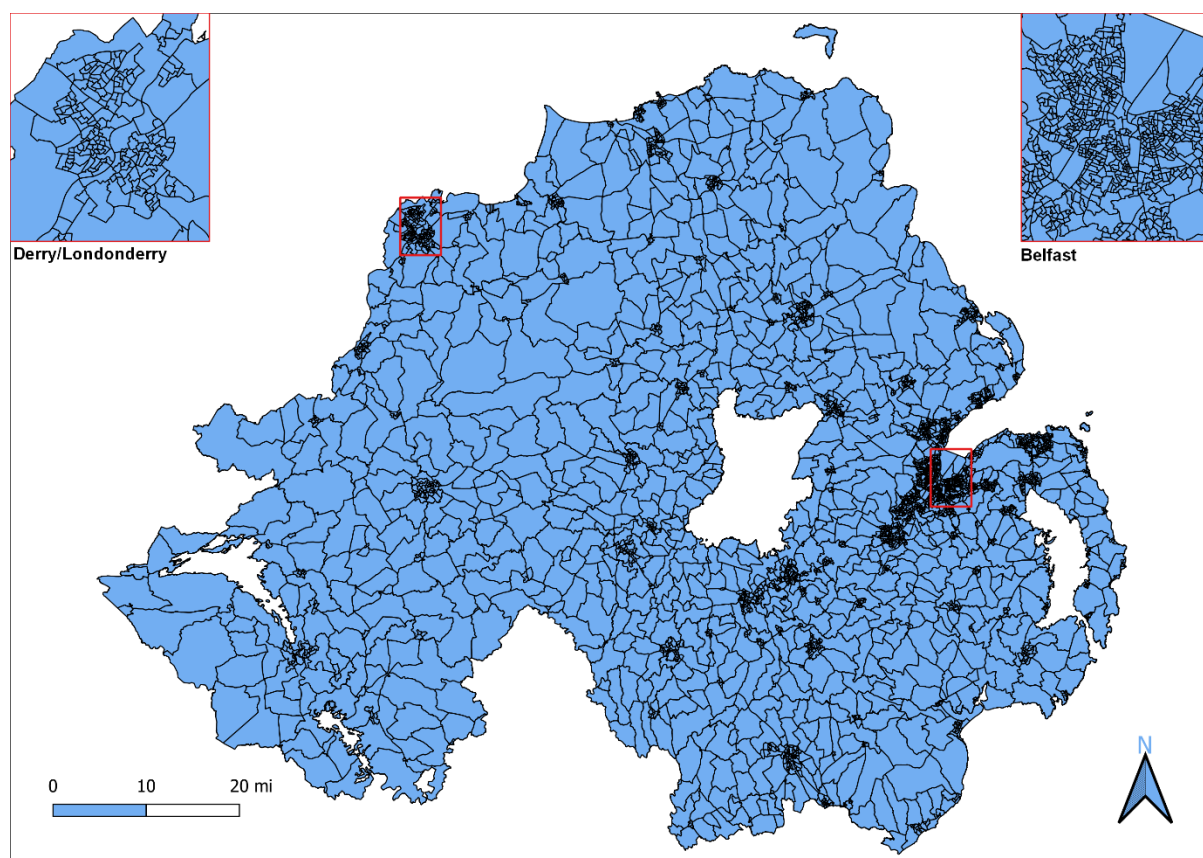
**Average households:** 900 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))



## 2.4. Data Zones (DZ2021)

**Description:** Data Zones are a statistical output geography, developed by NISRA to support the dissemination of Census 2021 statistics. There are 3,780 Data Zones across Northern Ireland, which nest within the 850 Super Data Zones (SDZ2021). These in turn nest within the 80 District Electoral Areas (DEA2014) and 11 Local Government Districts (LGD2014). Map 4 shows the Data Zone boundaries.

**Map 4:** Northern Ireland Data Zone 2021 (DZ2021) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 3,780

**Codes:** N20000001, N20000002, ....., N20003780

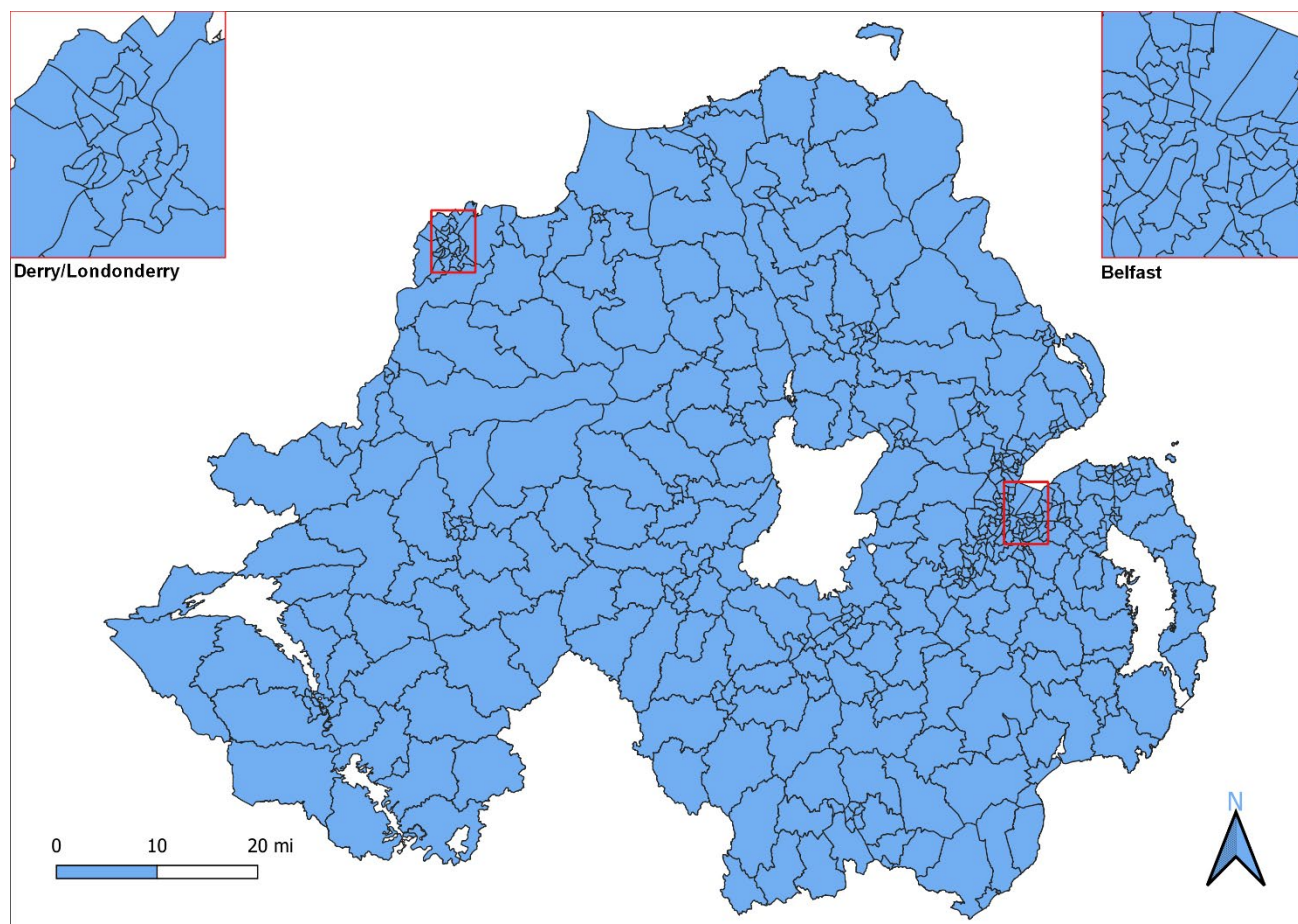
**Average population:** 500 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 200 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.5. Current Wards (Ward2014)

**Description:** Electoral Ward boundaries are determined by the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner. The Ward2014 boundaries were determined as part of the District Electoral Areas (Northern Ireland) Order 2014. Map 5 shows the Ward2014 boundaries.

**Map 5:** Northern Ireland Ward2014 boundaries



**Number of areas:** 462

**Codes:** N08000101, N08000102, ....., N08001140

(3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> last digits are the last 2 digits of its LGD2014).

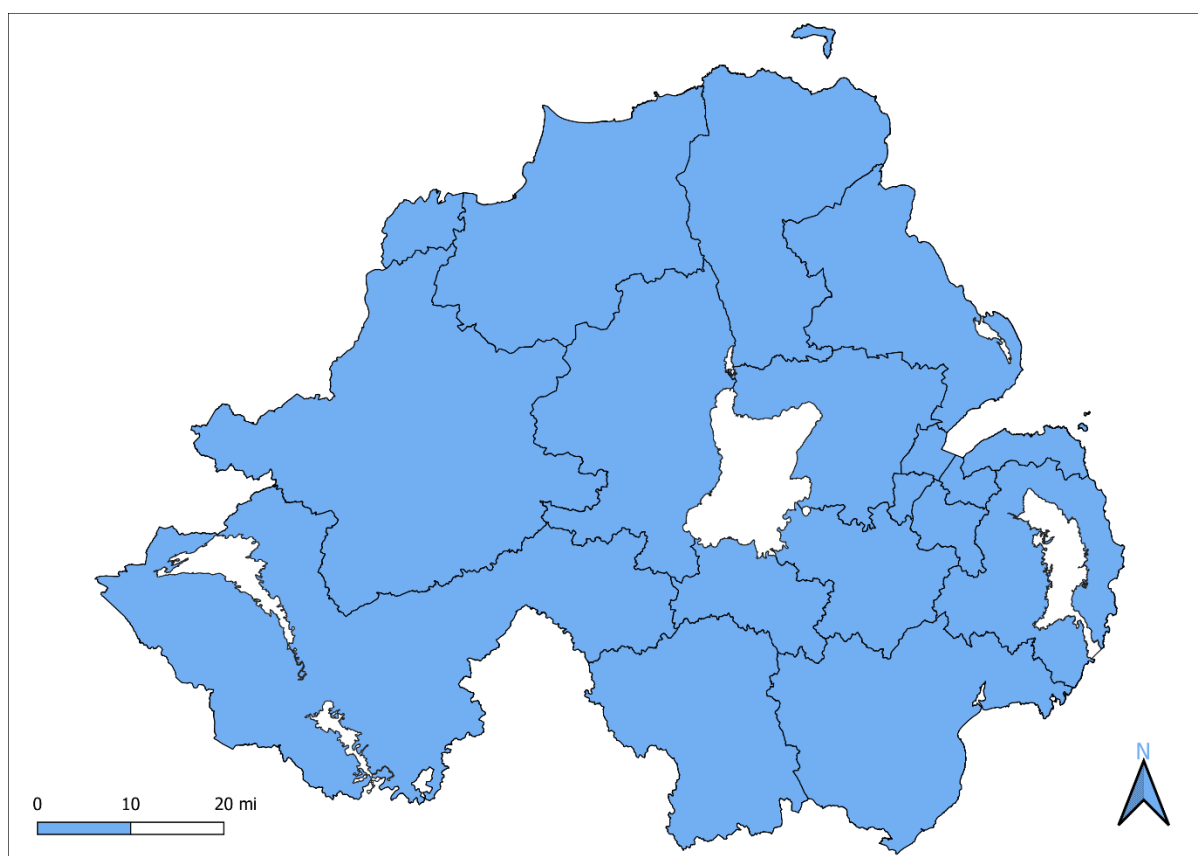
**Average population:** 4,120 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 1,660 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.6. Assembly Areas (AA2024)/Parliamentary Constituencies (PC2024)

**Description:** In accordance with the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020, the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland reviewed the 2008 Parliamentary Constituency boundaries and submitted its final recommendations report on 27 June 2023. These new Parliamentary Constituencies (which NISRA has assigned a reference year of 2024) took effect at the time of the July 2024 UK general election. Map 6 shows the AA2024/ PC2024 boundaries.

**Map 6:** Northern Ireland Assembly Area 2024 (AA2024) / Parliamentary Constituency 2024 (PC2024) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 18

**Codes:** N50000001, N50000002, ....., N05000018

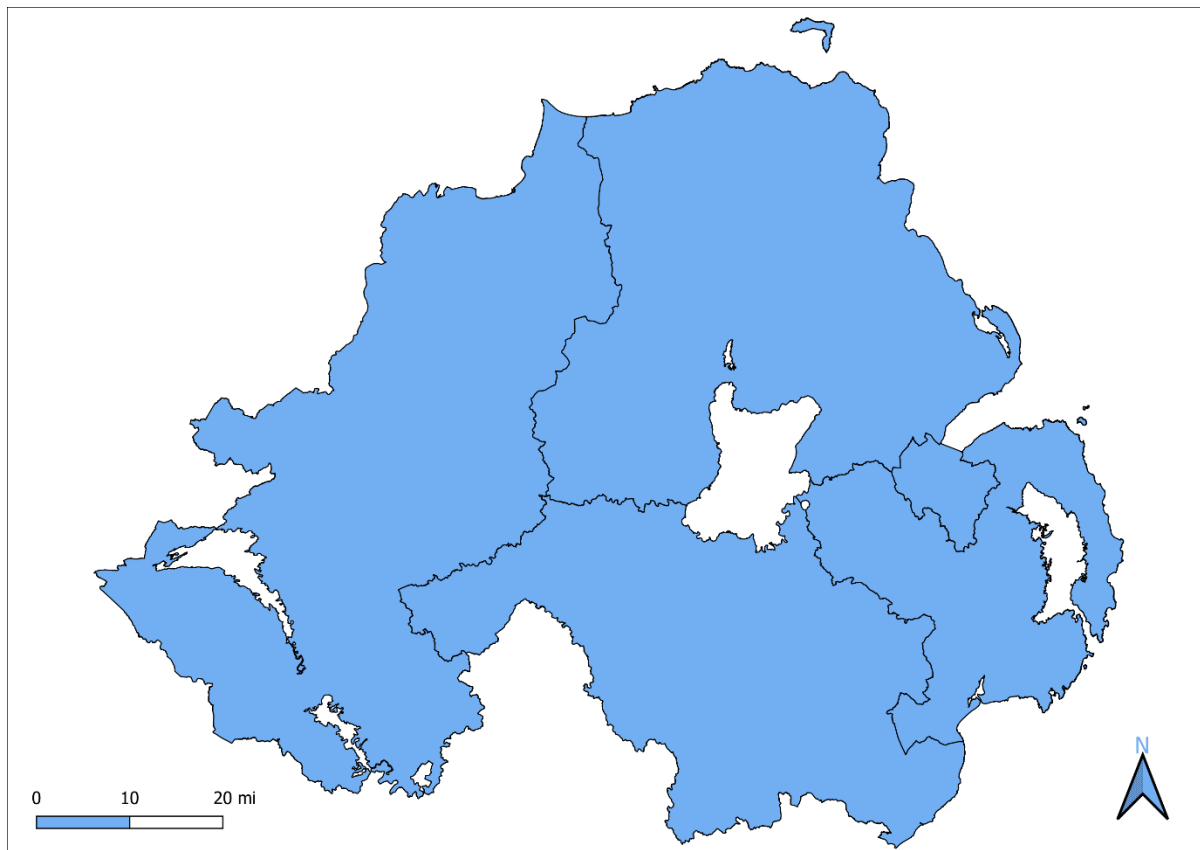
**Average population:** 105,730 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 42,710 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.7. Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCT)

**Description:** Five Health and Social Care Trusts provide integrated health and social care services across Northern Ireland: Belfast HSC Trust, South Eastern HSC Trust, Western HSC Trust, Southern HSC Trust and Northern HSC Trust. Map 7 shows the boundaries of the five Health and Social Care Trusts.

**Map 7:** Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 5

**Codes:** BHSCT, NHSCT, SEHSCT, SHSCT, WHSCT

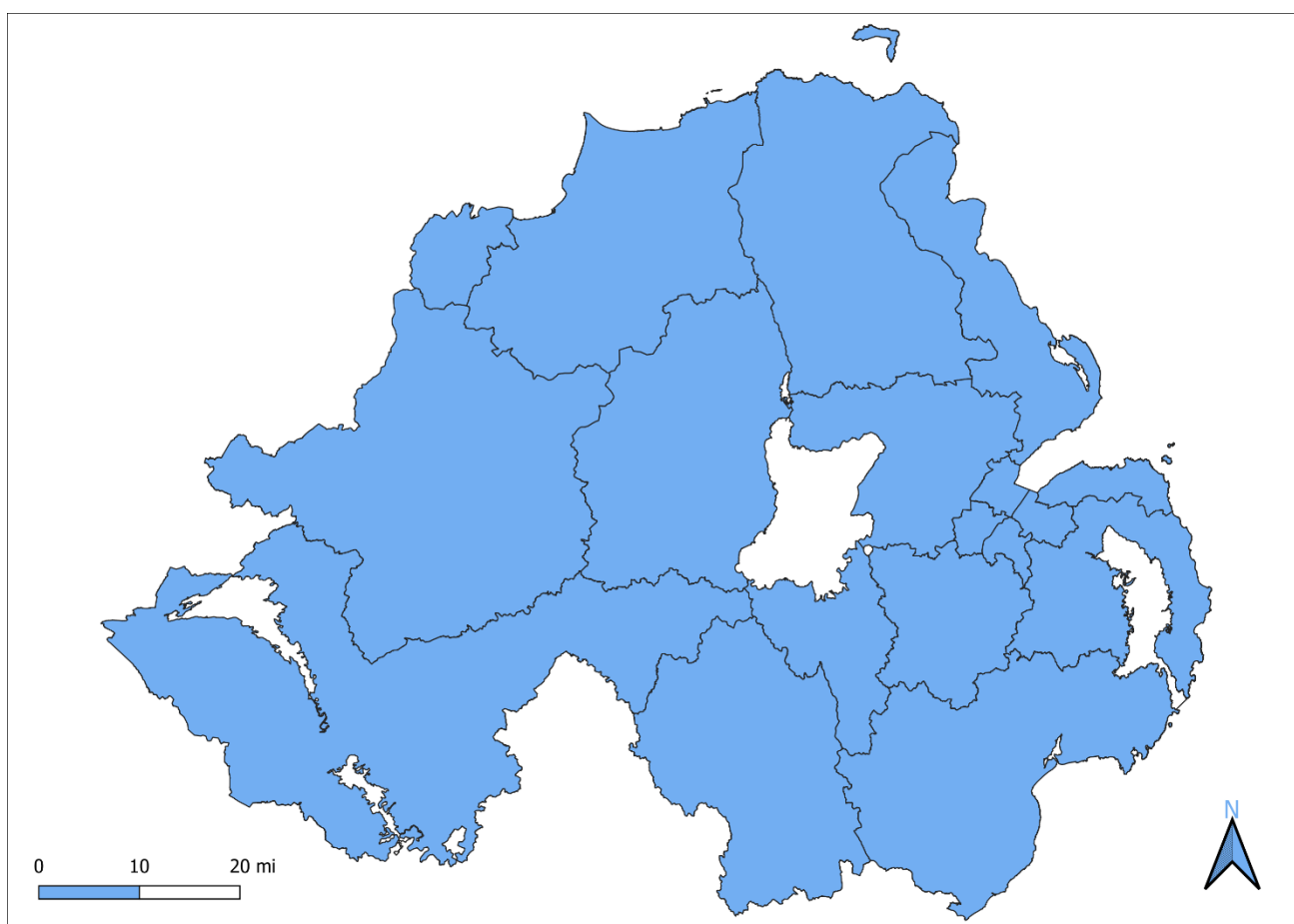
**Average population:** 380,640 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 153,760 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.8. Assembly Areas (AA2008)/Parliamentary Constituencies (PC2008)

**Description:** The 2008 Parliamentary Constituency boundaries came into effect at the time of the 2008 Westminster Parliamentary Elections. The 2008 Parliamentary Constituency boundaries were determined as part of the Parliamentary Constituencies (Northern Ireland) Order 2008. Map 8 shows the AA2008/PC2008 boundaries.

**Map 8:** Northern Ireland Assembly Area 2008 (AA2008) / Parliamentary Constituency 2008 (PC2008) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 18

**Codes:** N06000001, N06000002, ....., N06000018

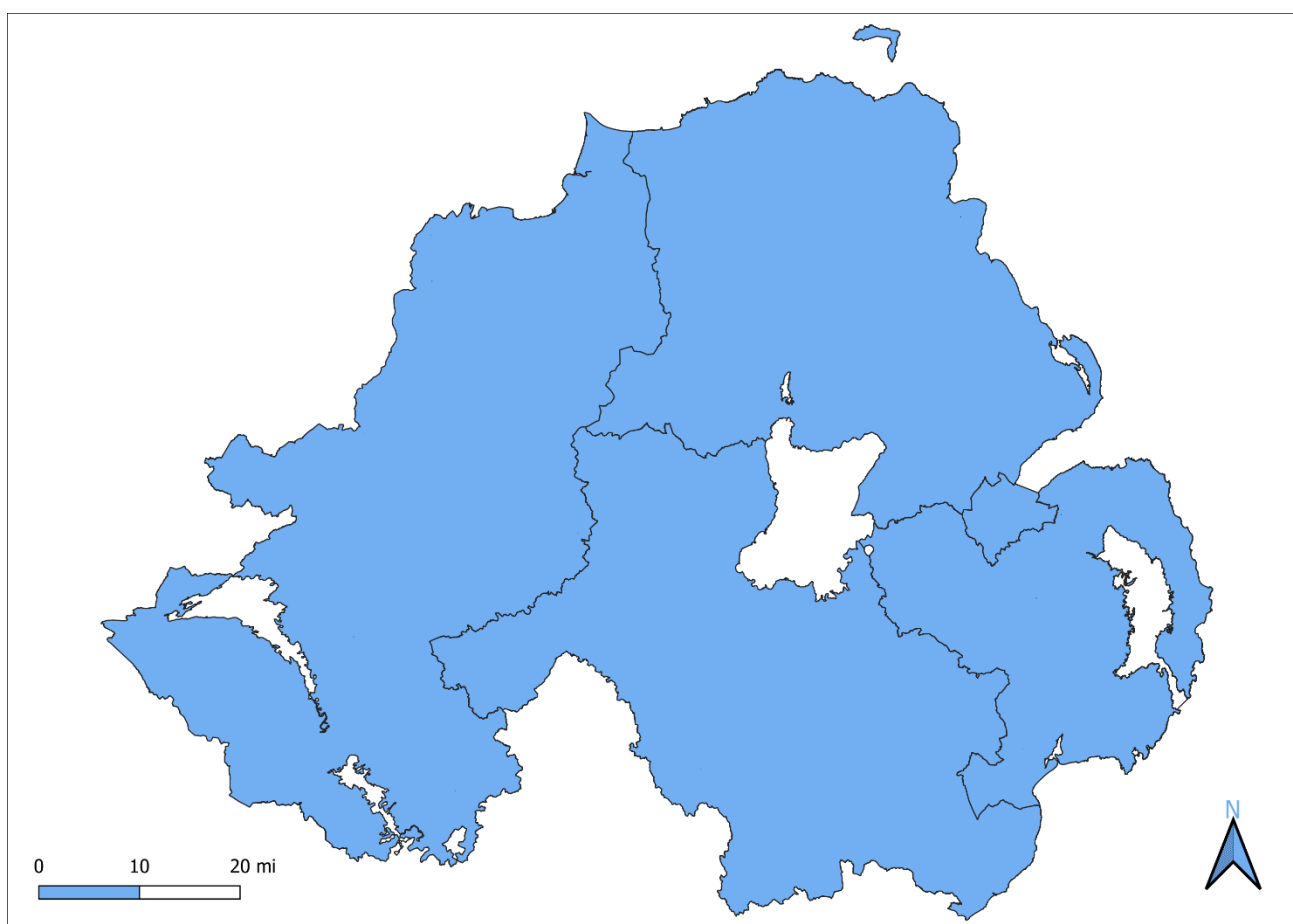
**Average population:** 105,730 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 42,710 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.9. Education and Library Boards (ELB)

**Description:** The Education Act (NI) 2014 enabled the Education Authority to replace the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs) with effect from 1 April 2015. The Education Authority was required to make it compatible with the new 11-council model of local government. The public library service for Northern Ireland was previously under the control of the 5 education and library boards, whose boundaries the former Local Government Districts (LGD1992) nested into. Map 9 shows the boundaries of the Education and Library Boards (ELB).

**Map 9:** Education and Library Boards (ELB) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 5

**Codes:** BELB, NEELB, SEELB, SELB, WELB

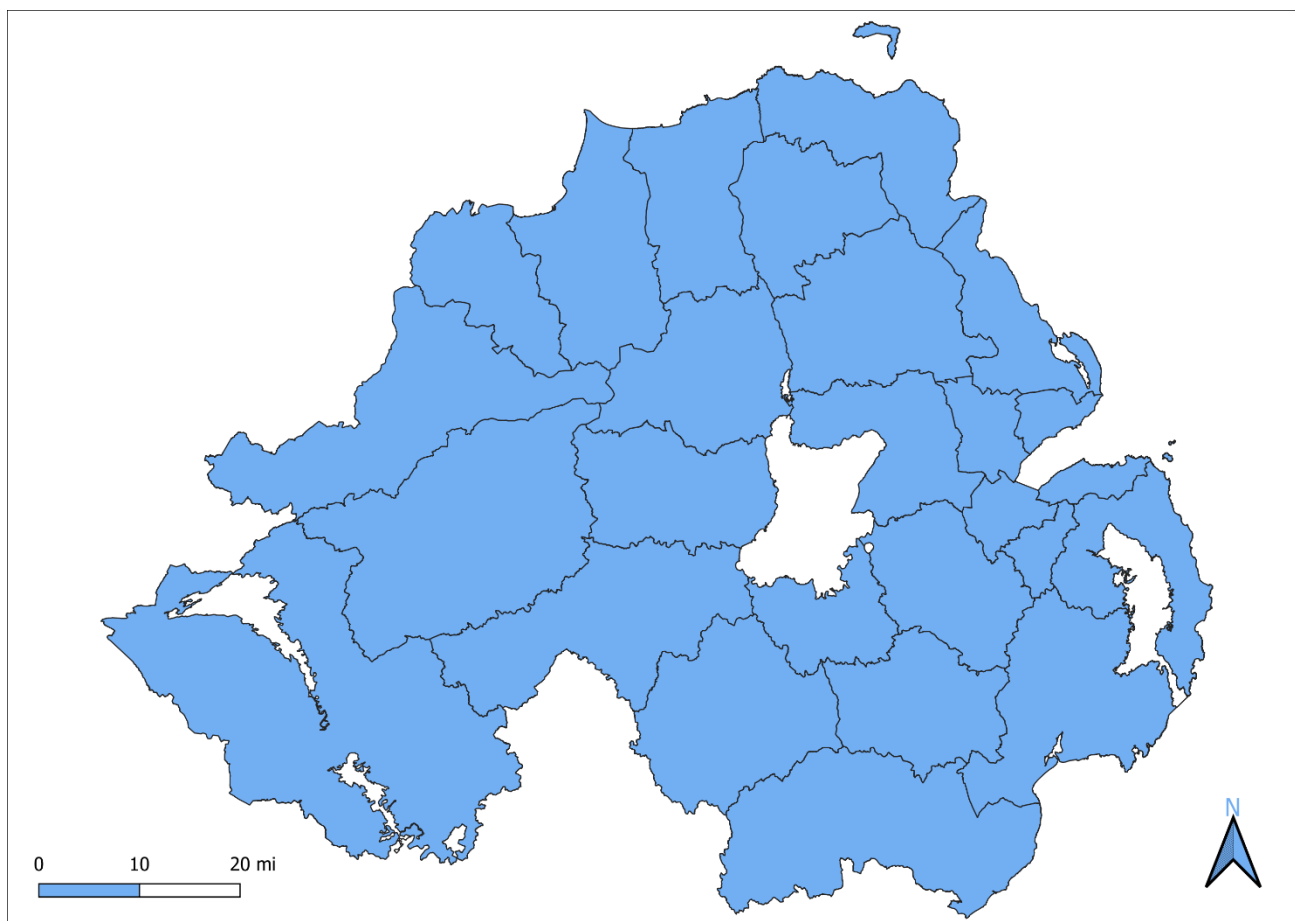
**Average population:** 362,170 ([Census 2011 Population estimates \(Excel, 436 KB\)](#))

**Average households:** 140,660 ([Census 2011 Household estimates \(Excel, 388 KB\)](#))

## 2.10. Local Government Districts (LGD1992)

**Description:** These former Local Government Districts came into effect in 1992, and the boundaries were determined as part of the Local Government (Boundaries) Order (Northern Ireland) 1992. Map 10 shows the Local Government District 1992 (LGD1992) boundaries.

**Map 10:** Northern Ireland Local Government District 1992 (LGD1992) boundaries



**Number of areas:** 26

**Codes:** 95AA, 95BB, ....., 95ZZ

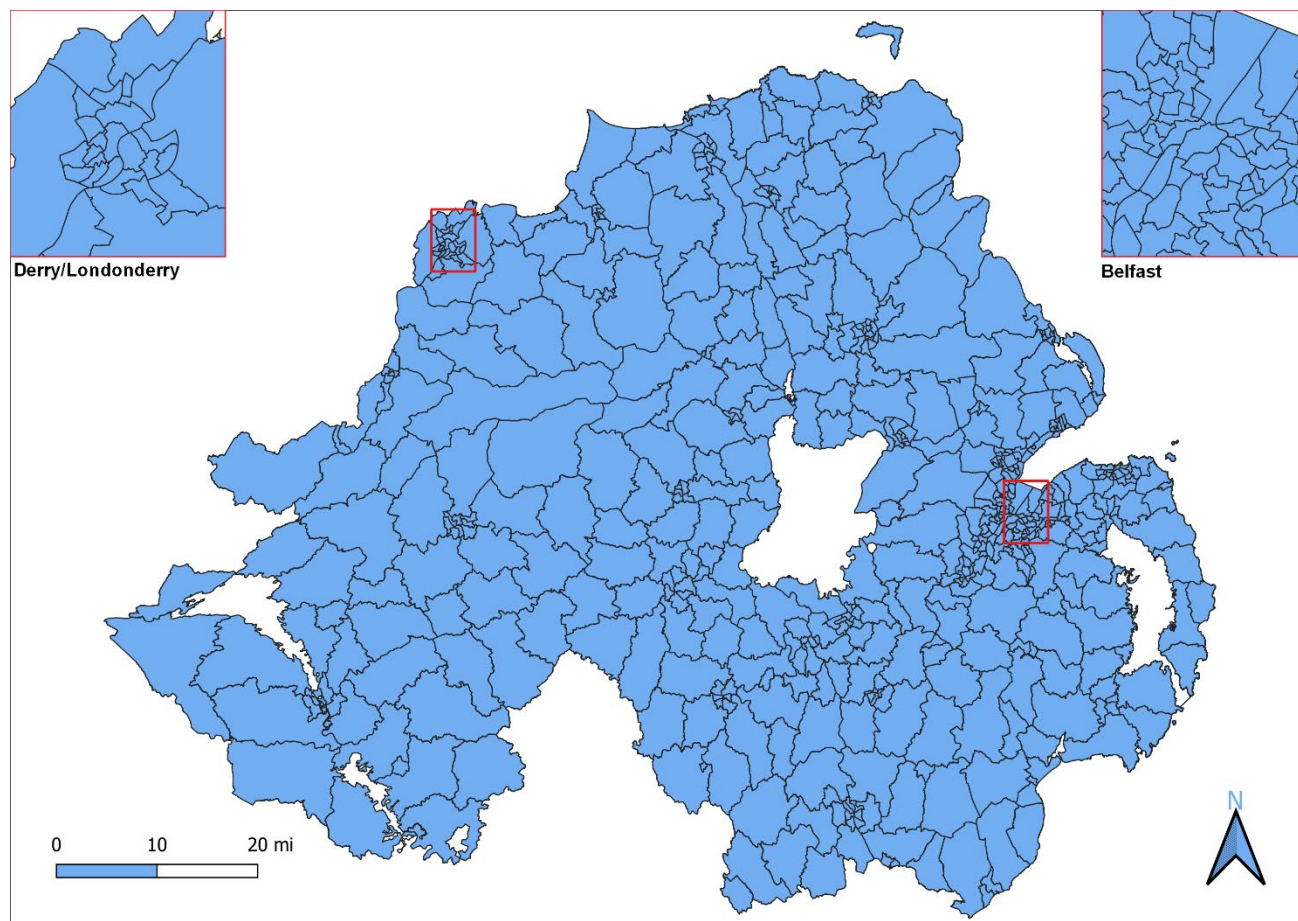
**Average population:** 73,200 ([Census 2021 Population estimates](#))

**Average households:** 29,570 ([Census 2021 Household estimates](#))

## 2.11. Former Wards (Ward1992)

**Description:** These former Wards came into effect in 1992, and the boundaries were determined as part of the Local Government (Boundaries) Order (Northern Ireland) 1992. Map 11 shows the Ward1992 boundaries.

**Map 11:** Northern Ireland Ward1992 boundaries



**Number of areas:** 582

**Codes:** 95AA01, ..., 95ZZ16 (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> digits are those of its LGD1992).

**Average population:** 3,110 ([Census 2011 Population estimates \(Excel, 436 KB\)](#))

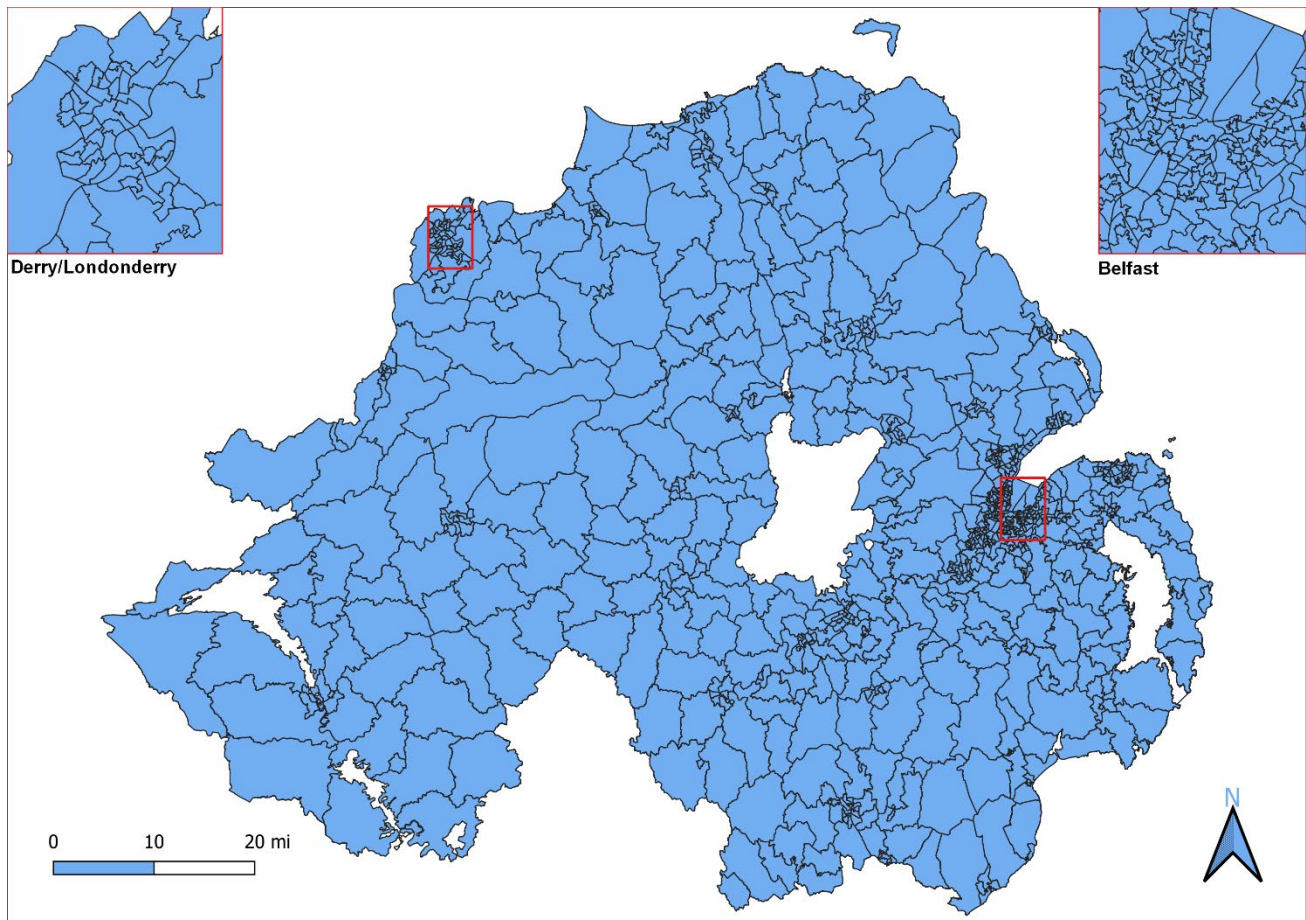
**Average households:** 1,210 ([Census 2011 Household estimates \(Excel, 388 KB\)](#))



## 2.12. Super Output Areas (SOA2011)

**Description:** Super Output Areas are a former statistical output geography, developed by NISRA to support the dissemination of Census 2011 statistics. There are 890 Super Output Areas, which nest within the 26 former Local Government Districts (LGD1992). Map 12 shows the SOA2011 boundaries.

**Map 12:** Northern Ireland SOA2011 boundaries



**Number of areas:** 890

**Codes:** 95AA01S1, ..., 95ZZ16S2 (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> digits are those of its LGD1992).

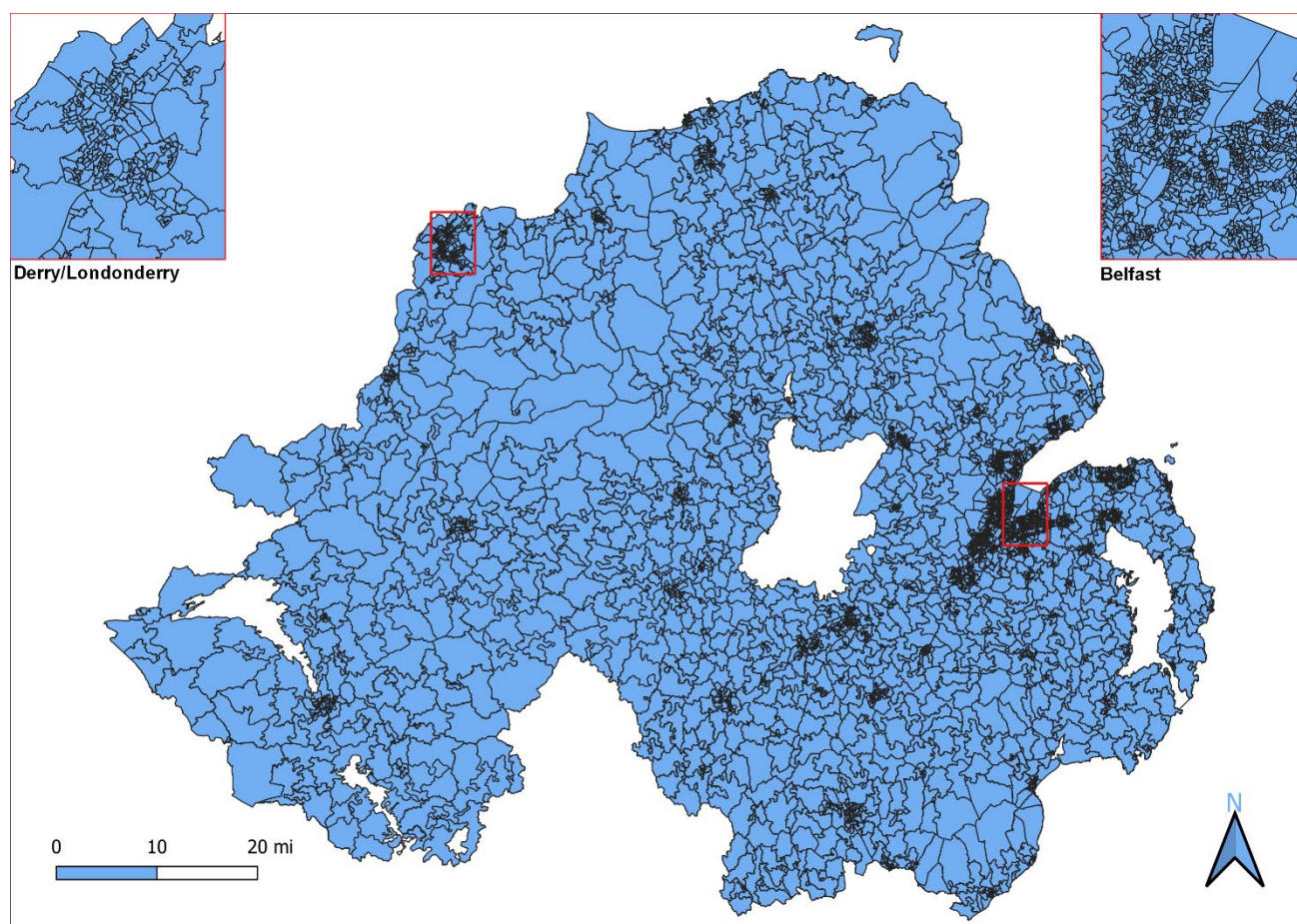
**Average population:** 2,030 ([Census 2011 Population estimates \(Excel, 436 KB\)](#))

**Average households:** 790 ([Census 2011 Household estimates \(Excel, 388 KB\)](#))

## 2.13. Small Areas (SA2011)

**Description:** Small areas are a former statistical output geography, developed by NISRA to support the dissemination of Census 2011 statistics. There are 4,537 Small areas across Northern Ireland, which nest within the 890 Super Output Areas. These in turn nest within the 26 former Local Government Districts (LGD1992). Map 13 shows the SA2011 boundaries.

**Map 13:** Northern Ireland SA2011 boundaries



**Number of areas:** 4,537

**Codes:** N00000001, ....., N00004537

**Average population:** 400 ([Census 2011 Population estimates \(Excel, 436 KB\)](#))

**Average households:** 160 ([Census 2011 Household estimates \(Excel, 388 KB\)](#))

### 3. Further information

Further information on where you can access and download a range of maps and digital products that support the use of geography in developing statistics is available on the [NISRA Geography webpage](#).

Lookup tables for a range of administrative and statistical geographies are available to download from [NISRA Geography Lookups](#).

A range of boundary files are available as open formats on the [OpenDataNI portal](#).

The [NISRA Boundary Application](#) is an interactive map of Northern Ireland that can be used to display the boundaries of the main administrative and statistical geographies. The boundaries are displayed via the Layer List icon on the right of the top ribbon (stacked pages icon). A checkbox can be ticked for the geography of interest, to load the boundaries on the map. If you click on a specific area on the map, an information box pops up providing the name and code for the area.

The [NISRA Data Portal](#) is an application where you can access data produced by NISRA. The application gives users the opportunity to view and filter datasets, run meta-data searches, plot interactive charts and visualise data on interactive maps.

The [Census 2021 Area Explorer](#) has census data for available geographies on an interactive map. Census data is also available from the [NISRA Flexible Table Builder](#).

To see the administrative and statistical areas that a postcode sits within, you can use the NISRA [Find my area](#) application.

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