Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency

Registrar General Northern Ireland Annual Report 2015

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National Statistics

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is an Executive Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) and has been in existence since April 1996. The Agency also incorporates the General Register Office (GRO) for Northern Ireland. NISRA's core purpose is to provide a high quality, cost effective, statistics, research and registration service that informs policy making and the democratic process and the wider public.

The overall corporate aims of NISRA are to:

- provide a statistical and research service to support decision making by Northern Ireland Ministers and Departments and to inform elected representatives and the wider community through the dissemination of reliable official statistics; and
- administer the marriage laws and to provide a system for the civil registration of births, marriages, civil partnerships, adoptions and deaths in Northern Ireland.

NISRA can be found on the internet at www.nisra.gov.uk

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Ninety-Fourth Annual Report of the Registrar General 2015

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31 August 2016

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Foreword by the Registrar General for Northern Ireland

I have pleasure in presenting the ninety-fourth Annual Report of the Registrar General to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The report provides a comprehensive demographic overview of the Northern Ireland population. The report also details information on key life events such as births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships registered in 2015. A variety of supporting information is also available on compact disc and through the NISRA website www.nisra.gov.uk.

In writing this report I would like to pay tribute to Dr Norman Caven who served as the Registrar General for Northern Ireland until October 2015. In his twenty two year tenure, Norman led wholesale reform and modernisation of the local civil registration system as well as managing the delivery of the 2001 and 2011 Censuses. He leaves the functions of the Registrar General in good health and I wish him well in his retirement.

Last year over 50,000 life events were registered by District Registrars and over 60,000 replacement certificates were supplied to the public. Staff across all parts of the civil registration service worked tirelessly to deliver this vital public service and I would like to thank them for their hard work.

Over the last twelve months, a host of wider developments were taken forward. Most notably, work started on the development of a new civil registration computer system, the new on-line genealogical system saw its first full year of service and key statistics on registration were supplied to support public policy in areas as diverse as health, education and immigration. Added to this initial plans were made for a 2021 Census using greater use of technology than ever before.

The functions of the Registrar General are often hidden from view but they form an integral part of people's lives. Ranging from supporting identity, the delivery and registration of civil marriage or providing essential statistics on the population, they are a key part of a functioning society. I trust that you will find the report both informative and useful and I welcome any comments you may have regarding its format and content.

Dr David Marshall
Registrar General for Northern Ireland
August 2016

Introduction

This report, which highlights the work of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's (NISRA) General Register Office and Demographic Statistics Branch, provides a demographic overview of Northern Ireland during 2015.

The report presents a variety of information on the population of Northern Ireland (including migration), and summarises over 50,000 key events such as births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships that were registered in District Registration Offices throughout Northern Ireland during 2015. For ease of readability and navigation, it has been divided into a number of smaller sections, each of which contains a summary of key findings. Supporting statistical tables, charts and infographics have also been provided on compact disc and through both the NISRA (**www.nisra.gov.uk**) and NINIS (**www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk**) websites.

Demographic statistics are vital in providing information to support the delivery of public services and are used by the European Union and United Nations for making international comparisons. In particular, the Department of Health (DoH) uses birth statistics to plan maternity services and monitor departmental indicators in relation to teenage births. The Department of Education also utilises birth statistics in the planning of future school provision. Mortality statistics are used to plan health services and monitor deaths from particular causes such as suicide or healthcare-associated infections. Marriage, divorce and civil partnership statistics may be of interest to those working in social policy, family law and the wedding industry.

Data Quality

Rigorous quality assurance checks are completed on the data prior to publication of the Report, and thus the information presented is considered to be of high quality. All births must legally be registered within 42 days, whilst deaths should be registered within 5 days (unless referred to a coroner) and marriages within 3 days. It should be noted that all figures presented in this report are based on the year in which the event was registered, which may not necessarily be the same as the year when the event occurred. While the vast majority of events are registered shortly after occurrence, some can take time to be registered. For example, events such as an infant death or suicide must be referred to a coroner and this legal process can take some time.

While at present there is no legal requirement to register a stillbirth in Northern Ireland, it is believed that the number of cases where a registration does not take place is relatively small.

Published birth and stillbirth statistics in this report relate only to Northern Ireland resident mothers. They do not include births and stillbirths to women usually resident in Northern Ireland who gave birth abroad. Nor do they include births and stillbirths to women whose usual residence is outside Northern Ireland even though the birth occurred here. Such numbers are relatively small and are not considered to adversely affect the inferences that can be drawn from the published results.

Published death statistics relate only to deaths which occurred in Northern Ireland. As such, this includes deaths of individuals whose usual residence is outside Northern Ireland and excludes deaths of usual residents who died while outside Northern Ireland.

Marriage registrations presented in this report relate to those which took place in Northern Ireland. They do not include the marriages of Northern Ireland residents who chose to get married in another country.

Further information relating to the quality of civil registration statistics can be found in the **Northern Ireland Birth Statistics Quality Assessment** and the **Northern Ireland Death Statistics Quality Assessment**.

List of abbreviations

UK	United Kingdom
DoH	Department of Health
EU	European Union
TPFR	Total Period Fertility Rate
EU15	European Union 15 member states as of 31st December 2003
A8	A group of 8 of the 10 countries that joined the European Union in 2004 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia)
SANDS	Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society
ICD-10	International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th revision ASDR Age-specific death rate NHS National Health Service
LGD	Local Government District
SMR	Standardised Mortality Ratio
MRSA	Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus
CDiff	Clostridium Difficile

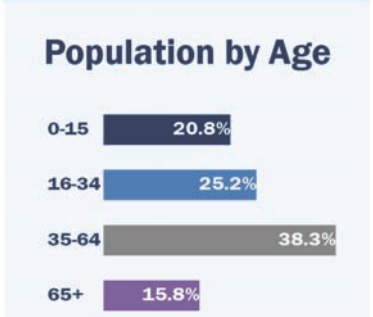
Key Points

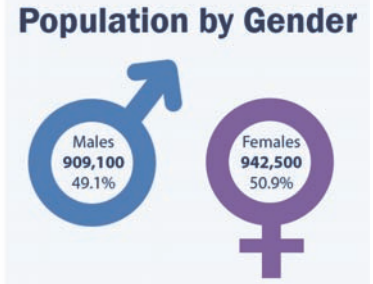
- The population of Northern Ireland rose by 11,100 in the year ending 30 June 2015, to exceed 1.85 million people for the first time.
- Of the 24,215 births (12,493 males and 11,722 females) registered, two out of every five (44 per cent) occurred outside of marriage.
- Births to teenage mothers reached a new record low of 760, whilst births to mothers aged 35 years and over continued to rise.
- 76 stillbirths were registered, 6.2 per cent fewer than in 2014 and the lowest number ever recorded in Northern Ireland.
- 15,548 deaths were registered – the highest number recorded since the flu epidemic of 1999 (15,663). Two out of every three of the 870 additional deaths in 2015 can be attributed to people aged 75 or over, 68 per cent of whom were male.
- At 28 per cent, Cancer continued to be the leading cause of death in 2015, with the number of such deaths among males increasing by 7 per cent and the number among females decreasing by 5 per cent.
- Almost 2 out of every 3 deaths were of people aged 75 or over.
- 8,355 marriages and 89 civil partnerships were registered, equivalent to roughly 1 every hour.
- August was the most popular month to get married although Saturday 5th September was the most popular day to tie the knot.
- 2,360 divorces and 7 civil partnership dissolutions were granted with non-cohabitation remaining the most frequently recorded reason for separation.

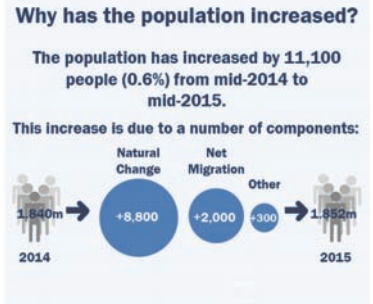
Population & Migration

In 2015:

- The population of Northern Ireland is estimated to be 1.852 million people at 30 June 2015.
- Over the year mid-2014 to mid-2015, the number of people living in Northern Ireland increased by 11,100 people (0.6 per cent).
- Natural growth was the main driver of population growth, adding 8,800 people (24,200 births minus 15,400 deaths) to the population.
- For the second year in a row, the number of people coming to live in Northern Ireland (23,600) was greater than the number of people leaving (21,500), leading to a net population gain of just over 2,000 people due to migration.
- The number of people leaving Northern Ireland to live elsewhere was at its lowest level since the year ending mid-2006, falling by 6 per cent between July 2014 and June 2015.
- The population aged under 65 increased at a moderate rate (0.3 per cent) in the year ending mid-2015, reaching 1,559,800 people, whilst the population aged 65 and over increased by 2.1 per cent in the same period to reach 291,800 people in mid-2015.
- The Northern Ireland population is projected to exceed 2 million people by 2034.
- Projections also indicate a continued aging population, with the number of people aged 65 and over projected to grow by 26 per cent in the 10 year period to mid-2024.
- Each of the 11 Local Government Districts experienced an increase in population between mid-2014 and mid-2015.







Population Estimates

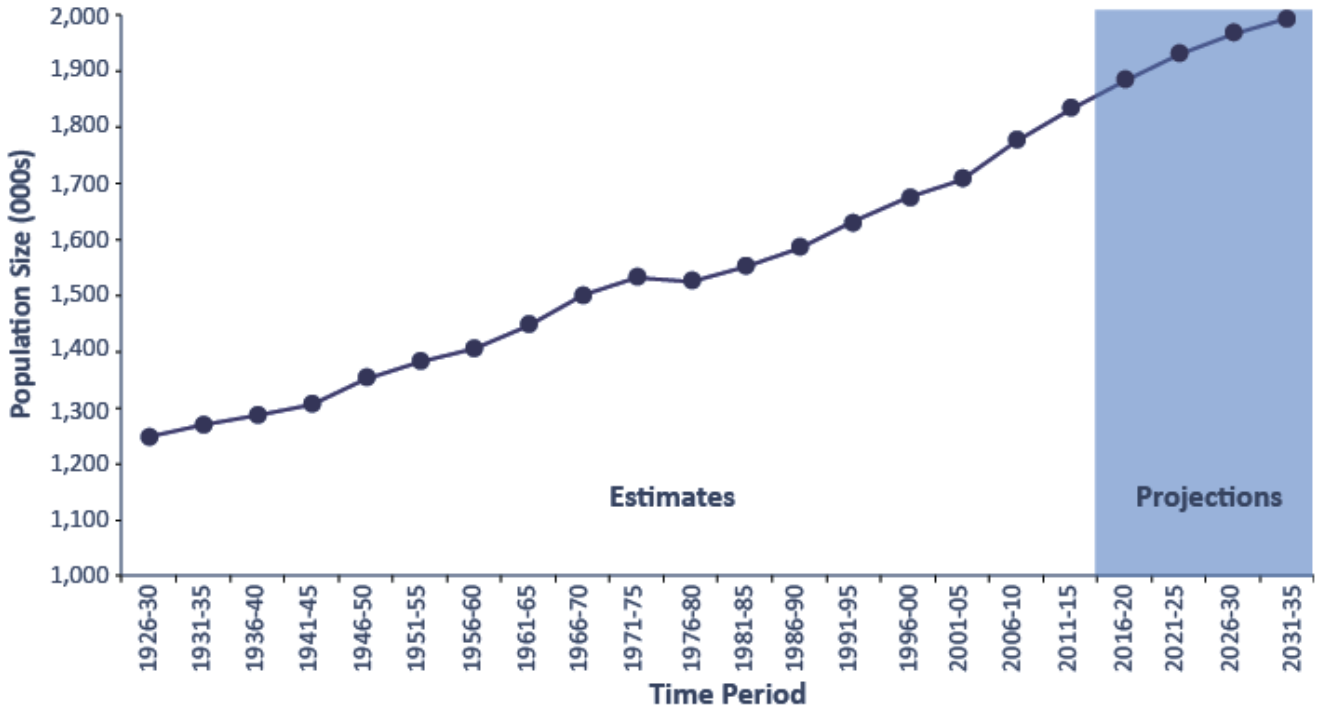
Population estimated to have risen by 11,100 people

The latest estimate of the size of the Northern Ireland population[i] (30 June 2015) is 1,851,600 people.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2015, Northern Ireland's population is estimated to have risen by 11,100 people. Natural growth (i.e. births minus deaths) added 8,800 people to the population, but there was also a net population gain of 2,000 people resulting from more people arriving to live in Northern Ireland (23,600) than leaving (21,500). Changes in the number of Her Majesty's Forces stationed in Northern Ireland accounted for a further population increase of 300 people.

Figure 1.1 shows the long term trend of increasing population, despite a slight decrease in population in the early 1970s as a result of high levels of net outward migration at that time. The latest population projections for Northern Ireland (2014-based) show that the population is projected to continue to increase, exceeding 1.9 million people by mid-2020 and 2.0 million people by mid-2034.

Figure 1.1: Estimated (1926 to 2015) and projected (2016 to 2035) Population of Northern Ireland – non-zero y-axis

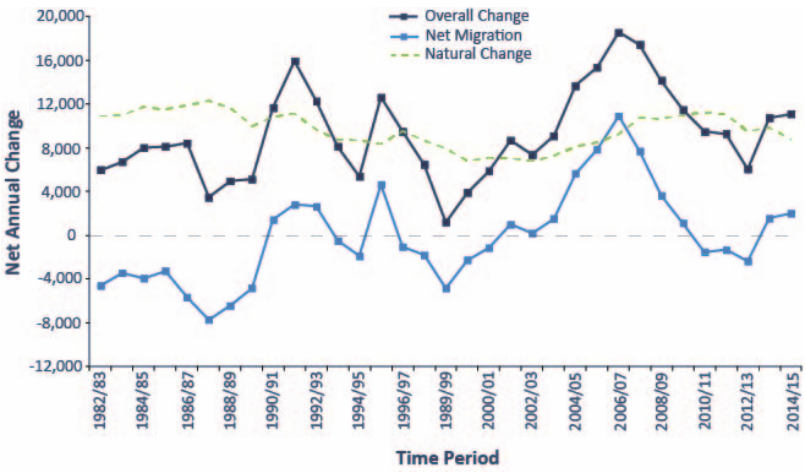


Download Chart (XLS Format – 58Kb)

i Reports and statistics are available at http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp17.htm. Population pyramids and interactive maps are available at http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp19.htm.

It can be seen from the trends in natural change and net migration presented in Figure 1.2 that, up to mid-2005, population increase was mostly due to natural change. In contrast, in the following year the contributions to population increase from natural change and migration were of a similar magnitude and in the year ending mid-2007 the contribution from migration exceeded that from natural change. Beyond that, net migration started to gradually reduce, falling below zero in the year ending mid-2011, indicating that more people left Northern Ireland than came here to live. In the years ending mid-2014 and mid-2015, Northern Ireland did however see a return to net inward migration, with a net population gain of 1,600 people and 2,000 people respectively due to migration.

Figure 1.2: Components of population change (1982/83 to 2014/15)



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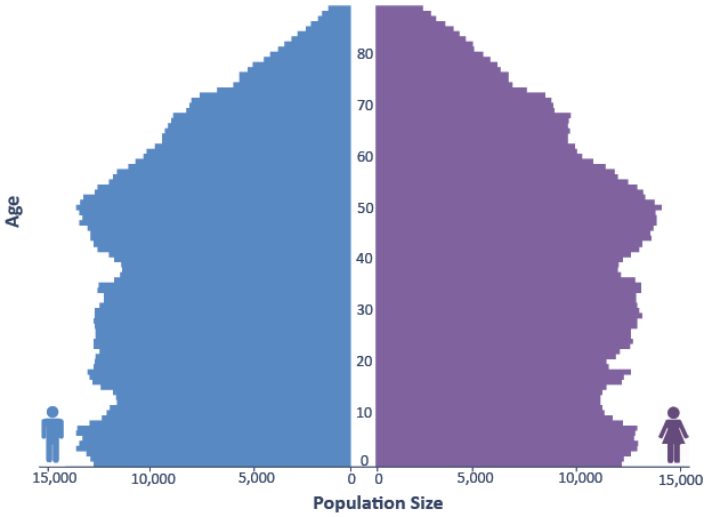
Age and Sex Structure

Figure 1.3 presents the age structure of the Northern Ireland population as at mid-2015. Females outnumber males in Northern Ireland, making up 51 per cent of the population. The age structure of Northern Ireland's population continues to get older due to a 23 year period of below replacement level fertility[i] (from 1992 to 2015) and continued increasing life expectancy.

During the twelve months to mid-2015, the number of children aged 0 to 15 years increased by 0.4 per cent to 385,200, the number of people aged 16 to 64 increased by 0.3 per cent to 1,174,600 people, while the older population (those aged 65 and over) increased by 2.1 per cent to 291,800. This compares to an overall population increase of 0.6 per cent. In the decade to mid-2004, the overall annual rate of population increase was around 7,000 people (equivalent to 0.4 per cent each year). Between mid-2004 and mid-2009, increases were significantly larger, averaging at 0.9 per cent each year. Since then, the annual rate of population increase fell gradually, reaching 0.3 per cent in the twelve months to June 2013, the lowest annual population increase seen this century.

Figure 1.3: Northern Ireland population pyramid by sex and age (2015)



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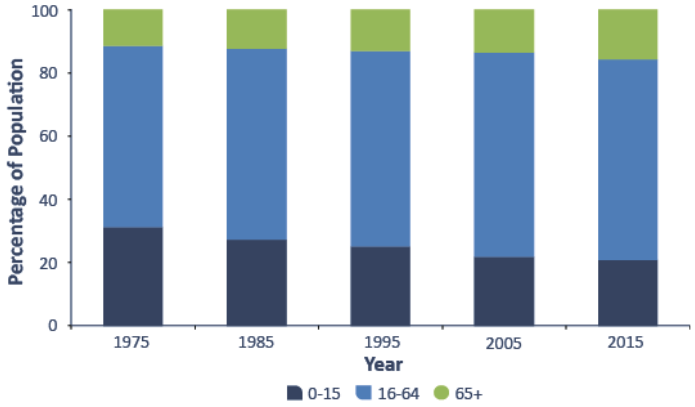
i In western countries a total period fertility rate of 2.1 live births per female over her lifetime is required to maintain long-term population levels.

Figure 1.4: Changing age structure of Northern Ireland population (1975 to 2015)



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Over the past thirty years, lower fertility levels have resulted in a 9.4 per cent decrease in the number of children aged 0 to 15 years. In contrast, the number of people aged 16 to 64 has increased by 24 per cent; and the older population (those aged 65 and over) has increased by 51 per cent. The changing age structure of the population since 1975 is illustrated in Figure 1.4.

Estimates of the Population aged 85 and over[i]

In mid-2015, 35,500 people (1.9 per cent of the population) were aged 85 years or over. This number has increased by 1,000 people (2.9 per cent) since mid-2014. Within the population aged 85 and over women significantly outnumber men, accounting for two thirds (67 per cent) of this population group.

Area Comparisons within Northern Ireland

All Local Government Districts experienced an increase in population

The pattern of continuing population growth is evident in each of Northern Ireland's 11 Local Government Districts. All Local Government Districts experienced an increase in the population between mid-2014 and mid-2015, with the smallest growth in Derry City & Strabane (0.2 per cent). In the same period, Lisburn & Castlereagh Local Government District had the greatest proportional increase in population (1.1 per cent). Of the other Local Government Districts, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (1.0 per cent) and Mid Ulster (0.8 per cent) were the only Local Government Districts with a population growth rate greater than the Northern Ireland percentage increase (0.6 per cent).

All Local Government Districts experienced a natural increase in population (i.e. more births than deaths) between mid-2014 and mid-2015. The largest natural increase in population was in Belfast and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Local Government Districts, each adding 1,400 people.

i More detailed statistics on the population aged 85 and over for mid-2001 to mid-2014 are available at http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp134.htm. Equivalent estimates for 2015 are due to be published in September 2016.

In 2015, 21 per cent of the Northern Ireland population were aged 0 to 15, whilst 16 per cent were aged 65 and over. Mid Ulster was the Local Government District with the highest proportion of children aged 0 to 15 among its population (23 per cent), while Ards & North Down had the smallest proportion (19 per cent). Conversely, Ards & North Down Local Government District had the highest proportion of people aged 65 and over (20 per cent), whereas Mid Ulster Local Government District had the smallest proportion (14 per cent).

Largest natural increase in population was in Belfast and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Local Government Districts

Migration

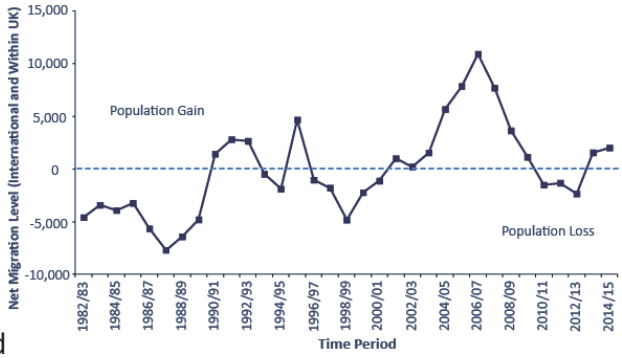
Measures of population movement or migration are based on the United Nations definition of a long-term international migrant[i]. This definition is in use in population statistics for countries across the European Union. Unlike some other European countries, there is no comprehensive system which registers population movement in the United Kingdom. Therefore, estimates of population movement into, and out of, Northern Ireland are derived from proxy indicators. In Northern Ireland the primary source for estimating this is anonymised medical card registrations. At the Northern Ireland level, the overall effect of population movement is derived from the difference in two "population flows": the number of people coming to live in Northern Ireland and the number of people leaving Northern Ireland to live elsewhere. The difference between these flows provides information on net migration, referred to earlier.

21,500 people left NI in year ending June 2015 - lowest level since mid-2006

Estimates of net migration for Northern Ireland since the early 1980s are shown in Figure 1.5. The graph can be viewed in terms of distinct phases of migration. The first phase during the 1980s was when Northern Ireland experienced consistently large net population loss due to outward-migration of, on average, 5,500 people each year. The "Troubles" will have had a marked impact on this.

The second phase from year ending mid-1991 until year ending mid-2004 shows a period in which population movement fluctuated between net inward and net outward migration. Over the fourteen year period in question, the net inflow varied between 1,400 in the year ending mid-

Figure 1.5: Estimated level of net migration (1982/83 to 2014/15)



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i "A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence." - Taken from "Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration. UN 1998" available at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?ID=116

1991 to a peak of 4,700 in the year ending mid-1996. In contrast the net outflow ranged from a loss of 500 people in year ending mid-1994 to a loss of 4,800 people in year ending mid-1999. The various net inflows and net outflows over this entire period broadly cancelled each other out, with an overall net gain of around 1,100 people. However, in the third phase between mid-2004 and mid-2008, the number of people estimated to have come here to live rose to, on average, 29,300 people each year with net inward migration peaking at 11,000 people in the year ending mid-2007. This indicates a marked increase in international inflows and is related to the enlargement of the European Union in May 2004, when people from countries in Eastern Europe were allowed to come to work in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Net migration estimated to be inward at around 2,000 people

After mid-2008, following the economic downturn, the net gain through migration fell as quick as it rose, with Northern Ireland once again experiencing a net population loss due to migration for three consecutive years between years ending mid-2011 and mid-2013.

In both of the years ending mid-2014 and mid-2015 the number of people who came to live in Northern Ireland exceeded the number of people who left to live elsewhere, giving rise to a switch back to net inward migration of 1,600 people and 2,000 people respectively. The year ending mid-2015 did however see a decline in both inward and outward migration, with the number of people who came to live in Northern Ireland falling by around 800 people (from 24,400 to 23,600; a reduction of 3.3 per cent) and the number who left falling by around 1,300 people (from 22,800 to 21,500; a reduction of 5.6 per cent).

56 per cent of new arrivals came from outside the UK

Place of Origin/Destination of People Coming to/Leaving Northern Ireland (2014-15)

Table 1 shows the previous country of residence of people who came to Northern Ireland to live. This does not necessarily reflect their nationality or country of birth. Of the 23,600 people who came to live here in the year ending June 2015, around 56 per cent (13,100) came from outside the United Kingdom, 5,500 of whom came from recent EU Accession countries[i] that joined the European Union since May 2004.

i These countries include Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, which joined on 1 May 2004, as well as Bulgaria and Romania (members since 1 January 2007) and Croatia (member since 1 July 2013).

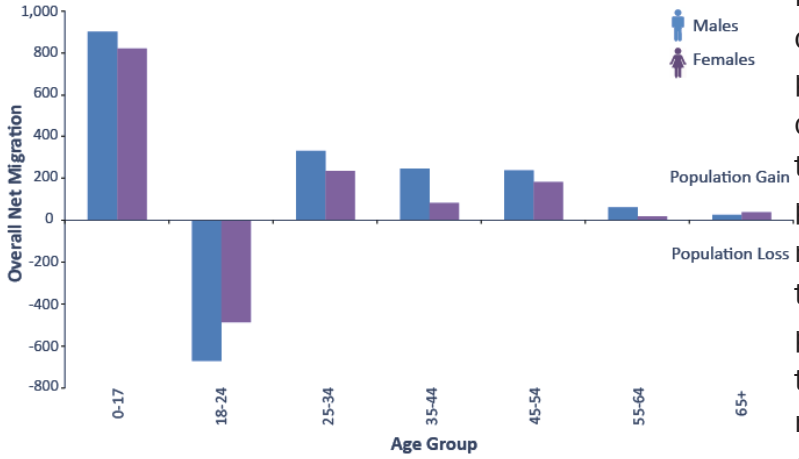
Table 1: Number of people coming to live in Northern Ireland by country of last residence (2012 to 2015)

Country of last residence	People coming to live in Northern Ireland					
	Mid-2012 to Mid-2013		Mid-2013 to Mid-2014		Mid-2014 to Mid-2015	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
England	7,800	34	8,500	35	8,000	34
Scotland	2,100	9	2,100	9	1,900	8
Poland	2,200	9	2,100	8	1,900	8
Republic of Ireland	1,600	7	1,700	7	1,500	7
Romania	200	1	1,100	4	1,300	6
Lithuania	1,000	4	800	3	800	3
China	500	2	500	2	600	2
Portugal	500	2	600	2	500	2
Wales	400	2	400	2	400	2
Bulgaria	100	0	300	1	400	2
Spain	500	2	400	2	400	2
East Timor	300	1	300	1	400	2
United States of America	300	1	400	2	400	2
All other EU Accession Countries	1,200	5	1,100	4	1,000	4
All other countries	3,300	14	3,500	14	3,200	14
Unknown	1,200	5	700	3	700	3
Total	**23,100**	**100**	**24,400**	**100**	**23,600**	**100**

Source: HSC Business Services Organisation, May 2016, Medical Card Registrations

In contrast, 52 per cent of the 21,500 people who left Northern Ireland to live elsewhere between mid-2014 and mid-2015 went to the rest of the UK to live, with the remainder (48 per cent) moving to countries outside the UK. In total, it is estimated that 800 more people moved from Northern Ireland to live in the rest of the UK than moved in the opposite direction. Conversely, 2,800 more people came to live here from outside the UK than moved in the opposite direction.

Figure 1.6: Net total migration by age group and sex (2014-15)



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Age-Distribution of Migrants

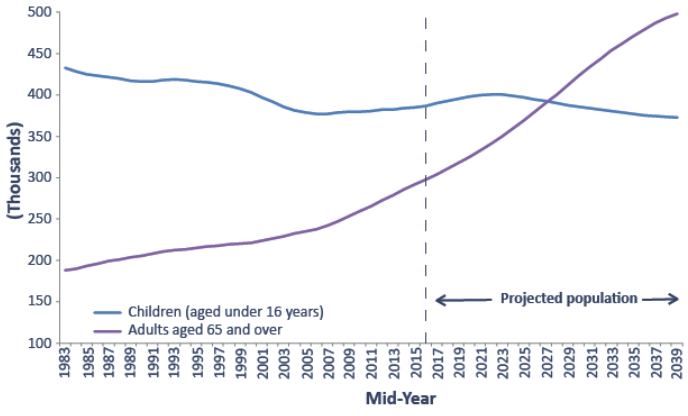
Figure 1.6 shows the age and sex distribution of net migration in Northern Ireland for the period mid-2014 to mid-2015. Of the age categories presented, the 18-24 age group is the only group to show a net outflow (1,200 people), which will include students who moved to the rest of the UK for study. For the remaining age categories the number of people coming to Northern Ireland exceeded the number of people who left. This was most noticeable among the 0-17 age group, which saw a net inflow of 1,700 young people. While there were also net inflows among the remaining age categories, it was relatively minor among those aged 55 and over.

Projected Population – Northern Ireland

Population projections are produced every other year and the latest projections[i], which use mid-2014 as the base year, indicate that the Northern Ireland population is projected to increase from 1.840 million people in mid-2014 to 1.939 million by mid-2024 (an increase of 5.3 per cent). Over the longer term the population is projected to reach 2.0 million people by mid-2034.

The projected increase in population is primarily due to natural growth. In the period mid-2014 to mid-2024, it is projected that there will be 89,000 more births than deaths. Migration projections suggest a net inflow of 9,200 people over the decade to mid-2024.

Figure 1.7: Children (those aged 0-15 years) and adults aged 65 and over, estimates (1983 to 2015) and projections (2016 to 2039) – non-zero y-axis



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The projections indicate a marked increase in the size of the population at older ages, as seen in Figure 1.7. While the population of children (i.e. those aged 0 to 15 years) in Northern Ireland is projected to increase by 3.9 per cent (14,900 children) over the decade mid-2014 to mid-2024, the population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 26 per cent, from 285,900 to 359,700. Indeed by mid-2028, the number of people aged 65 and over is projected to exceed the number of children.

i Further information on the 2014-based population projections is available at http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp20.htm

The largest projected population change, in percentage terms, will occur among those aged 85 and over, rising from 34,400 people in mid-2014 to 48,100 in mid-2024 (an increase of 40 per cent). By mid-2032 the population aged 85 and over will have doubled to 70,200.

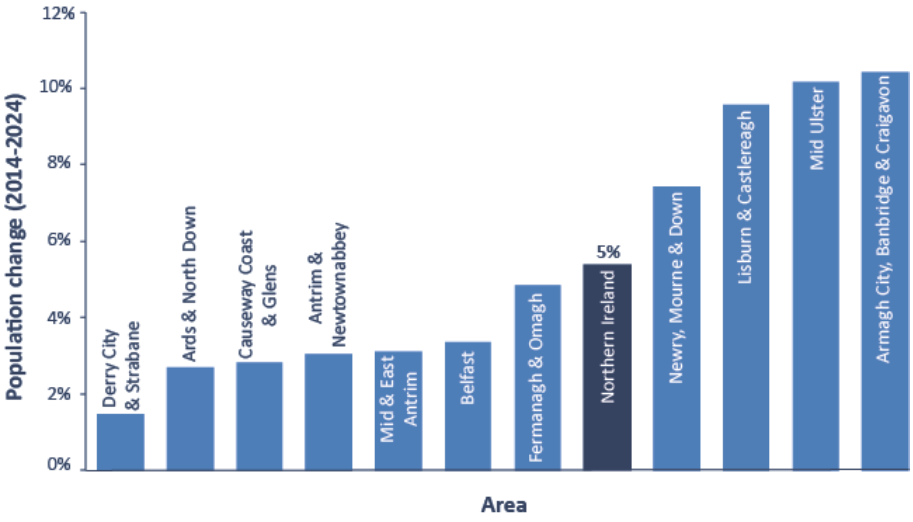
Projected Population – Areas within Northern Ireland

Population projections are also created for areas within Northern Ireland[i], with the latest local area projections, like the Northern Ireland projections, also using 2014 as the base year. Over the period 2014 to 2024, all of Northern Ireland's 11 Local Government Districts are projected to experience population growth.

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon is projected to have the highest percentage growth (10.4 per cent) with an increase from 205,700 to 227,100 between 2014 and 2024. Figure 1.8 shows the percentage change in all Local Government Districts.

The number of children (aged 0-15) is projected to increase in 6 out of the 11 Local Government Districts by 2024, with the largest percentage increase in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (9.6 per cent). The largest percentage decrease is projected in Ards & North Down (2.3 per cent).

Figure 1.8: Overall projected percentage change in population size of Local Areas between 2014 and 2024



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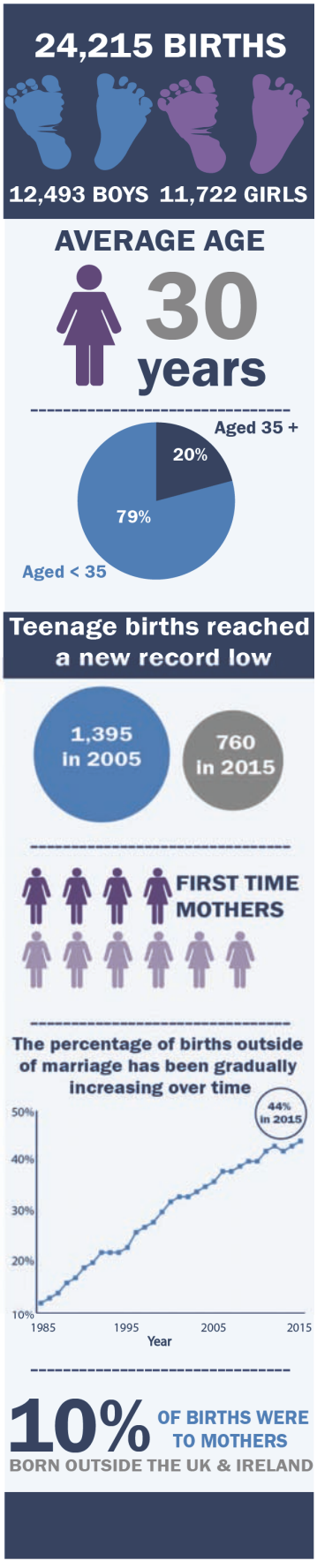
The population aged 16-64 years is projected to increase in 4 out of the 11 Local Government Districts by 2024, with the largest percentage increase in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (6.6 per cent). The largest percentage decrease is projected in Derry City & Strabane (3.5 per cent).

The population aged 65 years and over is projected to increase in all Local Government Districts by 2024, with the largest percentage increases in Newry, Mourne & Down, Mid Ulster and Fermanagh & Omagh Local Government Districts (33 per cent each). The smallest projected increase is in Belfast (15 per cent).

i Further information on the 2014-based population projections for areas within Northern Ireland is available at http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp47.htm.



Births

In 2015:

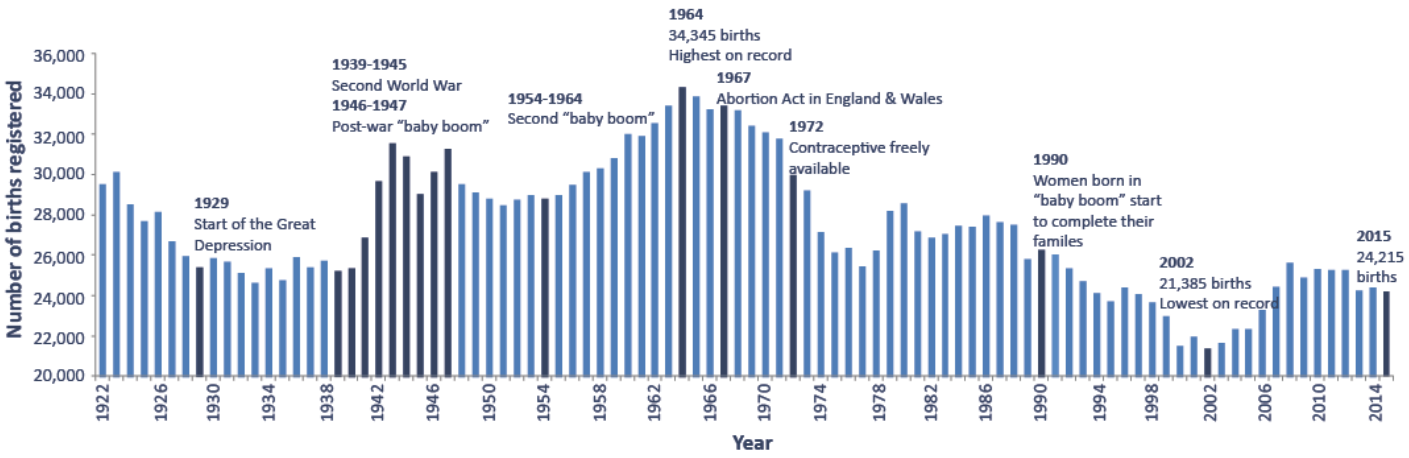
- There were 24,215 births (12,493 males and 11,722 females) registered to Northern Ireland mothers, 179 fewer than in 2014.
- The average age of mothers was 30.5 years, compared to 30.4 years in 2014.
- 22 per cent of all births were to mothers aged 35 years and over, up from 11 per cent 30 years ago.
- Teenage births reached a new record low of 760, down from 1,395 a decade ago.
- First time mothers accounted for 38 per cent of all births. 9.3 per cent of mothers already had 3 or more live born children, compared with 17 per cent in 1985, reflecting the trend towards smaller family sizes.
- 44 per cent of births occurred outside of marriage, a trend that has been gradually increasing over the years.
- Of the 23,936 maternities, 1.5 per cent resulted in multiple births; 343 sets of twins and 7 sets of triplets were born.
- 10 per cent of births were to mothers who were born outside the UK and Ireland. This compares with 5.0 per cent 10 years ago.

Numbers

In 2015, there were 24,215 live births (12,493 males and 11,722 females) registered to Northern Ireland mothers, 179 fewer than in 2014. This equates to approximately 66 babies born every day in Northern Ireland. The number of births in 2015 continues to be much lower than the corresponding figure from 30 years ago when 27,427 births were registered.

24,215 live births registered in 2015

Figure 1.9: Number of live births registered (1922 to 2015) – non-zero y-axis



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The 1920's saw a gradual decrease in the number of births registered in Northern Ireland, to around 25,000 by the end of the decade. The number of births continued at an average of 25,000 per year during the time of The Great Depression in the late 1920's and 1930's. Interestingly, the number of births fluctuated somewhat during the Second World War (1939-1945) and increased in the years immediately following the end of the War. Around a decade after the end of the War, Northern Ireland experienced a "baby boom", with the number of births peaking at 34,345 in 1964. This was followed by a sharp decline during the late 1960's and 1970's coinciding with the early years of the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland. The drop in the number of births levelled off in the 1980's at around 27,000 births per annum, mainly as a result of the greater number of women, who were born in the baby boom, passing through their childbearing years. A decline in births followed in the 1990's, as these women started to complete their families, before levelling off at 22,000 during the early 2000's. A gradual increase in the number of live births then started in 2006, stabilising at around 25,000 between 2008 and 2012, before declining to around 24,000 births per year in 2013.

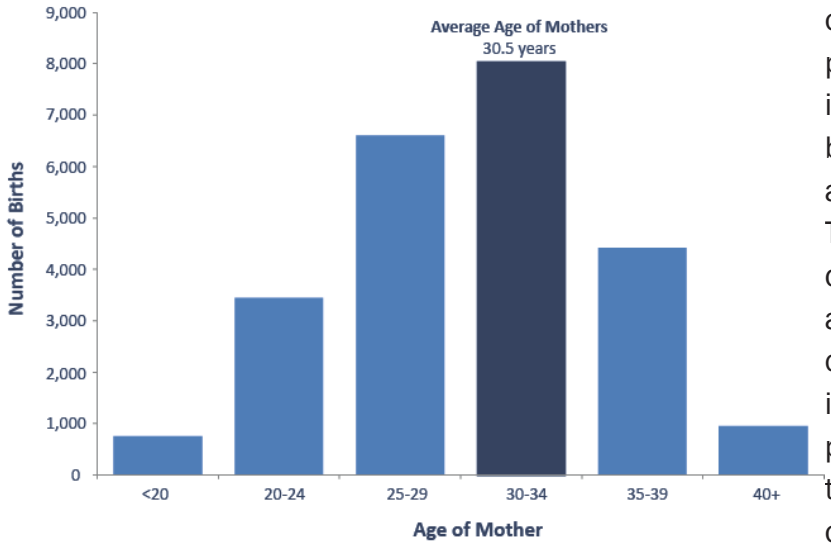
Highest births on record – 1964: 34,345

Lowest births on record – 2002: 21,385

Mother's Age

The average age of all mothers continues to increase, at 30.5 years compared with 29.6 in 2005 and 27.5 in 1985. For first time mothers, the average age was 28.4 years, compared with 27.1 in 2005 and 24.7 in 1985. Furthermore, 22 per cent of all births were to mothers aged 35 and over. This compares with a figure of 11 per cent 30 years ago. These findings indicate that women are delaying child-bearing until later in life, a trend which is apparent throughout the developed world. This is in spite of the well documented decline in female fertility that occurs with age[1]. Women may be waiting to have children later in life for several reasons, including attainment of educational and professional goals, improved access to contraception and increasing age of marriage[2]. In addition, it has been suggested that women may overestimate their 'fertility window' due to the success of assisted reproduction[1].

Figure 1.10: Live births by Age of Mother (2015)



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Average age of all mothers — 30.5 years

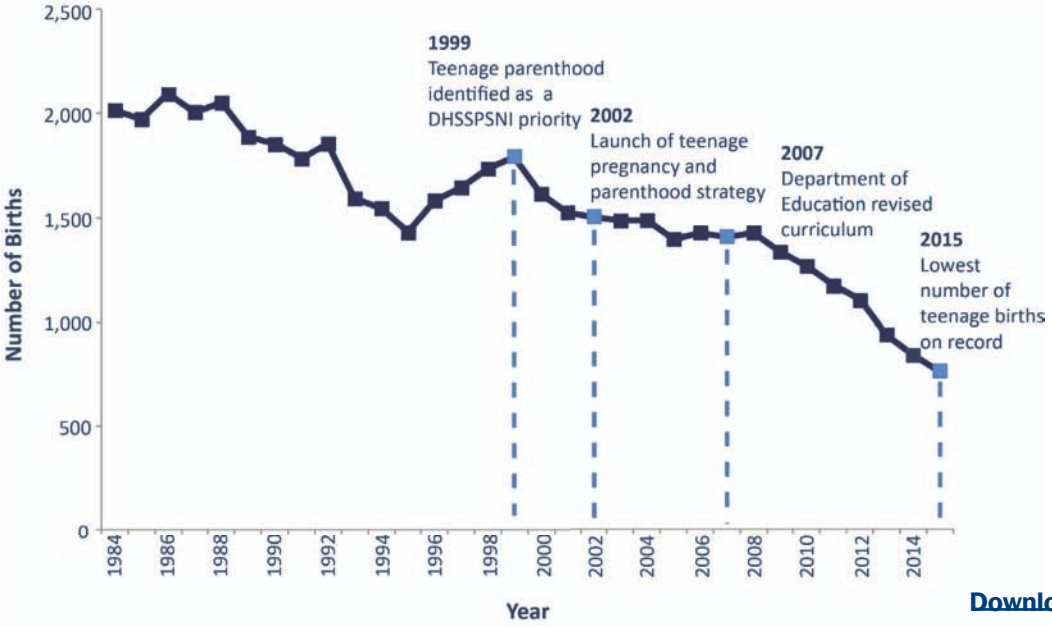
Average age of 1st time mothers — 28.4 years

Following the rise in births to teenage mothers in the mid 1990's, which peaked at 1,791 in 1999, the Department of Health launched the regional teenage pregnancy and parenthood strategy and action plan[3]. This policy aimed to reduce the number of births to teenage parents. Since 2002, the number of teenage births has seen a notable decline which may, in part, be due to the launch of the aforementioned strategy. Indeed, in 2015 the number of births to mothers aged under 20 years old continued to fall, reaching a new record low of 760 births registered. This is 9.4 per cent lower than in 2014 and approximately 46 per cent lower than in 2005 when there were 1,395 births to teenage mothers. In addition, the Department of Health strategy aimed to reduce the number of births to younger teenage mothers (i.e. those aged under 17 years old). Over the last decade, births to younger teenage mothers has more than halved from 145 to 66 births.

Since 2003 much of the focus from a Government perspective has been on educating teenagers, making resources widely available and providing assurances on confidentiality when seeking advice. In 2007, the Department of Education embarked on a revised curriculum which included compulsory components focused on self-awareness, personal health and relationships[4]. Since 2007 the number of births to teenage mothers has fallen by 46 per cent, which may in part be attributable to the changes in the curriculum.

Record low of 760 births to teenage mothers

Figure 1.11: Live births to Teenage Mothers, 1985 to 2015



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Father's Age

In 2015, the average age of all fathers[i] at the time of birth was 33.0 years compared to 30.2 years in 1985. More than two-thirds of the fathers were older than the mothers.

Average age of all fathers – 33.0 years

Fertility Rates

Fertility rates can be measured in a variety of ways, and can be broadly broken into "period" measures and "cohort" measures. "Period" measures refer to a cross-section of the population in one year. "Cohort" data on the other hand, follows the same people over a period of decades. Both period and cohort measures are widely used.

i Excluding 1,275 or 5.3 per cent of births where no father's details were available.

Figure 1.12: Estimated female population aged 15 to 44 and general fertility rate (1985 to 2015) – non-zero y-axes

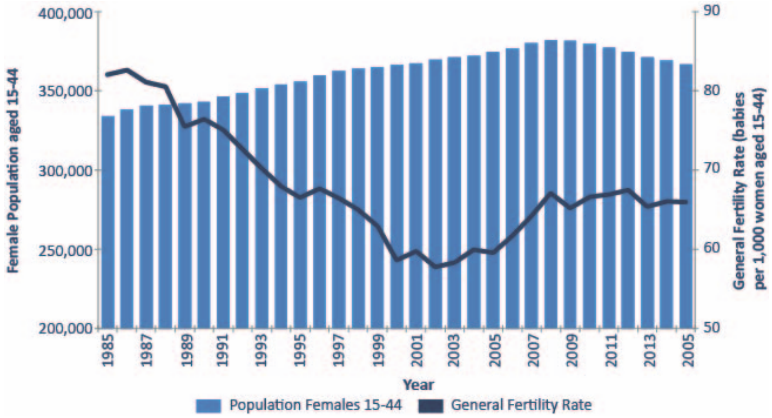

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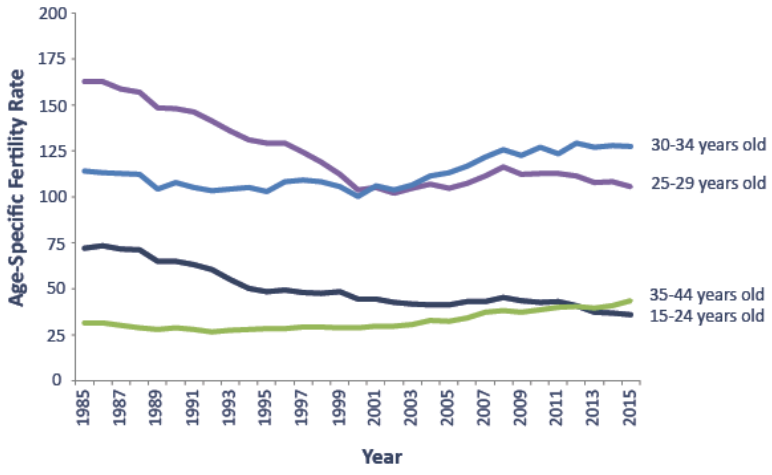
Figure 1.13: Live births per 1,000 women by age group of mother (1985 to 2015)



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Period Measures

The most commonly used period measures are the **Crude Birth Rate**[i] and the **General Fertility Rate**[ii]. Detailed definitions of both are available in Appendix 3, with the main difference being that the crude birth rate is based on the size of the general population and is therefore influenced by the age structure of the population, whereas the general fertility rate focuses on those most likely to have children, thus taking account of the age distribution.

The crude birth rate in Northern Ireland has been generally declining over time reaching a record low of 12.6 in 2002. By way of comparison, the crude birth rate in 2015 was 13.1 births per 1,000 population, which represents a slight reduction on the 2013 and 2014 rates (both 13.3).

The general fertility rate in a given year is best considered alongside the female population aged 15-44 for that year. In terms of trends, the population of females aged 15-44 increased between 1983 and 2008, before starting to decline thereafter. The general fertility rate on the other hand followed a downward trend from 1983 through to 2002, when it reached a record low of 57.8 births per 1,000 females aged 15-44. Thereafter the trend was generally upward with the general fertility rate in 2015 equating to 66.0 births per 1,000 population aged 15 to 44 years old.

The recent trend towards later childbearing is most apparent in the decline in fertility rates among 15-24 year old females. Over the past three decades fertility for this age group has halved from 72.3 babies per 1,000 women in 1985 to 35.8 babies per 1,000 women in 2015.

i A crude rate refers to the number of occurrences of the event per 1,000 population.

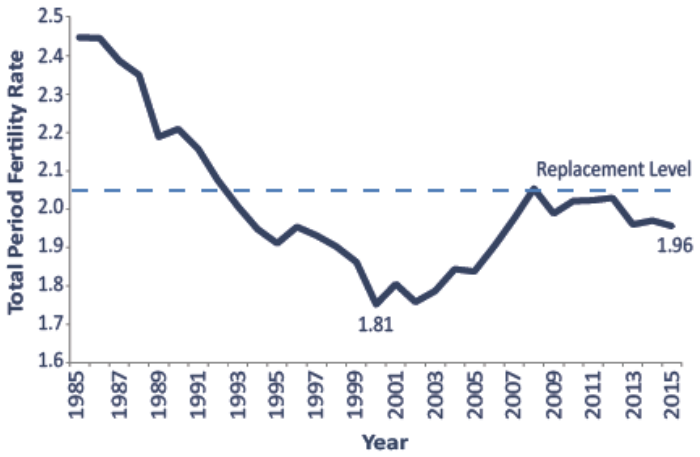
ii General fertility rate is the number of live births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years old.

In 2015, women aged 30-34 years experienced the highest age-specific fertility rate, with 127.6 babies per 1,000 women, while women aged 25-29 years experienced the second highest rate (105.4 babies per 1,000 women).

Cohort measures

Other useful measures of fertility are the **Total Period Fertility Rate (TPFR)**[i] and **Completed Family Size**[ii]. Both are cohort measures meaning they track theoretical groups of women over time. The TPFR is simply the average number of live-born children a woman would have in her lifetime, and is derived from the sum of the age-specific fertility rates of a given year. A value of 2.1 is generally taken to be the level at which the population would replace itself in the long run, ignoring migration. The TPFR dropped below replacement level in Northern Ireland for the first time in 1992. In 2015 the TPFR was 1.96, which is a recovery from a record low of 1.75 in 2000, but still below the fertility rates in the 1980's and early 1990's.

Figure 1.14: Total period fertility rate (1985 to 2015) – non-zero y-axis



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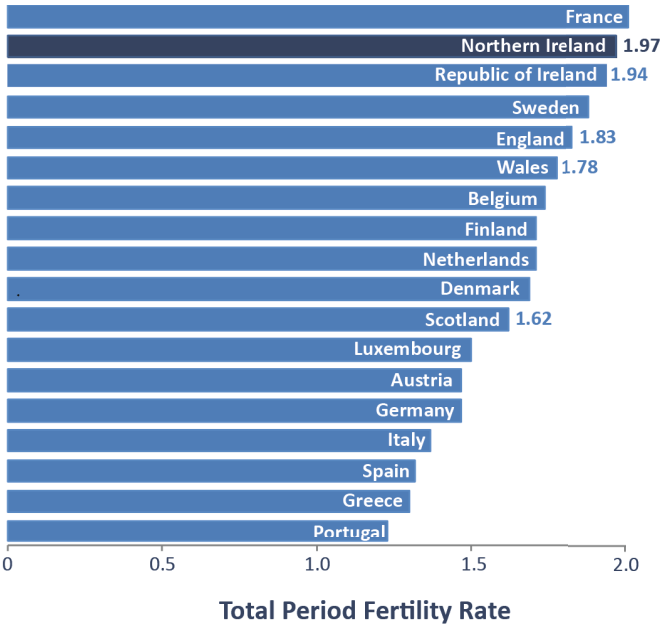
Northern Ireland has the highest TPFR (1.97) of the constituent countries of the UK when comparing latest available figures for 2014. France is the only EU15 country with a higher TPFR (2.01) than that in Northern Ireland[5], with the Republic of Ireland slightly below that of Northern Ireland (1.94).

A further measure of fertility is completed family size, which is a more accurate picture of fertility for a specific group of women born in a certain year. Family size at age 45 is taken to represent completed family size. This enables easy comparison between selected groups of women as they pass through the child-bearing ages.

Figure 1.15: Total period fertility rate, EU15 and Constituent Countries of the UK (2014)



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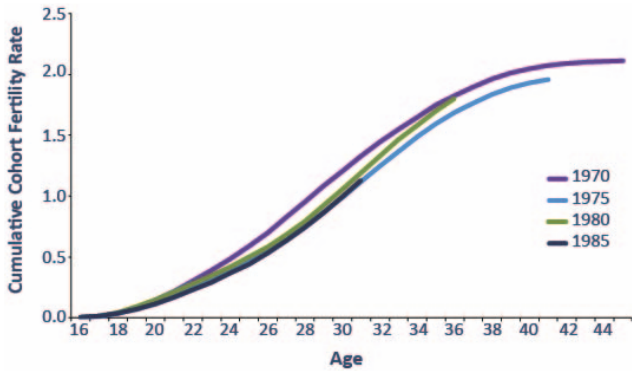
In Northern Ireland those women who were born

i The TPFR is the average number of children that would be born to a cohort of women who experienced, throughout their childbearing years, the fertility rates of the calendar year in question

ii Completed Family Size is the average completed size of a family by the time the woman has reached 45 years old.

Figure 1.16: Cumulative fertility rate for cohorts born in selected years



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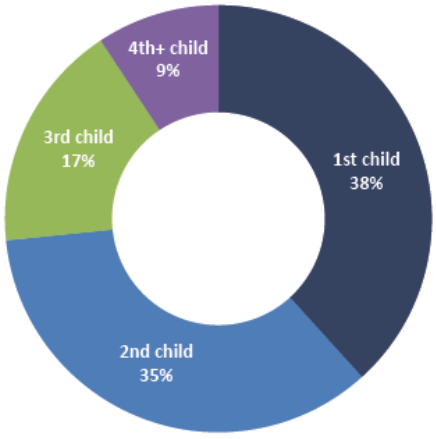
in 1970 had attained an average completed family size of 2.1 children by the time they reached 45. By the age of 30 years, the family size of the 1985 group of women was 1.0 children compared to 1.2 children for the 1970 group of women. A key point in Figure 1.16 is how closely the fertility rate of the 1985 group of women tracks the 1975 group, with both being level at age 30. In addition, the 1980 group of women is ahead, in terms of fertility, of the 1975 group at the age of 30 years old.

Overall fertility rates have been falling in Northern Ireland over time. During the majority of the last century fertility has had the largest contribution to the population change, far exceeding the contributions of mortality and migration. While declining fertility rates can initially be beneficial in terms of economic growth; the proportion of children in the population falls and the proportion of working age increases. Over time however, this leads to a decline in the working age population and an aging population develops.

Birth Order

Of the 24,215 births registered in Northern Ireland, 38 per cent were to first-time mothers, a slight decrease from 39 per cent in 2014. Second-time and third-time mothers represented 35 per cent and 17 per cent of births respectively. In 2015, 9.3 per cent of mothers already had 3 or more live born children, compared with 17 per cent in 1985, reflecting the trend towards smaller family sizes.

Figure 1.17: Percentage of live births by number of previous children born (2015)



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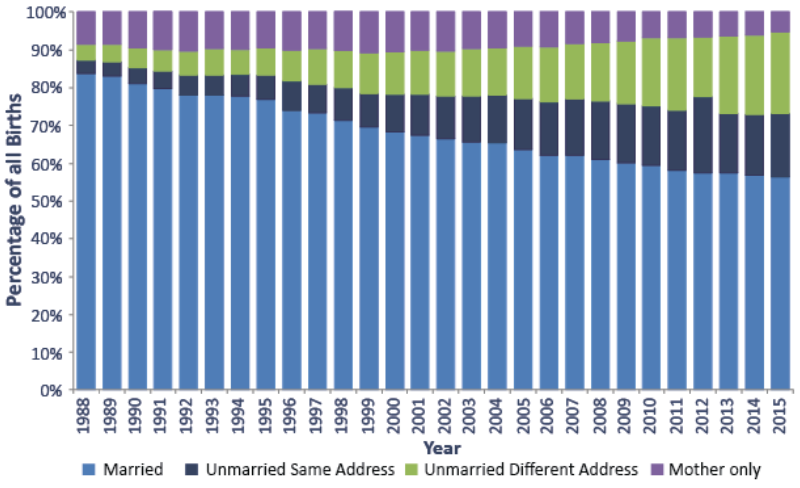
Partnership Status of Parents

The number of births within marriage continues to show a decreasing trend. For example, a decade ago 64 per cent of births were to married parents, whereas in 2015 the comparable figure was noticeably lower at 56 per cent. Similarly, 44 per cent of all births in 2015 occurred outside marriage, proportionately more than the 36 per cent of such births a decade ago. This proportion has been steadily increasing since the early 1960's when the proportion of children born outside marriage was around 2 per cent. Declines in marital childbearing in Northern Ireland are consistent with figures throughout the United States[6] and European Union[7] including England and Wales[8], Scotland[9] and Republic of Ireland[10].

Since 1988, information has been gathered that identifies births registered by married parents, unmarried parents[i] or by the mother only. Where the birth is jointly registered and the parents give the same address, it can be inferred that the parents are cohabiting. In recent years the percentage of births registered to cohabiting parents has increased from 6.5 per cent in 1995 to 17 per cent in 2015. This trend is consistent with an increase in the number of couples choosing to cohabit rather than entering into marriage. While the majority (88 per cent) of births that occurred outside of marriage were jointly registered by both parents, some 12 per cent of mothers chose to solely register their baby without providing the fathers' details.

Figure 1.18: Live births by registration status (1988 to 2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 33Kb)

Births outside of marriage tend to decrease with increasing age of the mother. A total of 98 per cent of births to mothers under the age of 20 were outside marriage. This compares to 87 per cent of births to mothers aged between 20 and 24, and 34 per cent of births for those aged 25 and over.

Multiple Births

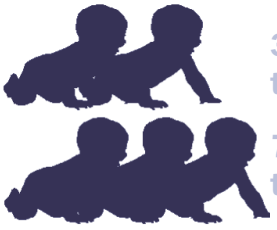
In 2015, 342 sets of twins and 7 sets of triplets were registered in Northern Ireland. Such multiple births accounted for 1.5 per cent of all maternities, a decrease on the highest level ever recorded in Northern Ireland in 2011 of 1.7 per cent.

The percentage of maternities resulting in multiple births increases with the age of the mother. For example, 0.4 per cent of maternities to mothers aged under 20 years old resulted in multiple births. This compares to a figure of 15.1 per cent for mothers aged 45 and over, and can be attributed in part to higher levels of assisted fertility treatment in older mothers.

Multiple births increase with mother's age

Place of Birth

The Royal Group of Hospitals in Belfast delivered 24 per cent of all babies born in Northern Ireland in 2015. Births at the Ulster Hospital Dundonald and Craigavon Area Hospital each accounted for the delivery of 17 per cent of all births respectively.



342 sets of twins

7 sets of triplets

i Unmarried parents include those living at the same address or at a different address.

Table 2: Percentage of maternities resulting in a multiple birth by age of mother, 2015

	Age of Mother						
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45+
Percentage of maternities resulting in a multiple birth	0.4	0.8	1.1	1.5	2.1	2.0	15.1

24 per cent of all babies were born in the Royal Group of Hospitals

Whilst the number of births fell at a number of hospitals, births at the Mater Hospital Belfast continued to show a sharp decline, falling from around 1,100 per annum prior to 2013 to 196 in 2015. A similar decrease in the number of babies delivered at Lagan Valley Hospital was also apparent, falling from around 1,100 prior to 2011 to approximately 200 in subsequent years. In contrast there was a sharp increase in the number of babies being delivered at the Ulster Hospital with 4,131 births last year compared to around 3,000 babies in the years prior to 2010.

In 2015, 93 babies were born in places other than a hospital, representing an increase of 16 per cent on the previous year. The majority of these babies (75) were born at home. Home births continue to represent a very small proportion of all births, but recent guidelines from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence[11] advise that a birth in either the home or a Midwifery Led Unit are thought to be equally safe for mothers who have previously given birth and who are considered to have a low risk pregnancy.

Births by Area

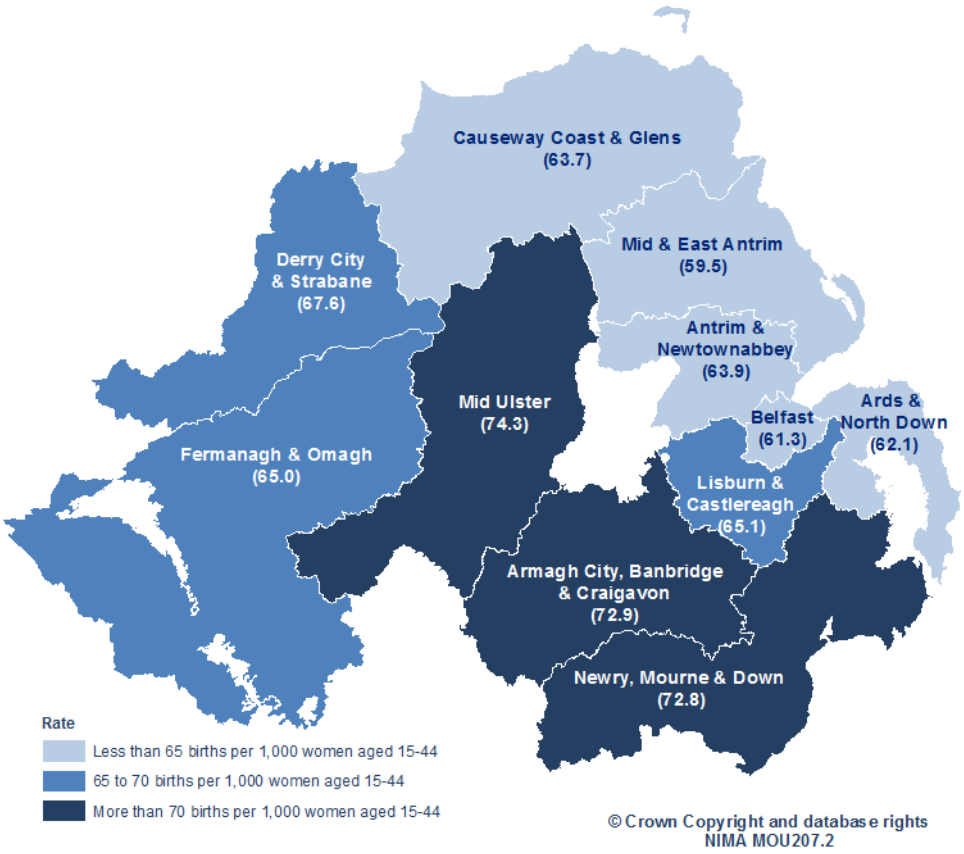
Mid Ulster had the highest general fertility rate of all the 11 Local Government Districts, followed by Newry, Mourne & Down and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, while the lowest general fertility rates were in Mid & East Antrim and Ards & North Down.

At Health and Social Care Trust level, general fertility rates ranged from 61.5 births per 1,000 females aged 15-44 in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to 73.3 births per 1,000 females aged 15-44 in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

Country of Birth of Parents

In 2015, 18 per cent of all births were to mothers who were born outside Northern Ireland. Of the 4,247 such births, 43 per cent were to mothers who were born either elsewhere in the United Kingdom or in the Republic of Ireland, a noticeable drop from the comparable figure in 2005 (66 per cent). In contrast, there has been a sharp rise in the number of births to mothers who were born in the A8 countries[i], increasing from 118 births in 2005 to 1,205 births in 2015. This change has been partly driven by women coming to live in Northern Ireland from the A8 countries that joined the European Union in 2004.

Figure 1.19: Live births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44, by Local Government District (2015)



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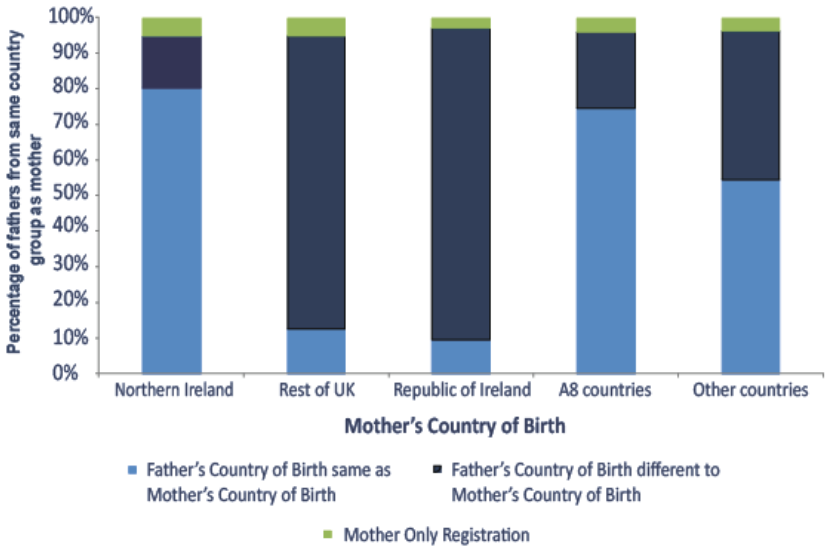
The percentage of births to mothers born outside the UK and Ireland was 10 per cent in 2015. This percentage was first reached in 2013 and is significantly higher than the 5.0 per cent of births registered to these mothers 10 years ago.

10 per cent of births to mothers born outside the UK and Ireland

For births where the mother was born in Northern Ireland, 85 per cent had a father who was also born in Northern Ireland. For births where the mother was born in the rest of the UK or the Republic of Ireland, the majority of fathers (85 per cent) were not born in these regions, with 76 per cent from Northern Ireland. The trend is different for children whose mother was born in an A8 country, where 78 per cent of these children have a father who was also born in an A8 country.

i The A8 countries are a group of the 10 countries that joined the European Union (EU) on 1 May 2004 and include the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Malta and Cyprus also joined the EU in 2004 but are considered separately from the A8 countries as they have full free movement rights to work throughout the EU.

Figure 1.20: Live births in Northern Ireland by mother's and father's country of birth (2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 30Kb)

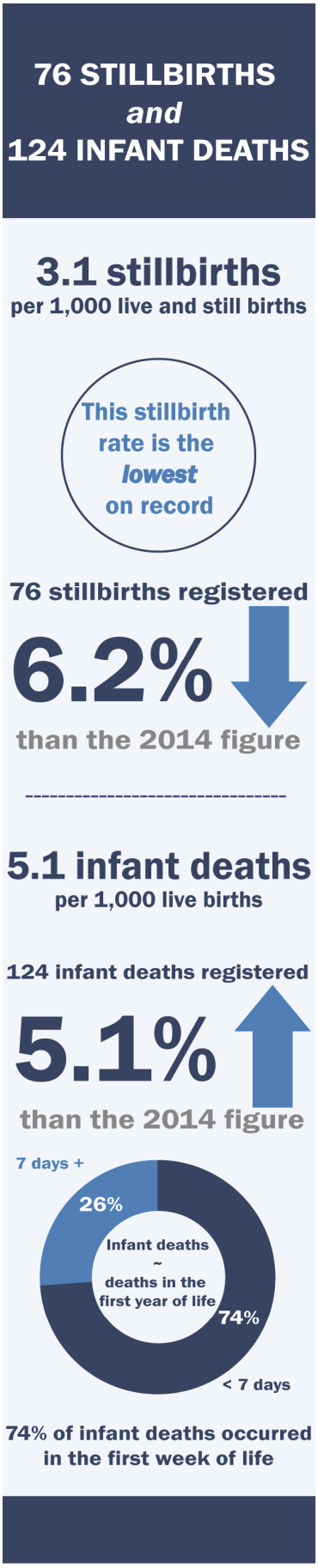
Births to Non-Residents

The statistics presented in this report relate to mothers living in Northern Ireland, however all births occurring in the country must be registered here. In 2015, 210 births were registered where the mother lived outside Northern Ireland, 11 fewer births than the previous year (221). The vast majority of these births (92 per cent) were to mothers living in the Republic of Ireland giving birth in hospitals near the border, primarily Altnagelvin Area Hospital and Daisy Hill Hospital.

Stillbirths and Infant Deaths

In 2015:

- 76 stillbirths were registered, 6.2 per cent fewer than in 2014 and the lowest number ever recorded in Northern Ireland.
- The 124 infant deaths (i.e. deaths in the first year of life) represent a slight increase on the previous year (118 infant deaths) and equate to 5.1 deaths per 1,000 live births.
- Three quarters (74 per cent) of all infant deaths occurred in the first week of life.



76 stillbirths registered – lowest number ever recorded in NI

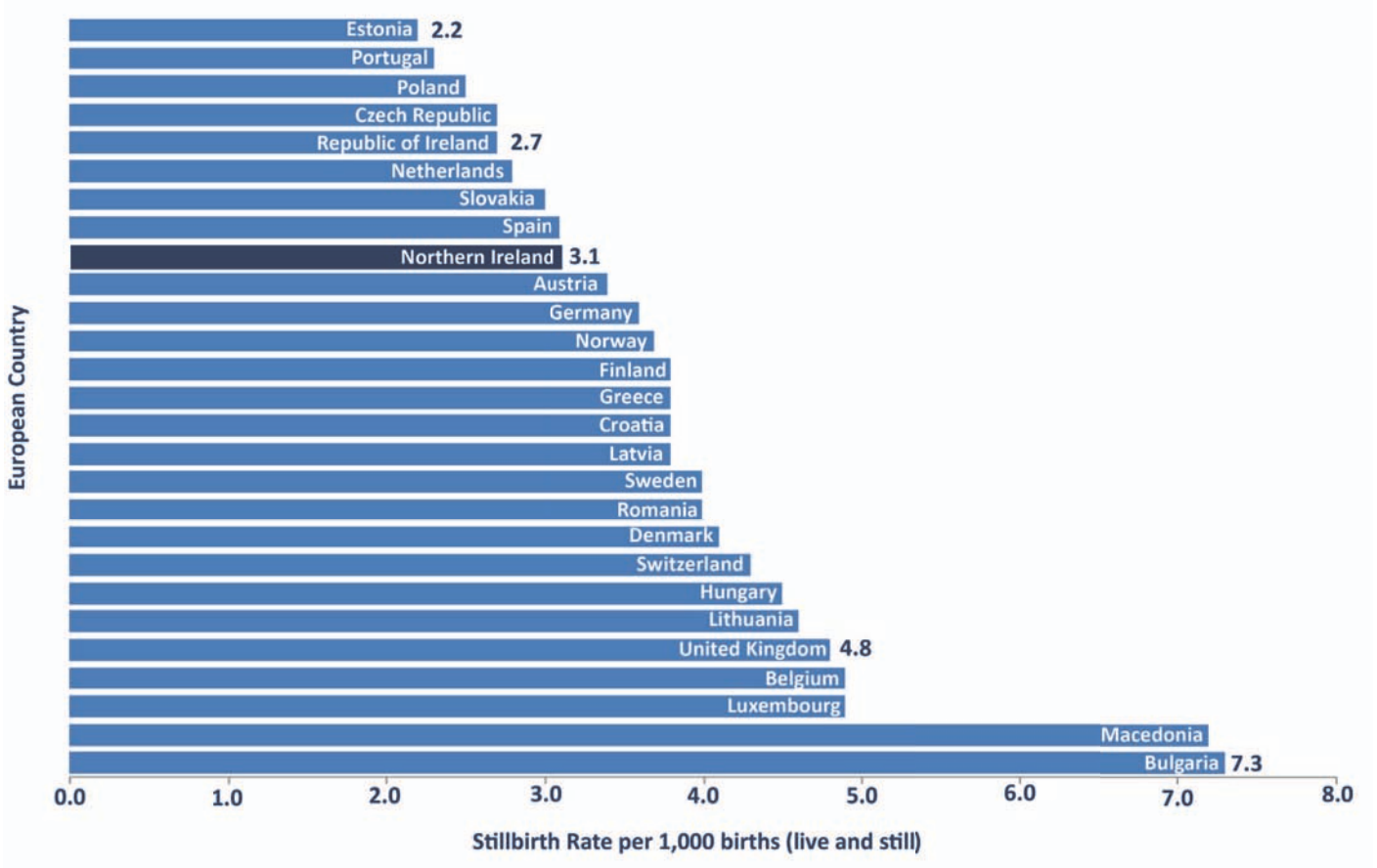
3.1 stillbirths per 1,000 births – lowest rate ever recorded in NI

Stillbirth Numbers and Rates

A stillbirth is a baby that is born deceased after 24 completed weeks of pregnancy[12]. In 2015, there were 76 stillbirths registered, a decrease of 6.2 per cent on the previous year and the lowest number ever recorded in Northern Ireland.

Over the past 30 years the stillbirth rate has fallen significantly, from 6.4 stillbirths per 1,000 births (live and still) in 1985 to 3.1 in 2015. Indeed, the 2015 stillbirth rate represents the lowest ever recorded in Northern Ireland. This fall has happened despite a change in the definition of stillbirths in 1992, which reduced the minimum period of gestation from 28 to 24 weeks. Having said that, the 2015 stillbirth rate in Northern Ireland was higher than in other European countries such as Estonia, where the most recent stillbirth rate was documented as 2.2 per 1,000 births (live and still) in 2013[13]. Against this background, through the work of charities such as SANDS (Stillbirth and neonatal death charity)[14] and 'Count the Kicks'[15] the aim is to further decrease the stillbirth rate throughout the UK.

Figure 1.21: Latest available stillbirth rates for European countries



Download Chart (XLS Format – 30Kb)

Latest available figures range from 2013 to 2015. Source: Eurostat[13]

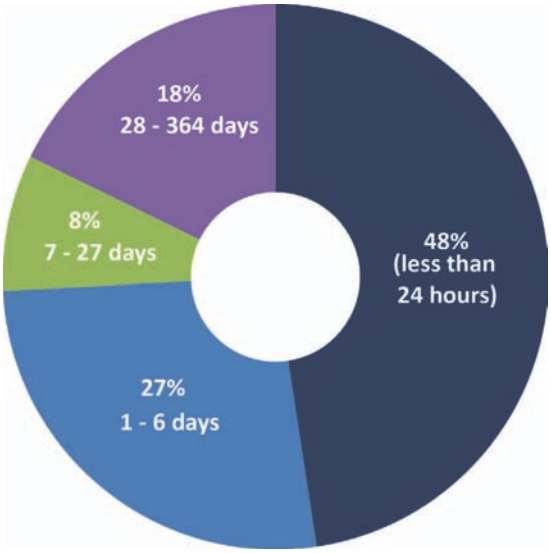
Infant Death Numbers and Rates

The number of infant deaths (i.e. deaths in the first year of life) totalled 124, representing a small increase from the 2014 figure of 118. Deaths in infants aged under 1 week old accounted for 74 per cent of all infant deaths with 48 per cent of infants dying on their first day of life.

Over the past 30 years, the infant death rate has fallen from 9.6 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 1985 to 5.1 in 2015. However as illustrated in Figure 1.23, the rate in 2015 remains one of the higher rates in Europe, which (based on the latest available data) ranges from 1.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in Cyprus to 11.1 in Turkey.

As with stillbirths and infant deaths, the numbers of perinatal, neonatal and postneonatal deaths (see Appendix 3 for definitions) have reduced greatly since the 1940's and 1950's. However in 2015, both the number of perinatal deaths (169) and neonatal deaths (102) were marginally higher than in 2014 (161 and 96 respectively). Similar to previous years, males accounted for more perinatal, neonatal and postneonatal deaths than females.

Figure 1.22: Infant deaths by age at death (2015)



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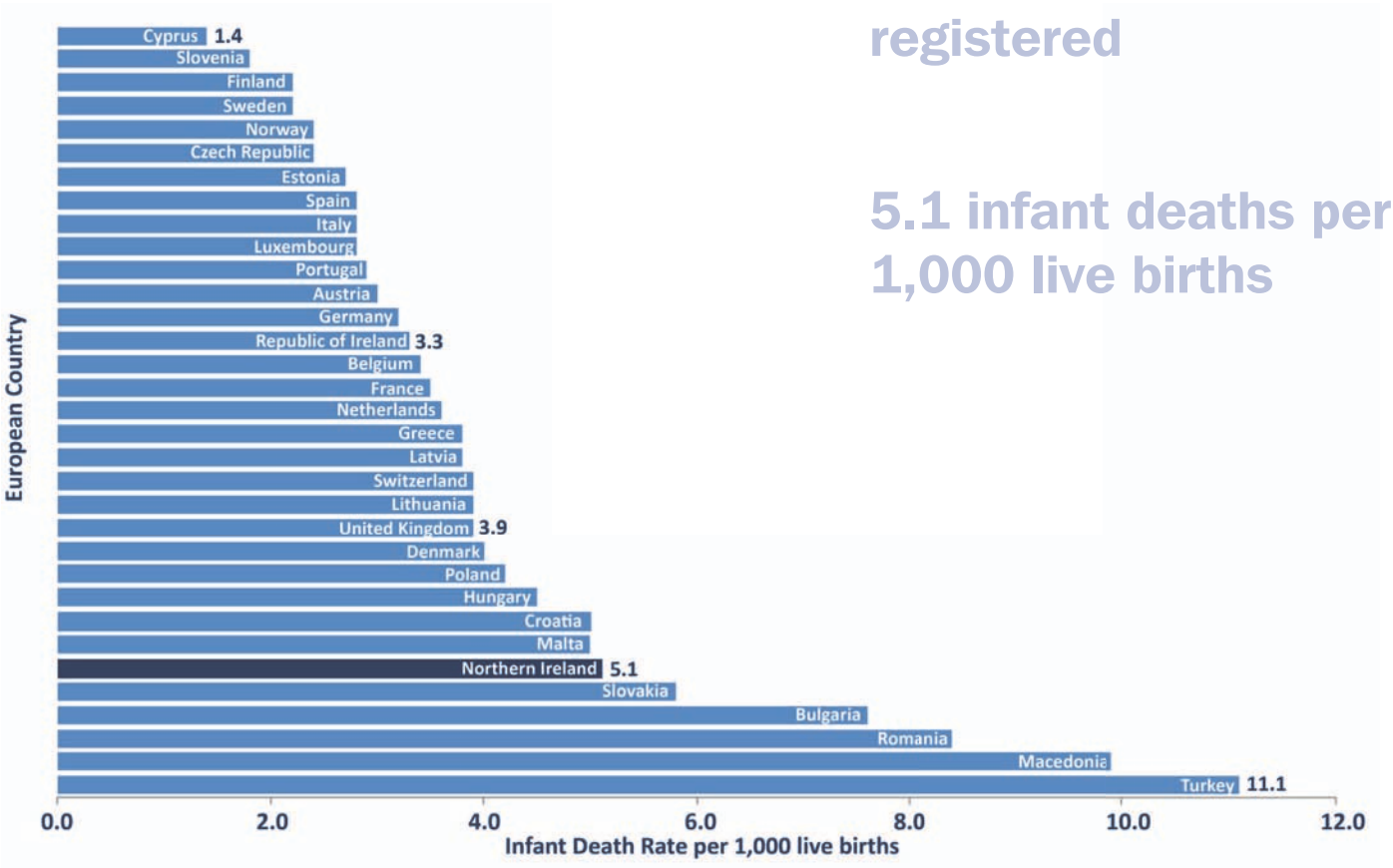
124 infant deaths registered

5.1 infant deaths per 1,000 live births

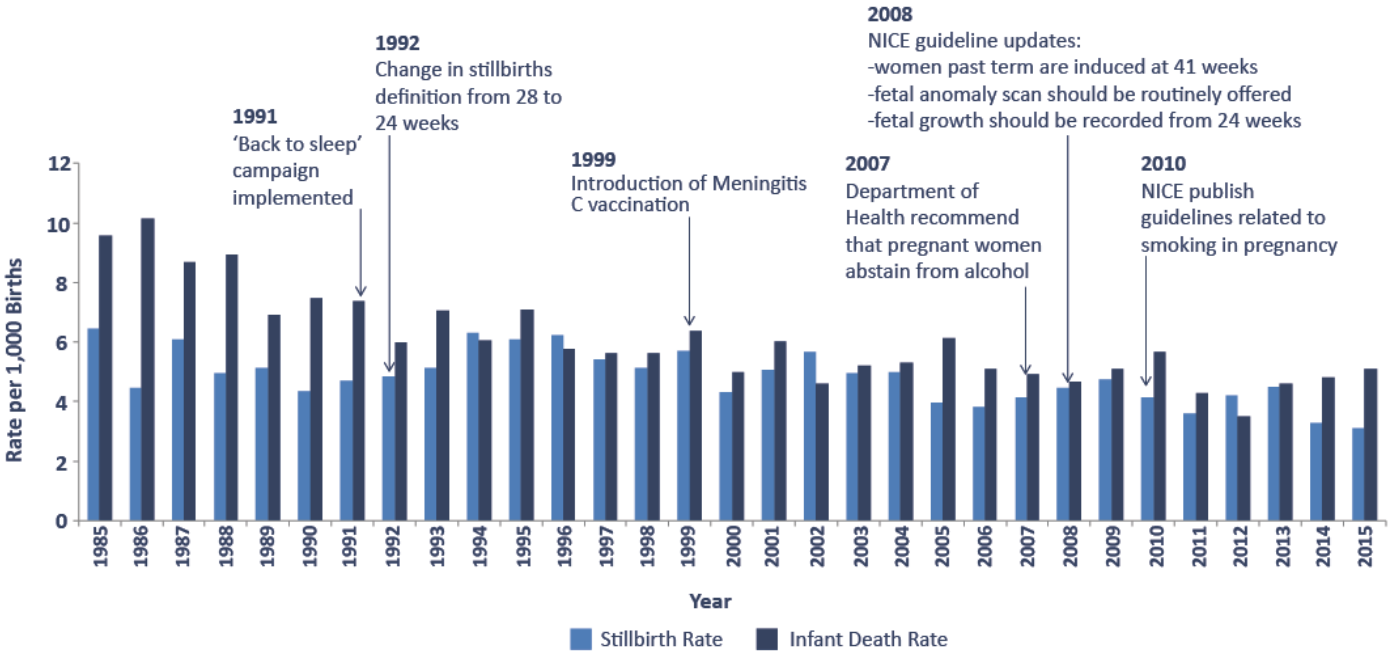
Figure 1.23: Latest available infant mortality rates for European countries



Download Chart (XLS Format – 31Kb)

Latest available figures range from 2012 to 2015. Source: Eurostat[13]

Figure 1.24: Stillbirth and infant death rates (1985 to 2015)



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Record low number and rate of stillbirths in 2015

Causes of Infant Deaths and Stillbirths

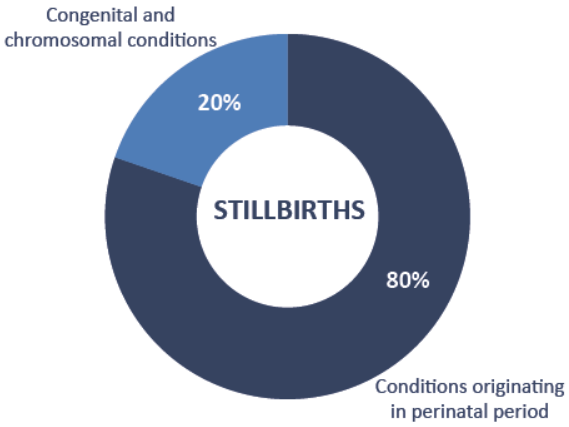
All deaths and stillbirths are coded using the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th revision (ICD-10). Classification of the underlying cause of death is done by reference to the death certificate and additional information from the certifying doctor. Further information relating to ICD-10 codes used to classify causes of death, including those discussed below, can be found on the World Health Organisation website[16].

Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities refer to conditions present at birth that are caused by an abnormally formed part of the body, having an abnormal number of chromosomes[i], or having chromosomes with missing or extra pieces. These conditions were the cause of 20 per cent of stillbirths and 35 per cent of infant deaths.

A further 80 per cent of stillbirths and 53 per cent of infant deaths were caused by conditions originating in the period after the 28th week of pregnancy (i.e. in the perinatal period).

i Chromosomes are the thread-like bodies that contain genetic/hereditary information.

Figure 1.25: Stillbirths and Infant Deaths by Cause of Death (2015)



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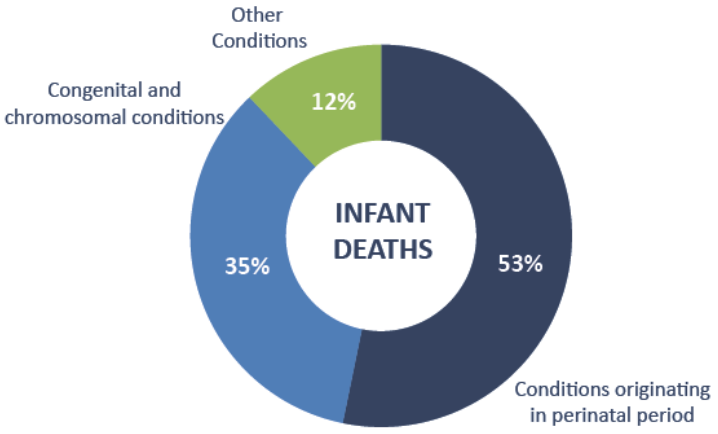

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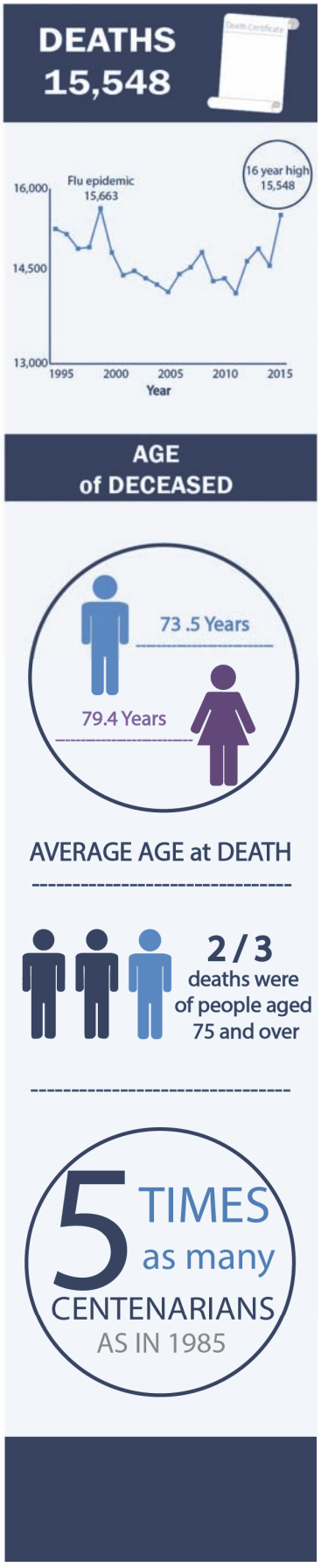
Other conditions include sudden infant death syndrome, also known as 'cot death', which is the sudden unexplained death of a child aged under 1 year old. In 2015, 4 infants died as a result of sudden infant death syndrome. The number of infant deaths attributed to this cause has fluctuated between 0 and 16 deaths over the past 30 years, with lower numbers during the 2000's compared to during the 1980's and 1990's. There were also 11 infant deaths caused by infectious and parasitic diseases, diseases of the circulatory, respiratory and nervous systems and other ill-defined and unspecified causes of mortality.

4 deaths due to sudden infant death syndrome ('cot death')

Pregnancy, Childbirth and Puerperium

Occasionally deaths are caused by pregnancy, childbirth and the period immediately following childbirth. In 2015, 1 maternal death was registered due to complications of labour and delivery. There was also 1 maternal death in 2014. Over the past 30 years, 32 maternal deaths have been registered with the highest number (5 deaths) reported in 2009.

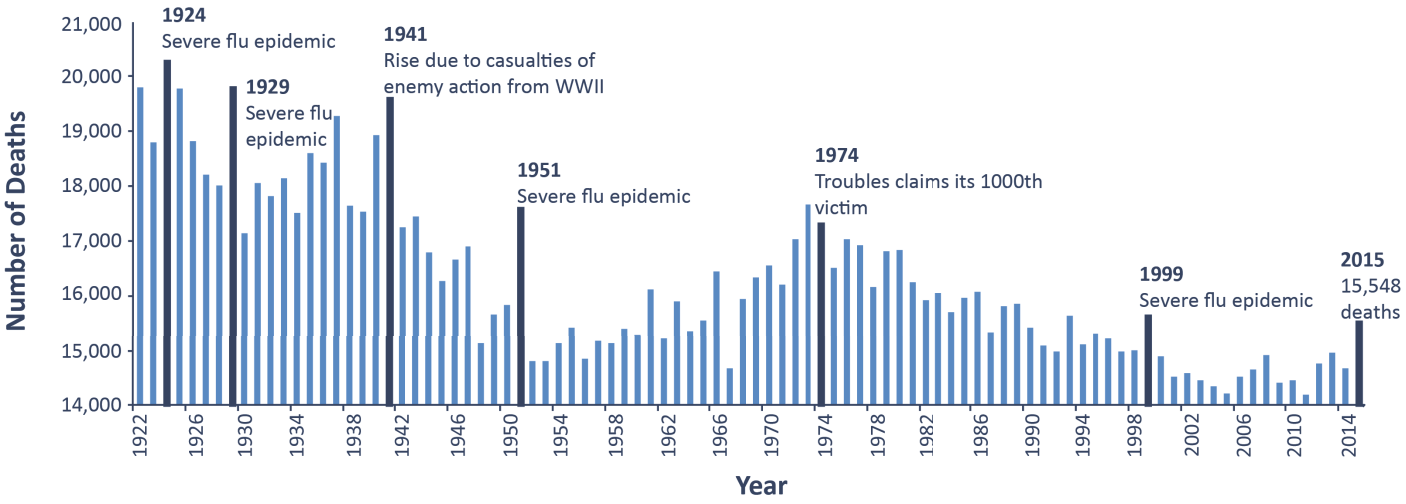


Deaths

In 2015:

- 15,548 deaths were registered – the highest number recorded since the severe flu epidemic of 1999 (15,663).
- There were 104 female deaths for every 100 male deaths, exceeding the female to male ratio in the population as a whole (103 females: 100 males).
- Average age at death for men was 73.5 years compared with 79.4 for women.
- Almost 2 out of every 3 deaths were of people aged 75 or over.
- Women born today in Northern Ireland are expected to live to 82.3, 4 years longer than men (78.3).
- 22 per cent of deaths occurred in NHS hospitals, with a further 20 per cent occurring in other hospitals or nursing homes.
- There were 149 deaths of people aged 100 or more, almost 5 times the number of 30 years previously (31 in 1985).

Figure 1.26: Number of deaths registered (1922 to 2015) – non-zero y-axis



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There were 15,548 deaths registered in 2015, an increase of 5.9 per cent on 2014 and the highest number recorded since the severe flu epidemic of 1999 (15,663). This equates to an average of 42 deaths registered per day in 2015. A discussion on factors contributing to the increase in deaths in 2015 can be found in the next section.

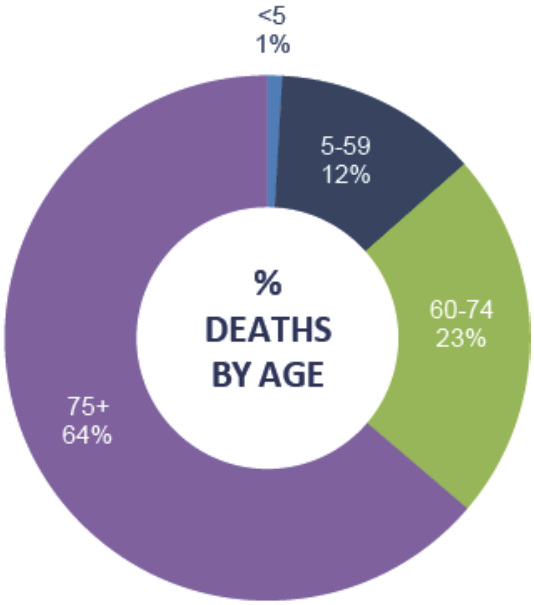
Despite the increase in deaths in 2015, there has been an overall reduction in the number of deaths during the past 30 years despite the population increasing in size and containing a higher proportion of elderly people. For example, the size of the current population is 18 per cent larger than it was in 1985[17] and those aged 75 and over represent 7.0 per cent of the population now compared to only 5.0 per cent in 1985. Indeed, if the age-specific death rates of 1985 still applied today, the number of deaths registered in 2015 would have been more than 25,000; over 10,000 higher than the actual number registered. This decrease is reflected in the continuing reduction in mortality rates across all age groups and the corresponding increase in life expectancy.

42 deaths on average per day

Deaths by Date of Registration and Date of Occurrence

All figures recorded in this report are based on the year that the death was registered and not the year in which the death occurred. While the vast majority of deaths are registered shortly after death, some can take time to be registered, for example events such as an infant death or suicide must be referred to a coroner for investigation[18]. The vast majority of deaths (95 per cent) that were registered in 2015 also occurred in 2015.

Figure 1.27: Percentage of Deaths by Age (2015)



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Mortality by Age

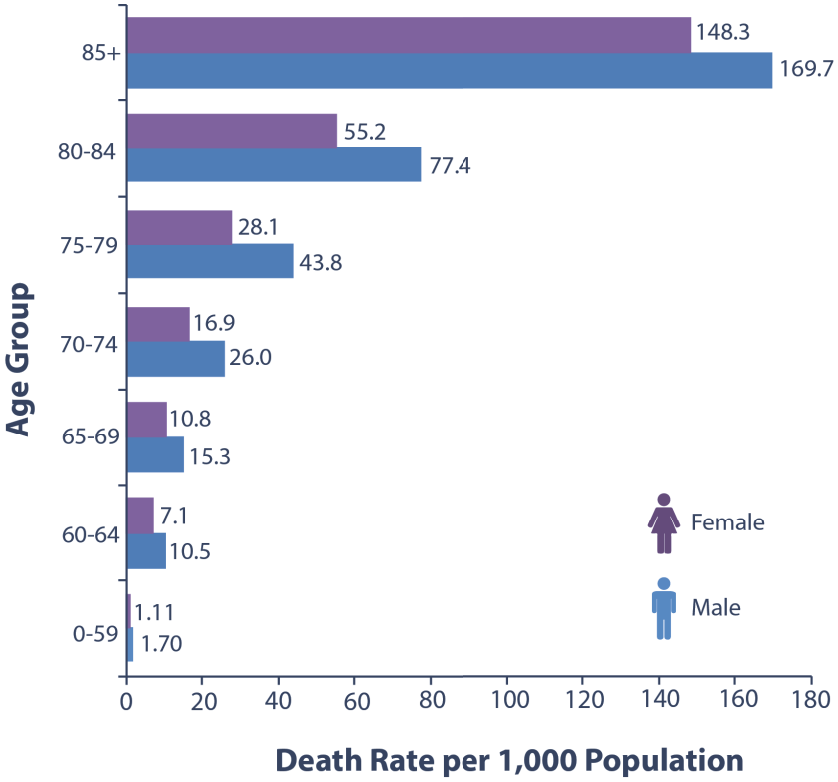
The majority of deaths were of people aged 75 or over (64 per cent), with a further 23 per cent aged 60 to 74. Children under the age of 5 accounted for less than 1 per cent of all deaths.

The average age at death was 73.5 years for males and 79.4 years for females, an increase of more than 5 years for both males (68.0 years) and females (74.2 years) since 1985. This reflects the increased survival of males and females over the period and the consequential ageing of the population.

From the relatively high rates of death in children aged under 1 year (5.6 and 4.6 per 1,000 population of males and females respectively), death rates sharply decline through childhood. The lowest age-specific death rates (ASDRs) were experienced by males and females aged between 1 and 14 years old (between <0.1 and 0.2 per 1,000 population). ASDRs gradually begin to increase from 15 years of age for both males and females. Throughout the life span ASDRs are generally higher for males, however the difference becomes more prominent after the age of 70 years.

Throughout life, age specific death rates are higher for males than females

Figure 1.28: Age-specific death rates by age group and sex (2015)



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Compared to 3 decades previously, the annual risk of dying has declined for people of all ages, with the exception of 30-34 year old males (whose risk has increased by 11 per cent). The largest decline in the age-specific death rates occurred in the 10 to 14 years age group (down 73 per cent for males and 91 per cent for females).

Table 3: Age-specific death rates by age group and sex (2015)

2015	Age Specific Mortality Rates	
Age	Male	Female
<1	5.6	4.6
1-4	0.2	0.1
5-9	0.1	0.1
10-14	0.1	0.0
15-24	0.6	0.2
25-34	1.1	0.4
35-44	1.7	0.9
45-54	3.3	2.4
55-64	7.9	5.5
65-69	15.3	10.8
70-74	26.0	16.9
75-79	43.8	28.1
80-84	77.4	55.2
85+	169.7	148.3

Mortality by Sex

The number of female deaths continues to outnumber that of males, as it has done for the last 25 years. Some 7,953 females and 7,595 males died, giving a sex ratio of 104 female deaths for every 100 male deaths. This contrasts with the population ratio which is currently lower, with 103 females for every 100 males.

104 female deaths for every 100 male deaths

In 1985, the death rate among males was higher than that of females (10.6 deaths per 1,000 population compared to females with a death rate of 9.9). Thirty years on the death rate has lowered for both sexes, and males and females now have the same death rate (8.4).

Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is the most commonly used measure to describe the health of the population and reflects the overall mortality level of a population. Improvements in public health, nutrition and vaccinations have been the main factors influencing increased life expectancies across the world over the last century[19].

Similar to fertility rates, life expectancy estimates can be measured using both "period" and "cohort" measures and have a degree of uncertainty irrespective of how they are calculated. Period life expectancy statistics are calculated using today's age-specific mortality rates enabling the comparison of mortality rates over time and for different areas. However, this is unlikely to be a true reflection of what could actually happen because mortality rates continue to decrease over time.

Cohort life expectancy, on the other hand, uses age-specific mortality rates over the lifetime of a group of people (a cohort) born in the same year. While this approach takes account of possible improvements in mortality rates over time, it incorporates population projections and therefore is inherently more uncertain than period estimates.

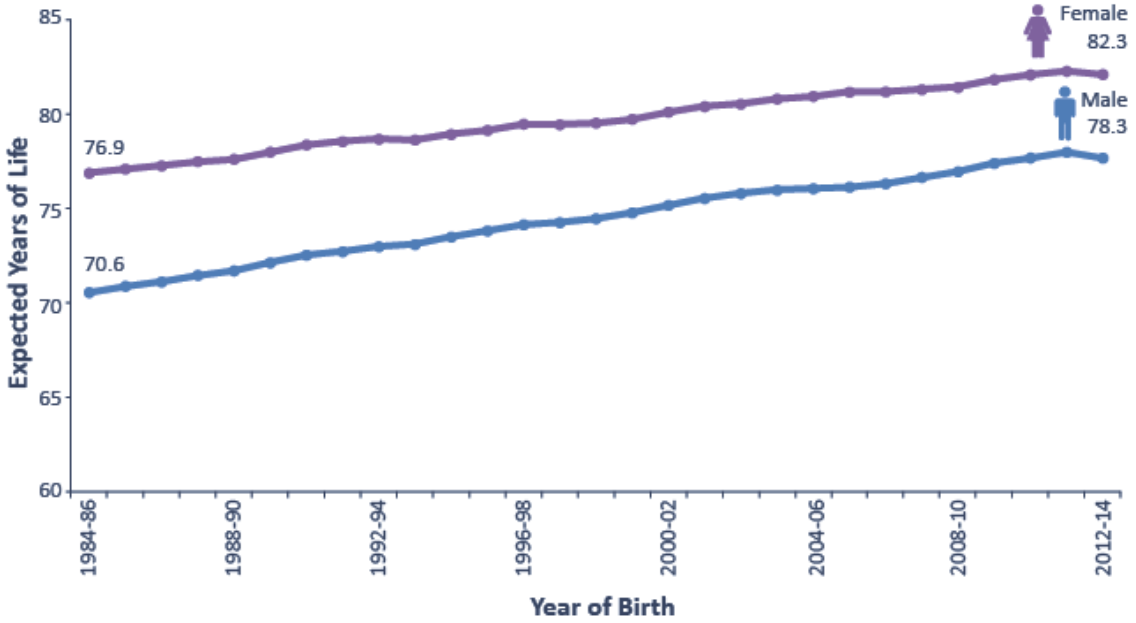
Table 4: Period (2012 to 2014) and projected cohort (2014) expectations of life - males and females

Expectation of Life (years)	Males	Females
At birth - Period	78.3	82.3
At birth - Projected Cohort	89.5	92.8
Difference in years	11.2	10.5
Age 65 - Period	18.1	20.5
Age 65 - Projected Cohort	20.8	23.1
Difference in years	2.7	2.6

For example, a man aged 65 today by his period life expectancy could expect to live another 18.1 years whereas the same man by cohort life expectancy, could expect to live another 20.8 years.

Using the period measure, boys and girls born in Northern Ireland between 2012 and 2014 can expect to live until they are 78.3 years and 82.3 years respectively. This is an increase on 30 years ago as boys and girls born between 1985 and 1987 would have expected to live until they were 70.9 and 77.1 years respectively. A woman aged 65 today can expect to live another 20.5 years, whereas their male counterpart can expect to live another 18.1 years.

Figure 1.29: Period expectation of life at birth, by sex (1984-86 to 2012-14) - non-zero y-axis



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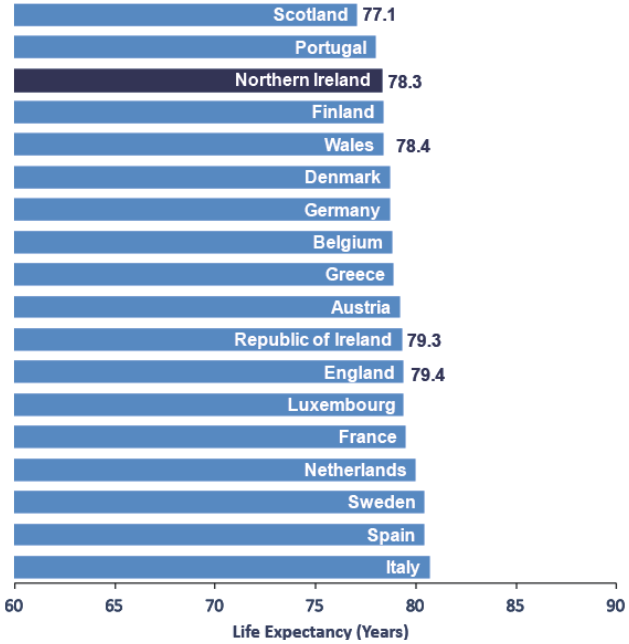
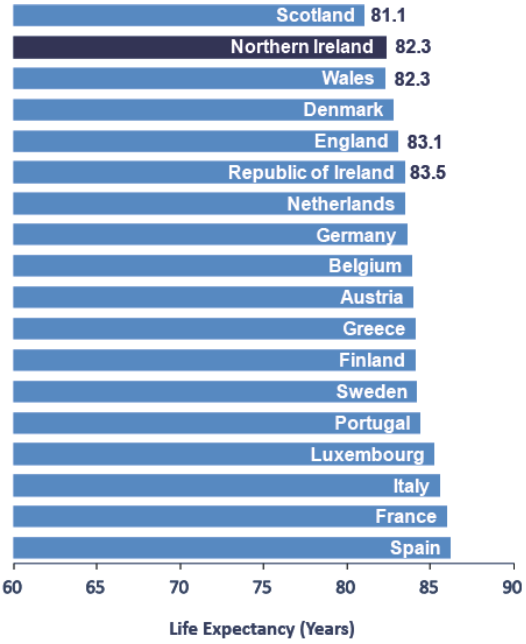
Compared to the vast majority of other European (EU15) countries, Northern Ireland has generally a lower life expectancy at birth for both males and females. At the UK level, males and females born in Scotland have the lowest life expectancy at birth. The most recent data available for all countries is for 2014.

Figure 1.30: Male life expectancy at birth, EU15 and constituent countries of the UK, 2014 – non-zero y-axis



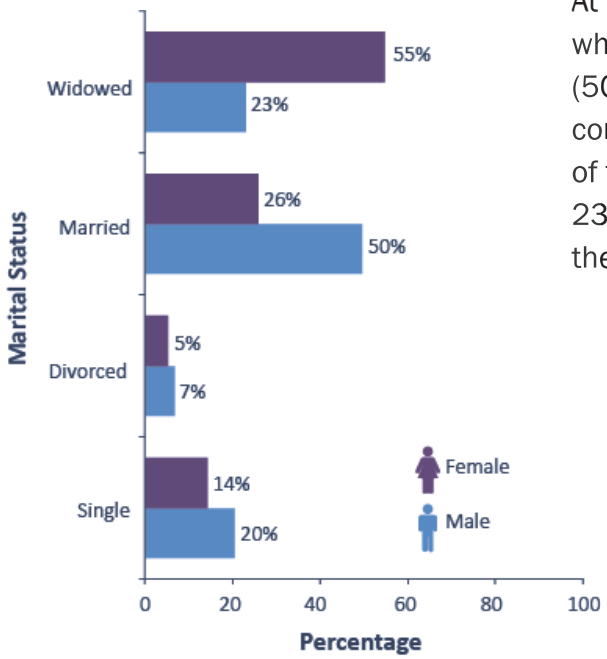
Source: Eurostat[20] **Download Chart** (XLS Format – 31Kb)

Figure 1.31: Female life expectancy at birth, EU15 and constituent countries of the UK, 2014 – non-zero y-axis



Source: Eurostat[20] **Download Chart** (XLS Format – 32Kb)

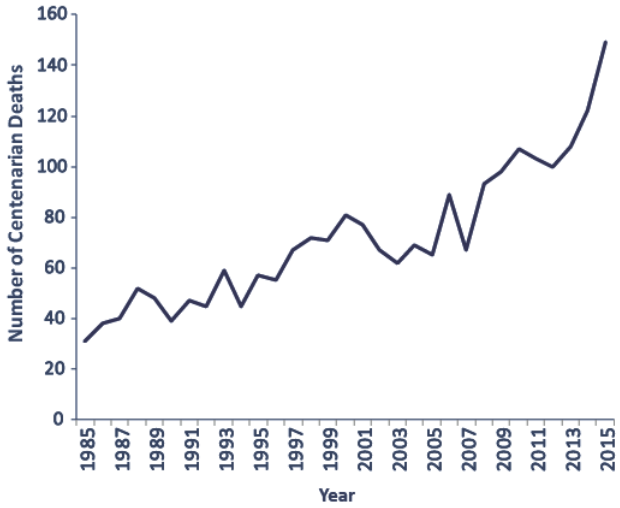
Figure 1.32: Percentage of deaths by Marital Status, 2015



Download Chart (XLS Format – 45Kb)

149 deaths of people aged 100 or more, the majority of whom were women

Figure 1.33: Number of Deaths of Centenarians 1985-2015



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Mortality by Marital Status

At the time of death, males were more likely to be married whereas females were more likely to be widowed. Half (50 per cent) of males were married at the time of death compared to 26 per cent of females. In contrast, 55 per cent of females were widowed at the time of death compared to 23 per cent of males. This difference is a consequence of the greater longevity of women.

Centenarians

There were 149 deaths of persons aged 100 or more compared to 31 in 1985. The aging population in Northern Ireland, coupled with improvements in life expectancy have led to the numbers of centenarians increasing. In the last 10 years, this number has more than doubled rendering 2015 the highest number of deaths to centenarians on record.

The vast majority (129) of deaths of centenarians were women in 2015, which has consistently been the case over time. The oldest age reached was 107 for women and 106 for men. As of the date of this publication, the oldest age any human has been known to live to is 122 years, the age reached by Jeanne Calment from France[21]. If improvements in life expectancy continue, we can expect to see the number of people reaching 100 to increase.

Place of Death and Type of Death Certificate Issued

Just under half (48 per cent) of all deaths occurred in NHS hospitals with a further 20 per cent occurring in other hospitals or nursing homes. The remaining 32 per cent occurred in all other places which includes places such as their home or in a hospice.

When a death occurs in Northern Ireland, either a medical certificate is issued by a doctor or the death is referred to the Coroner and a Coroner's certificate is issued upon completion of the Coroner's investigation. A death must be reported to a Coroner where a person has died from any cause other than natural illness for which they have been seen or treated by a registered medical practitioner within 28 days prior to the death. The number of deaths referred to the coroner has remained relatively stable over time, with approximately one fifth of all deaths (21 per cent) being treated in this way. For the remaining deaths registered in 2015 a medical certificate was issued.

14% more deaths in Belfast LGD than the NI average

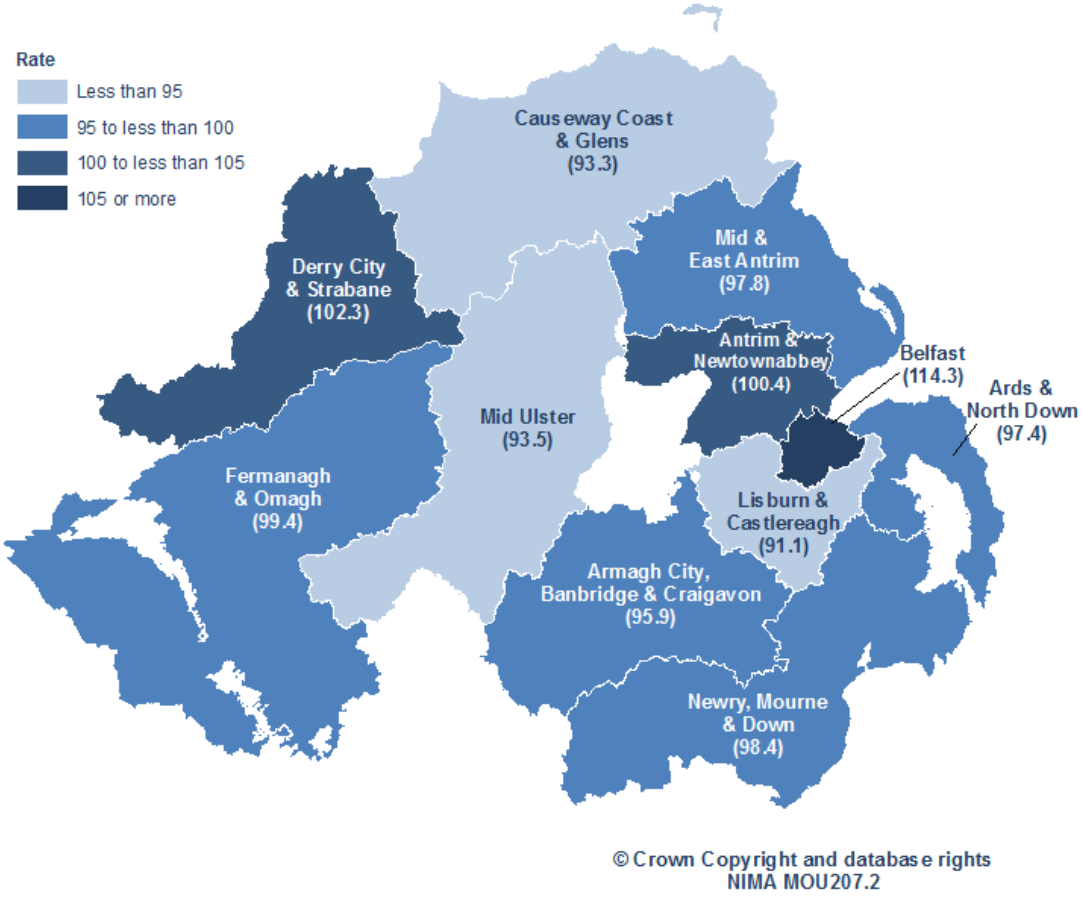
8.9% fewer deaths in Lisburn & Castlereagh LGD than the NI average

Deaths by Area

Populations across areas of Northern Ireland differ in terms of their age and sex structure which has an impact on the death rate for each area. The standardised mortality ratio (SMR) takes account of the age and sex structure of the local population and compares mortality in that local area with the Northern Ireland average (100). SMRs are often used as an indicator of the level of illness among a population and tend to relate to deprivation[22].

Even when controlling for age and sex differences in the local population, 14 per cent more deaths occurred in the Belfast Local Government District than the Northern Ireland average whereas in contrast, 8.9 per cent fewer deaths occurred in the Lisburn & Castlereagh Local Government District than the Northern Ireland average.

Figure 1.34: Standardised mortality ratios by Local Government District (2012 to 2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 26Kb)

1 in every 9 deaths were of people born outside Northern Ireland

Deaths by Country of Birth

The majority of deaths registered in Northern Ireland (88 per cent) were of people who were born in Northern Ireland. A further 9.7 per cent of deaths were of people who were born in the rest of the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland. The remainder were people born in other countries of the world or were of unknown origin.

Cause of Death

In 2015:

- Of the 15,548 deaths, the leading cause of death was cancer (28 per cent), followed by circulatory disease (24 per cent).

- For both males and females, the most common cancer site was the bronchus or lung; the prostate was the second most common cancer site in male deaths whereas the breast was the second most common cancer site in females.

- 61 per cent fewer people died of heart disease than three decades ago - 1,825 compared to the 1985 figure of 4,736 deaths.

- There were 318 deaths registered due to suicide, a 19 per cent increase on the previous year. Just over three quarters of all suicides were males.

- The number of deaths due to Alzheimer's and other dementias increased by 17 per cent on the previous year, from 1,498 in 2014 to 1,760.

- External causes of death (for example accidents, suicide) were the leading cause of death in people aged 15-34. Circulatory disease was the leading cause for those aged 85 and over. Cancer was the leading cause for all other age groups

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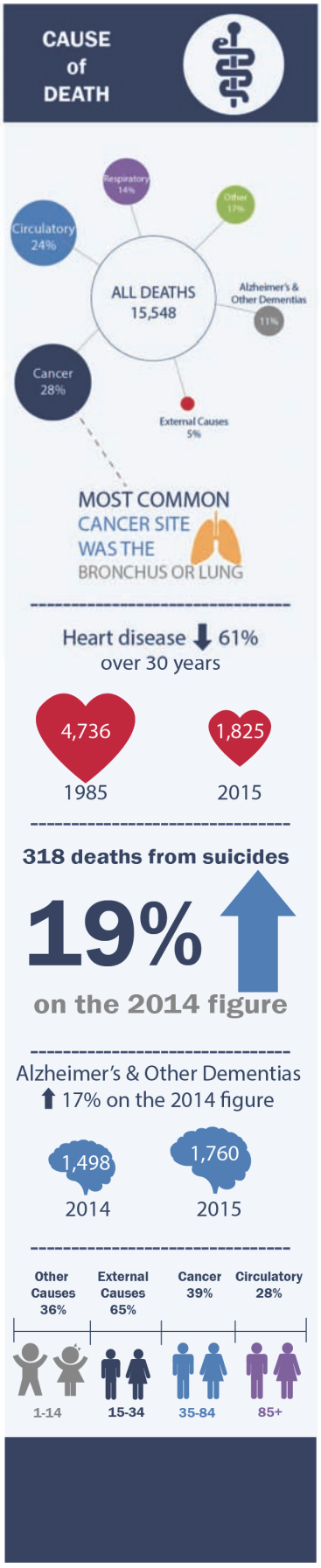


Cancer was the leading cause of death

All deaths have been coded using the tenth revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death (ICD10).

In total cancer, circulatory diseases and respiratory diseases accounted for 67 per cent of the 15,548 deaths registered in 2015.

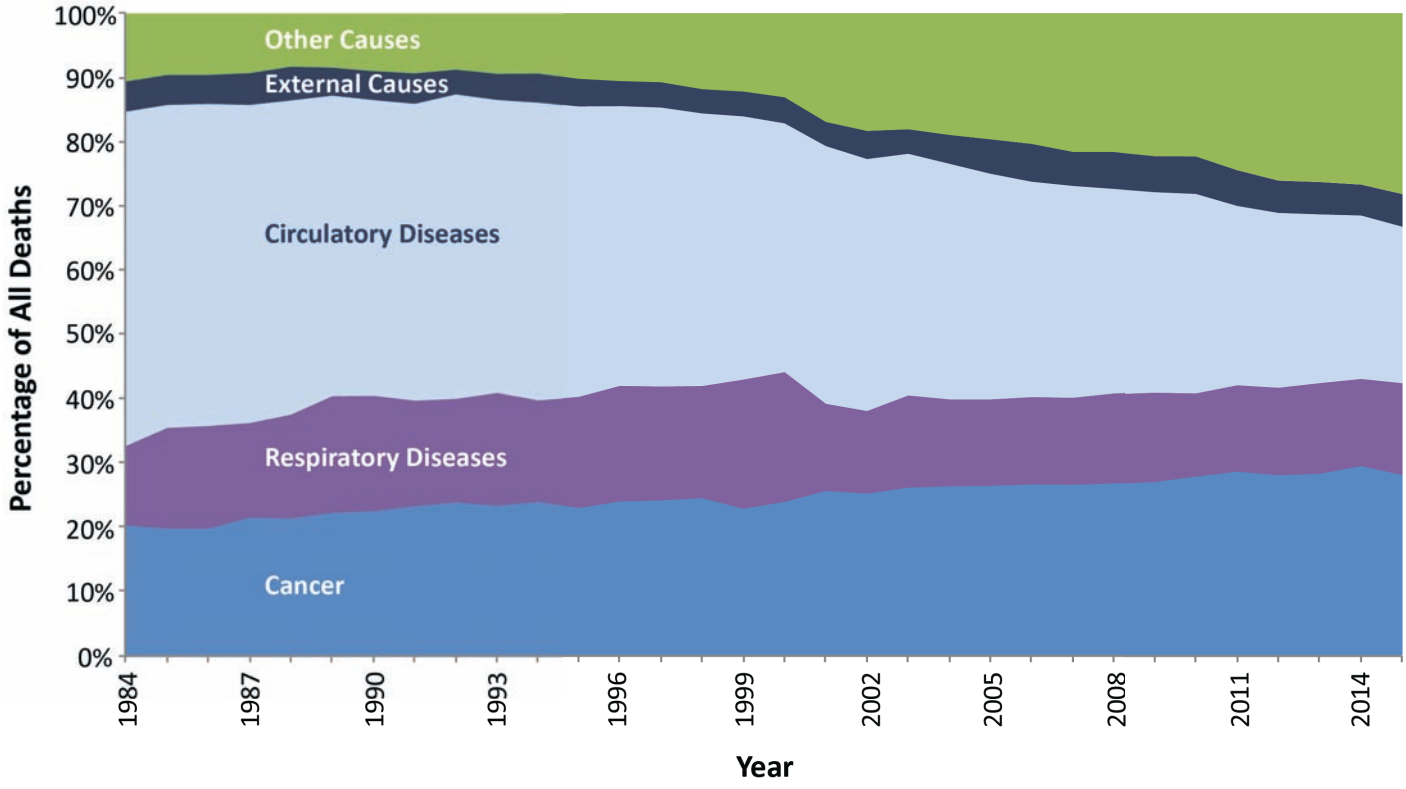
Cancer remains the leading cause of death in Northern Ireland, accounting for 28 per cent of all deaths (4,361), an increase of 35 per cent on the corresponding figure in 1985 (3,232 deaths).

In terms of Circulatory Diseases, while the number of deaths due to heart disease (Ischaemic heart disease) increased slightly in 2015 (1,825 deaths), this represents a decrease of 61 per cent on the corresponding number of deaths in 1985 (4,736).

In 2015, every day there was an average of 12 deaths registered due to cancer, 10 to circulatory diseases, 6 to respiratory diseases, 2 to external causes and 12 to all other causes.

Some of the principal causes of death are considered in the following sections.

Figure 1.35: Percentage of deaths by cause of death (1984 to 2015)



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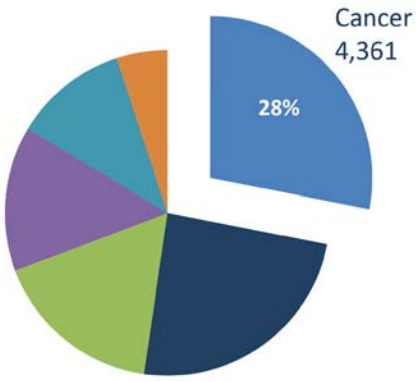
Malignant Neoplasms (ICD10 Codes C00-C97)

Cancer deaths now account for 28 per cent of all deaths compared to 20 per cent in 1985. Although there have been advances in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in recent years, it remains the case that in Northern Ireland cancer accounts for the largest number of deaths attributable to a single group of causes.

In part this is due to unavoidable factors such as the aging population and inherited genetic risks[23]. However, experts agree that smoking is the single biggest avoidable cause of cancer, causing over a quarter (28 per cent) of cancer deaths in the UK[24]. The most common cancer site was the bronchus or lung, which accounted for 23 per cent of male cancer deaths (551) and 21 per cent of female cancer deaths (439).

Prostate cancer was the second most common cancer site in males (262) whereas breast cancer was the second most common cancer site in females (291), accounting for 11 per cent of all male deaths and 14 per cent of all female deaths due to cancer.

Figure 1.36 Deaths by Cause (2015)



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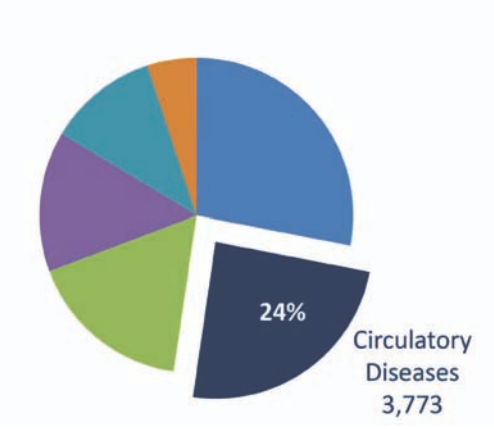
Diseases of the Circulatory System (ICD10 Codes I00-I99)

Just over 24 per cent of all deaths were due to diseases of the circulatory system. Over the past 3 decades this has fallen by 53 per cent, from 8,031 deaths in 1985. This improvement is due in part to advances in medical care coupled with greater public awareness of the causes and symptoms of heart disease.

Three quarters of deaths due to diseases of the circulatory system were the result of heart disease or stroke (Cerebrovascular disease).

Deaths due to Ischaemic heart disease are more common in males than females with 1,060 males and 765 females dying as a result of these causes last year. Some research suggests that there are a number of possible reasons for this including the protective effect of female hormones up to menopause and gender differences in lifestyle and attitudes to health[25, 26].

Figure 1.36 Deaths by Cause (2015)



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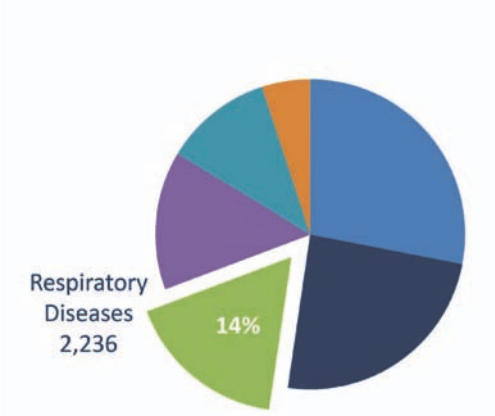
In contrast, deaths due to stroke are more common in females than males. Last year, 569 females and 419 males died as a result of a stroke. There are a number of risk factors that contribute to the gender difference, including the increased life expectancy of females and the use of hormone replacement therapy/contraception which can increase the risk of stroke in females[25, 26].

Figure 1.36 Deaths by Cause (2015)



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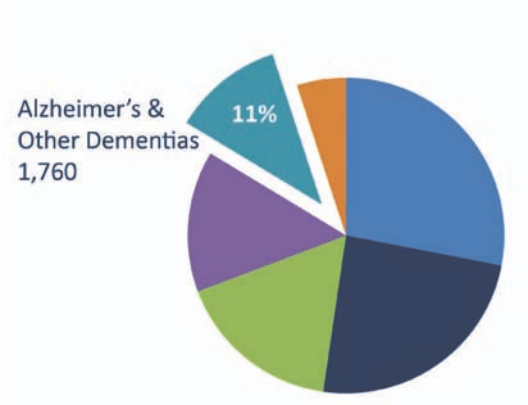
Respiratory Diseases (ICD10 Codes J00-J99)

Deaths from respiratory diseases accounted for 14 per cent of all deaths registered in 2015. Of the 2,236 respiratory deaths, 794 deaths were from pneumonia, 934 from chronic lower respiratory diseases and 508 due to all other respiratory diseases. The number of deaths due to diseases of the respiratory system is higher than the previous ten-year average (2005 to 2014 inclusive) of 1,997 deaths and 11 per cent lower than 30 years ago – 2,511 in 1985.

Figure 1.36 Deaths by Cause (2015)



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Alzheimer's Disease (ICD10 Code G30) and Other Dementias (ICD10 Codes F01, F03)

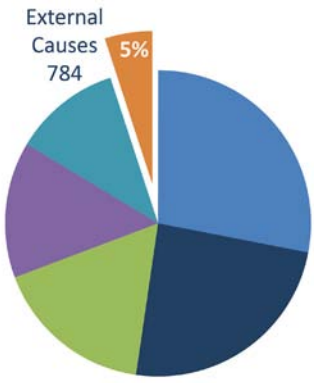
Last year, 493 deaths were due to Alzheimer's disease (141 males, 352 females) and a further 1,267 deaths due to other dementias (420 males, 847 females). While there has been a sharp increase in the number of deaths due to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias in recent years, the increase in such deaths can be attributed to (i) changes in the coding of deaths that came into effect in January 2011, and (ii) the ageing of the Northern Ireland population. Between 2014 and 2015 the number of deaths due to Alzheimer's and other dementias increased by 17 per cent. Two thirds (66 per cent) of these deaths were of persons aged 85 years and older.

External Causes of Death (ICD10 Codes V01-Y98)

Deaths registered due to external causes accounted for 5.0 per cent of all deaths, of which twice as many were male (528) than female (256). In the previous ten-year period 2005-2014 inclusive, there were on average 786 deaths per year from external causes of death.

Of the 784 deaths due to external causes, 440 were due to accidents. Of these accidental deaths, 36 per cent were due to accidental falls and 18 per cent were due to transport accidents. Just over half (53 per cent) of deaths due to accidental falls were males, whilst over four fifths (83 per cent) of deaths due to transport accidents were males.

Figure 1.36 Deaths by Cause (2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 42Kb)

Deaths from Suicide and Events of Undetermined Intent (X60-X84, Y87.0, Y10-Y34, Y87.2)

In the United Kingdom, deaths classified as 'events of undetermined intent' along with 'intentional self-harm' are classified as suicide. Last year there were 318 such deaths registered in Northern Ireland, representing an increase of 19 per cent on the 268 registrations in 2014. Males were over three times more likely to die from suicide than females, with males accounting for 77 per cent of such deaths.

Just under half (49 per cent) of all suicides were due to hanging, strangulation or suffocation, 80 per cent of which (124) were of males.

All suicides are referred to the coroner. These deaths can take time to be fully investigated and there is often a period of time between when the suicide occurs and when it is registered. For example, of the 318 such deaths registered in 2015, 150 actually occurred in 2015 and 141 occurred in 2014 with the remaining 27 occurring in 2013 or earlier.

Prior to 2004, there were 7 Coroner's districts in Northern Ireland. Following a review of the Coroner's service, the separate districts were amalgamated into one centralised Coroner's service. This change may have affected the timing of the registration of deaths, with statistics from 2004 onwards being more timely[18].

Table 5: Number of suicide and undetermined deaths registered and actual number occurring (2005 to 2015)

Year	Suicide and Undetermined Deaths	
	Registered	Occurred
2005	213	230
2006	291	222
2007	242	258
2008	282	256
2009	260	230
2010	313	300
2011	289	255
2012	278	267
2013	303	292[1]
2014	268	274[1]
2015	318	150[1]

[1] Figures should be treated with caution as a significant number of deaths occurring in these years will not yet have been registered.

Occurrence figures for 2012, 2013 and 2014 should be used with caution, as a significant number of deaths occurring in these years will, as yet, not have been registered. All occurrence figures above are subject to revision as additional late registrations of suicide and undetermined deaths are made[18].

Smoking Related Deaths

Information is not recorded on the death certificate on whether the deceased was a smoker. Estimates can however be made of the number of deaths attributable to smoking, by using information on the contribution of smoking to specific conditions which are recorded at death, for example lung cancer.

Research has been undertaken by the Health Development Agency to calculate the proportion of smoking related deaths in the population based on published relative risk factors for mortality of current and ex-smokers from various diseases, counts of death by cause, and estimates of current and ex-smoking behaviour.

These proportions were then applied to Northern Ireland counts of cause, sex and age specific mortality. Using this method, between 2,200 and 2,400 deaths can be attributed to smoking each year. Further information on the method used is given in Appendix 3.

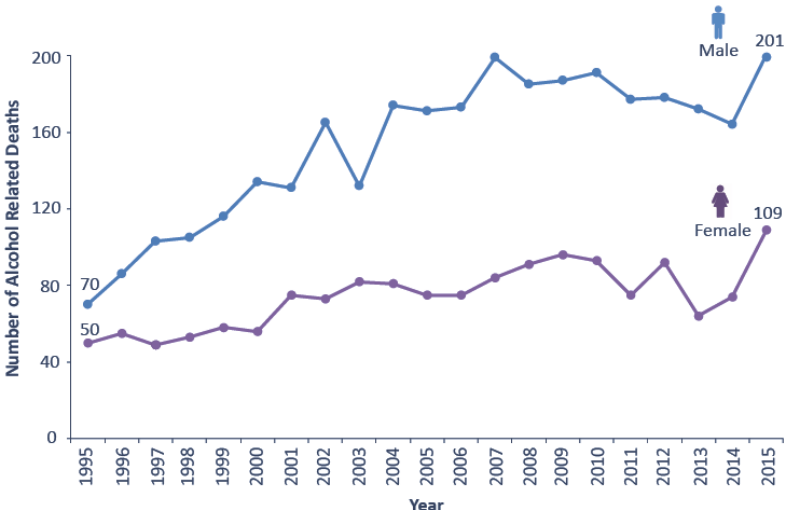
Table 6: Estimated number of smoking related deaths (2005 to 2015)

Year	Estimated Smoking Related Deaths
2005	2,290
2006	2,320
2007	2,310
2008	2,400
2009	2,360
2010	2,310
2011	2,270
2012	2,270
2013	2,400
2014	2,320
2015	2,390

Alcohol Related Deaths

A total of 310 people died from alcohol related deaths; 65 per cent were males and 35 per cent were females. This figure is a 30 per cent increase from the 2014 figure of 238 alcohol related deaths, and is 26 per cent higher than the corresponding figure a decade ago (246 deaths in 2005). The number of alcohol related deaths for males and females increased between 2014 and 2015.

Figure 1.37: Deaths from alcohol related diseases by sex (1995 to 2015)



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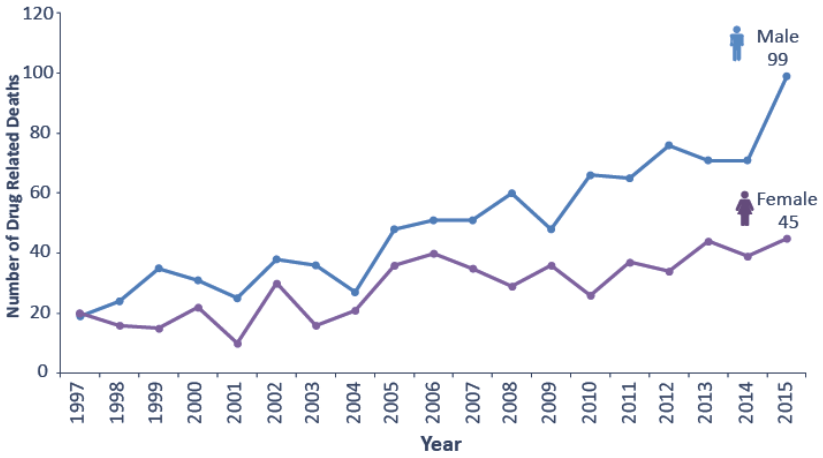
Drug Related Deaths

Drug related deaths relate to cases where the underlying cause of death recorded on the death certificate is drug poisoning, drug abuse or drug dependence. Deaths from substances of abuse which are not traditionally regarded as drugs, such as alcohol and tobacco, are excluded from the definition. Further information on the definition can be found in Appendix 3.

Figure 1.38: Drug related deaths by sex (1997-2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 39Kb)

While drug related deaths account for less than 1 per cent of all deaths, there has been a general upward trend in the number of such deaths, rising from 39 in 1997 to almost four times as many last year (144). The gender gap has widened, particularly in recent years with 54 more male than female deaths last year.

Asbestos Related Deaths

In 2015, 70 asbestos related deaths were registered, 7 more than in 2014. The 2004 figure of 92 deaths was the highest number recorded in the period from 2003 to 2015. See Appendix 3 for further information on asbestos related deaths.

70 asbestos related deaths

17 deaths due to MRSA

67 deaths due to CDiff

Healthcare Associated Infections

Healthcare associated infections (HCAIs) are infections that are acquired as a result of health care. There are many factors that contribute to Healthcare associated infections including advances in treatment that improve survival of patients but leave them more vulnerable to infections. A sharp increase in HCAIs in 2007 and 2008 led to a public inquiry, focussing on prevention control and deaths from Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Clostridium difficile (CDiff) which are now monitored on an ongoing basis. The number of such infections has declined over recent years.

In 2015, 17 deaths were registered where MRSA was mentioned on the death certificate. Of these, 10 deaths had MRSA recorded as the underlying cause of death. The corresponding figures for 2014 were 12 deaths and 5 deaths respectively.

CDiff was mentioned on 67 death certificates in 2015 and was stated as the underlying cause on 30 of these. In 2014, CDiff was mentioned on 64 death certificates and recorded as the underlying cause of death on 28 of these.

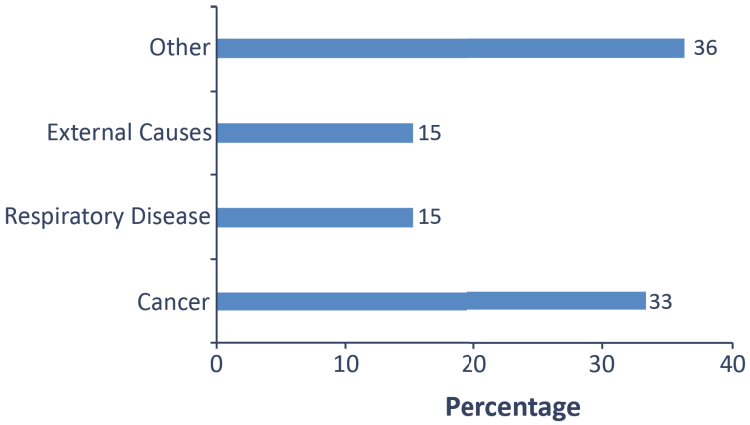
Main Causes of Death by Age and Sex

Mortality rates by cause of death vary with age and sex. For example, while deaths due to external causes account for the highest percentage of deaths among males aged 15 to 34 (70 per cent), deaths due to cancer (malignant neoplasms) account for the highest percentage of deaths among females aged 35 to 64 (46 per cent).

A total of 124 deaths of children aged less than one year were registered, 96 within the first four weeks of life. The majority of infant deaths were attributed to certain conditions originating in the perinatal period (66 deaths) and congenital anomalies (43 deaths).

A total of 33 children aged 1 to 14 died last year, 21 of whom were males and 12 of whom were females. One third (33 per cent) of the

Figure 1.39a: Deaths by cause for 1 to 14 year olds (2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 33Kb)

children concerned died from Cancer, 15 per cent from a Respiratory Disease, 15 per cent from External Causes and the remainder (36 per cent) from other causes. Differences between males and females should be treated with caution for this age group due to the relatively small numbers involved.

A total of 290 people aged 15 to 34 died last year, 210 males and 80 females. External causes of death accounted for the largest proportion of these deaths (65 per cent), made up primarily of suicide and transport accidents. In fact, 42 per cent of all suicide deaths (132 out of 318 suicides) and 47 per cent of deaths due to transport accidents (36 out of 77 transport accident deaths) involved people in this age group.

Differences between males and females can also be seen in this age group. While external causes remained the leading cause of death for both males (70 per cent) and females (51 per cent), it was more pronounced for males, mainly due to more males than females dying from suicide; of the 210 males aged 15-34 that died last year, 50 per cent died due to suicide. Cancer accounted for 15 per cent of deaths among females in this age group compared with 7.1 per cent of males.

Cancer accounted for 39 per cent of the 2,446 deaths among people between the ages of 35 to 64, with diseases of the circulatory system accounting for a further 19 per cent. Half (50 per cent) of all deaths due to suicide were of those aged 35 to 64.

Cancer accounted for a higher proportion of deaths among females (46 per cent) than males (34 per cent) in this age group. Deaths due to Circulatory Disease were however more common among males than females (22 per cent versus 10 per cent) as were deaths due to external causes (15 per cent versus 4.9 per cent).

Figure 1.39b: Deaths by sex and cause 15 to 34 year olds (2015)

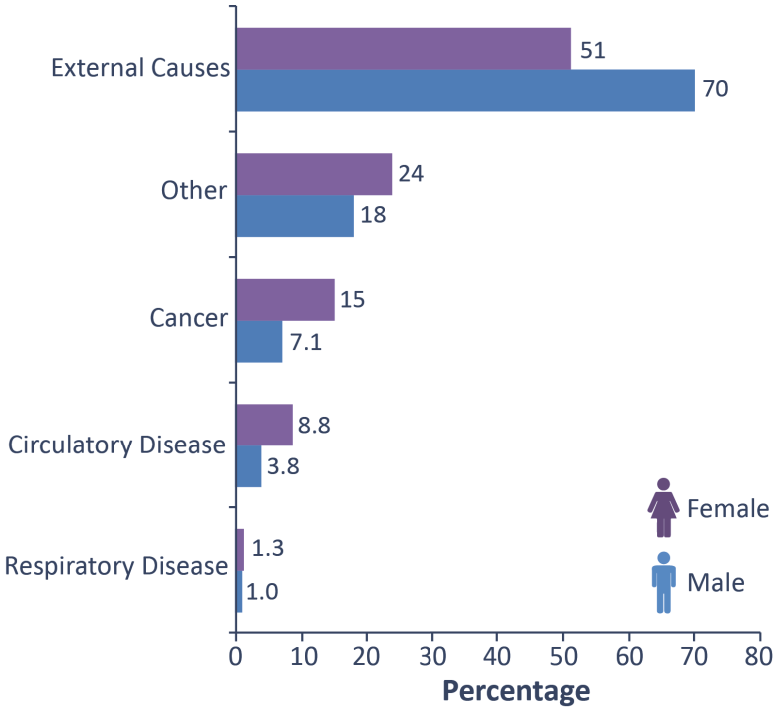


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Figure 1.39c: Deaths by cause 35 to 64 year olds (2015)

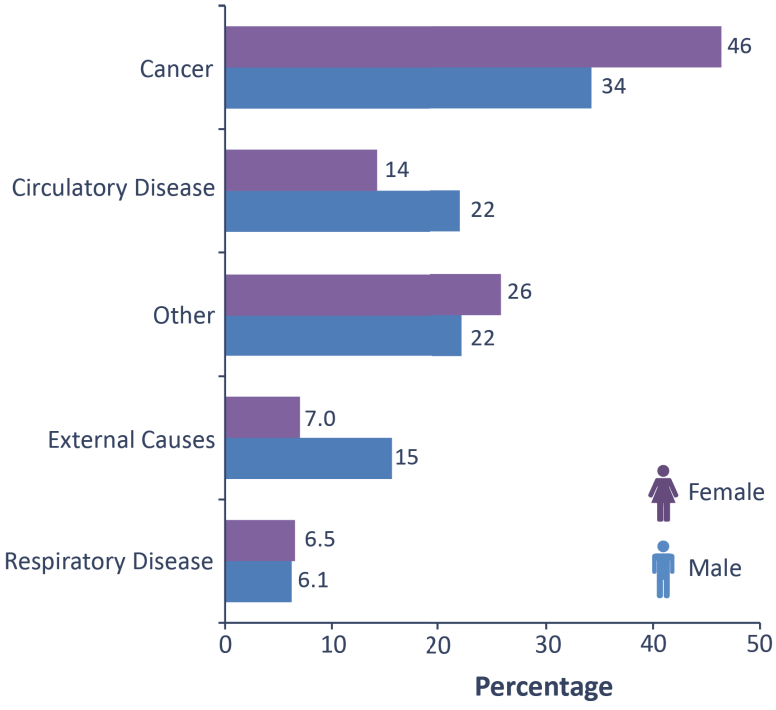

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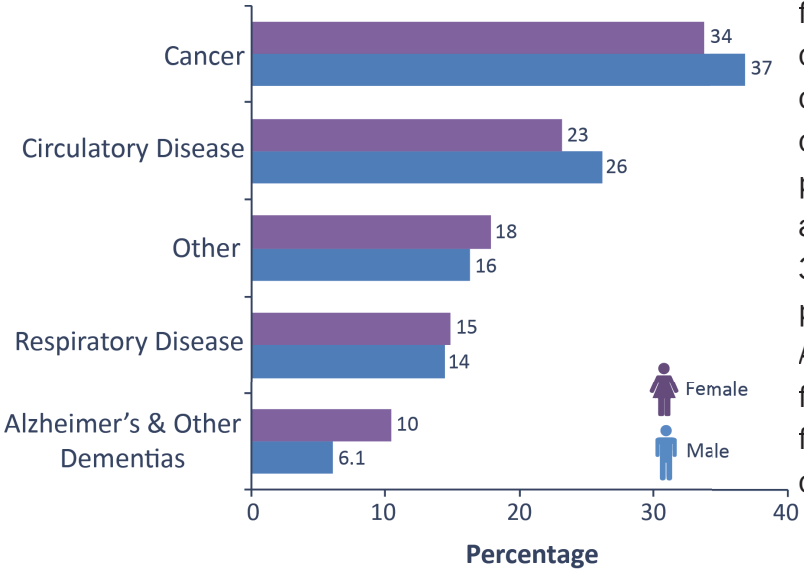
Figure 1.39d: Deaths by cause 65 to 84 year olds (2015)



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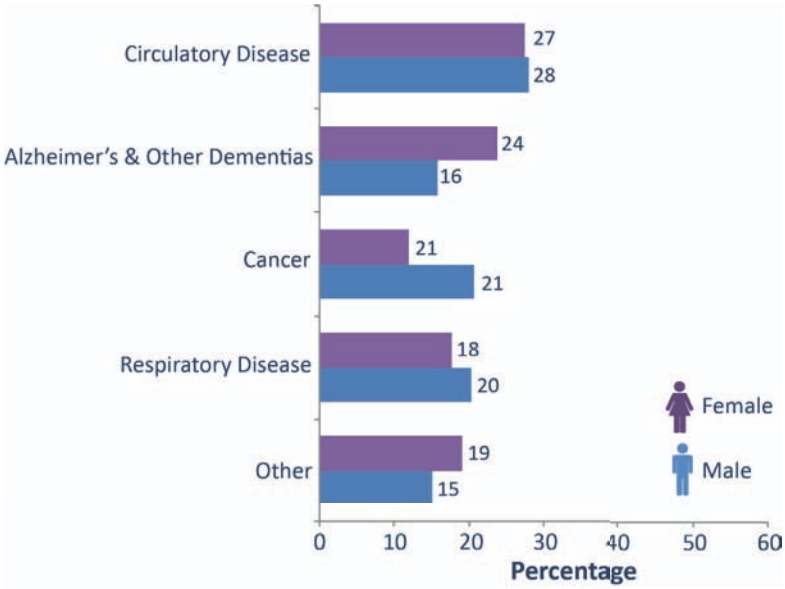
A total of 7,149 people aged 65 to 84 years old died last year; 3,885 males and 3,264 females. Cancer again was the leading cause of death in this age group (35 per cent), followed by circulatory disease (25 per cent). Cancer accounted for a slightly higher proportion of deaths among males in this age group than females (37 per cent versus 34 per cent) as did Circulatory Diseases (26 per cent versus 23 per cent). In contrast, Alzheimer's and Other Dementias accounted for proportionally more deaths among females (10 per cent) than males (6.1 per cent).

Figure 1.39e: Deaths by cause 85 years + (2015)



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The number of deaths in the older population continues to rise. Last year, 35 per cent of deaths (5,506) were of people aged 85 years or over, compared to only 17 per cent of deaths (2,747) in 1985. More people are surviving into old age as a consequence of the improvements in mortality that we have seen over the past 50 years.

The proportion of deaths due to cancer among those aged 85 or over (15 per cent) is less than half that among those aged 65 to 84 (35 per cent). In contrast, the proportion of deaths due to Alzheimer's and other dementias among those aged 85 or over was considerably higher than that among those aged 65 to 84 (21 per cent and 8.1 per cent respectively).

Circulatory disease was the leading cause of death among both males and females aged 85 and over. Cancer accounted for proportionally more deaths among males than females (21 per cent versus 12 per cent) as did Respiratory Diseases (20 per cent versus 18 per cent). In contrast Alzheimer's and Other Dementias accounted for proportionally more female deaths than male (24 per cent and 16 per cent respectively).

Marriages

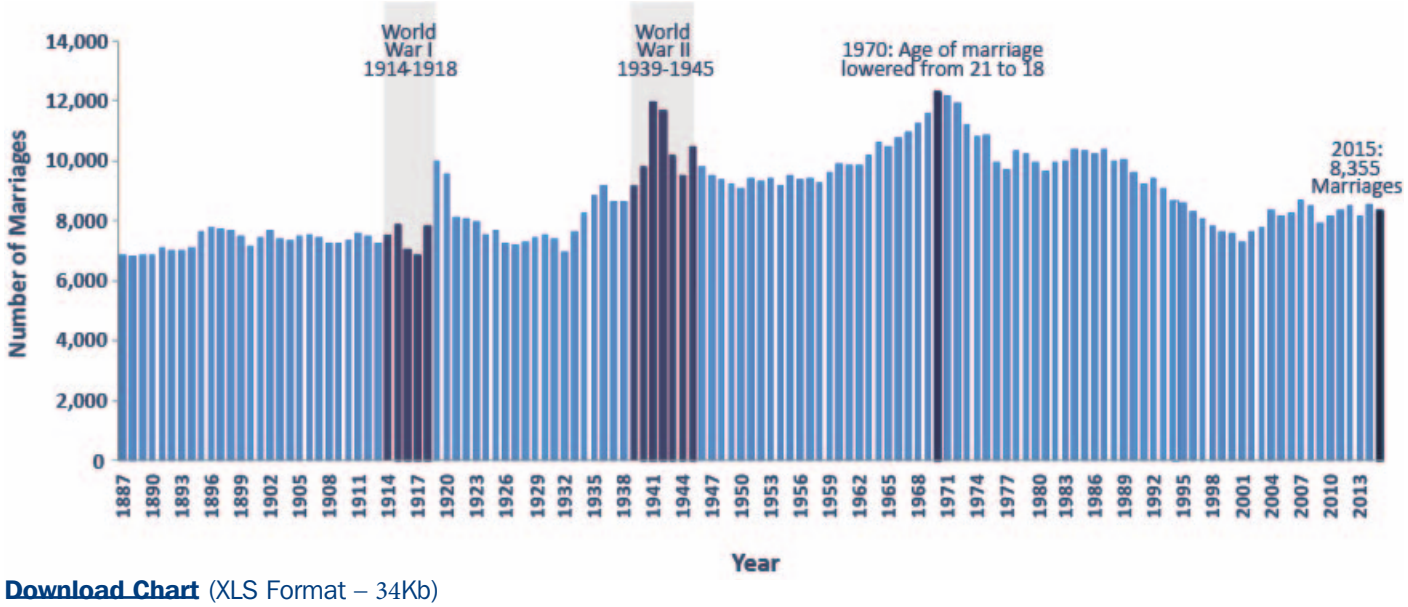
In 2015:

- 8,355 marriages were registered, equivalent to roughly 1 every hour.
- While August was the most popular month to get married, Saturday 5th September was the most popular day.
- The average age for grooms was 34.3 years, with brides slightly younger with an average age of 32.2.
- St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, Derry was the most popular religious venue for religious marriages. The Belfast Registration Office was the most popular venue for civil marriage ceremonies.
- 15 per cent of all religious marriage ceremonies were held outside of religious buildings.

An average of one marriage was conducted every hour

There were 8,355 marriages celebrated in 2015, an average of 1 marriage per hour. This is a decrease of 2.3 per cent on the 2014 figure of 8,550, while reflecting a 15 per cent increase on the 30 year low of 7,281 marriages that were registered in 2001. The number of marriages in Northern Ireland peaked in 1970, coinciding with the lowering of the minimum age of marriage from 21 to 18. Historically, other peaks are noticeable after the First World War and during the Second World War.

Figure 1.40: Marriages in Northern Ireland, 1887 - 2015



Download Chart (XLS Format – 34Kb)

Marriage Rate

Indicative marriage rates can be calculated by expressing the number of people who married per 1,000 population aged 16 and over. In 2015, 16,710 people were married, equivalent to an indicative marriage rate of 11.4 persons per 1,000 population aged 16 and over. This represents a slight decrease on the corresponding figure of 11.7 in 2014.

The marriage rate for males was slightly higher than that of females (i.e. 11.7 per 1,000 men aged 16 and over and 11.1 per 1,000 women aged 16 and over). Each of these rates represents a decrease on the corresponding rates for males and females in 2014, namely 12.1 and 11.4 respectively.

The marriage rates for both males and females remain lower than those of 30 years ago (18.9 for men and 17.4 for women), indicating an increased tendency to cohabit rather than marry. Over half (54 per cent) of couples who married in 2015 reported living at the same address prior to getting married.

Age at Marriage

Over the course of the last 30 years the average age at which both men and women have been getting married has been increasing. Since 1985, the average age of grooms has increased by 7.3 years (from 27.0 years to 34.3 years in 2015) and the average age of brides has increased by 7.2 years (from 25.0 years to 32.2 years).

Approximately one in nine brides (11 per cent) and one in seventeen grooms (5.9 per cent) were under 25 years of age when they married in 2015. By way of contrast, the comparable proportions a decade ago were 21 per cent and 11 per cent respectively.

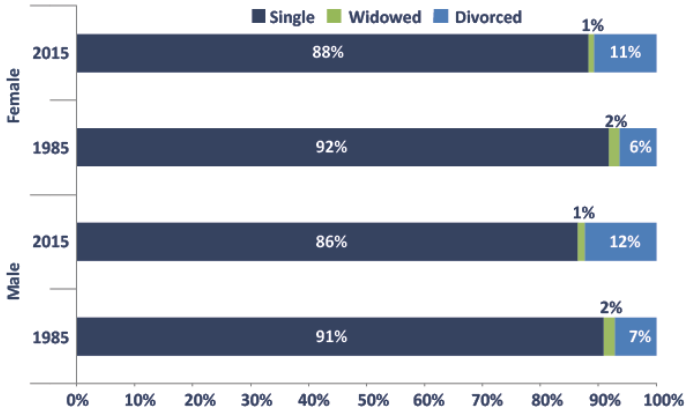
Approximately 11 per cent of brides and 6 per cent of grooms were <25 years old when they were married

Marital Status at Marriage

Over four fifths (82 per cent) of all marriages were the first for both partners. Remarriages for both parties accounted for a further 7.1 per cent of all marriages, with the remaining 11 per cent involving couples where only one partner had been married previously.

The percentage of people marrying who were divorcees rose from 6.7 per cent in 1985 to 12 per cent in 2005 and has remained around this level over the last decade. This coincides with a decrease in the proportion of people marrying who were single before marriage. The proportion of those marrying who were widowed has decreased over the past 30 years from around 2 per cent to 1 per cent for both brides and grooms.

Figure 1.41: Marital Status of those who got Married by Sex (1985 and 2015)



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Just over half of the couples who married in 2015 lived at the same address prior to getting married.

Country of Birth and Residency

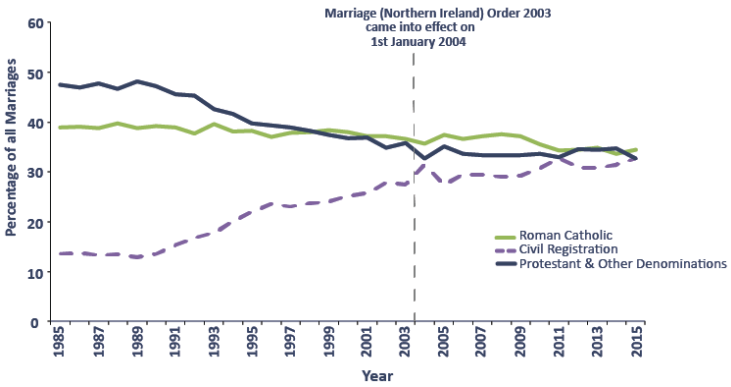
The majority of marriages continue to be of couples where at least one partner lives in Northern Ireland (88 per cent). For those couples not currently resident in Northern Ireland, but choosing to get married here, 69 per cent were of couples where one or both partners were born here, indicating a tendency to return home to Northern Ireland to get married.

In 71 per cent of all marriages registered during 2015, both partners were born in Northern Ireland, whereas in 22 per cent, only one partner was born in Northern Ireland. In the remaining 7.2 per cent of marriages neither partner was born in Northern Ireland.

Religious and Civil Marriages

Of the 5,619 religious marriages registered in 2015, more than half (51 per cent) were Roman Catholic ceremonies, 18 per cent Presbyterian, 12 per cent Church of Ireland, 4.4 per cent Methodist and 14 per cent other denominations.

Figure 1.42: Percentage of marriages by method of celebration (1985 to 2015)



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While the proportion of marriages that were Roman Catholic ceremonies has remained relatively stable over time, the proportion of other religious ceremonies has generally been decreasing since the early nineties. This coincides with an increase in popularity of Civil Ceremonies in part due to the introduction of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 which enabled civil ceremonies to be conducted in approved venues as well as District Registration Offices. In 2015, 33 per cent of all marriages (2,736) were celebrated by a civil ceremony, a marked increase on 30 years ago (14 per cent in 1985). The highest civil ceremony rates on record were recorded in 2011 and 2015.

Place of Ceremony

District Registration Offices and religious buildings continue to be the most popular venues for weddings. In 2015, the District Registration Office in Belfast had the most civil marriage ceremonies (500) of all the District Registration Offices. In terms of religious buildings, St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, Derry hosted the most weddings (53).

Marriage legislation underwent major change in 2004. Under the new law there are less strict residence requirements for marriage; these allow civil marriage ceremonies to be conducted outside District Registration Offices in approved venues. Since then the percentage of all marriages taking place in approved venues has increased steadily from 12 per cent in 2005 to 26 per cent in 2015. The number of approved venues has also expanded with 203 unique locations chosen by couples to have their ceremony in 2015. Of all civil marriage ceremonies in 2015, some 49 per cent were held in approved venues other than a District Registration Office.

The most popular locations outside of District Registration Offices and Religious Buildings were Galgorm Manor Hotel, Ballymena (153 marriages) followed by Belfast Loughshore Hotel, Carrickfergus (110 marriages), Clandeboye Lodge Hotel, Bangor (107 marriages), and The Old Inn, Crawfordsburn (92 marriages).

The prevalence of conducting religious marriage ceremonies in venues other than religious buildings varies by religion and denomination. In 2015, 15 per cent of all religious marriage ceremonies were held outside of religious buildings.

Seasonality & Day of Marriage

The summer months (May to September) were the most popular choice of couples for their big day, with August being the most common month to get married (1,279 couples) followed by July (1,122 couples). The least popular month to 'tie the knot' was January with 211 marriages. The most popular week to get married was from Sunday 2nd August to Saturday 8th August when 314 couples got married.

The time of year isn't the only decision to be made by couples planning a wedding; the day of the week is also important. The most common day of the week for all marriages in 2015, was a Saturday (37 per cent) while Friday was the most common day for civil marriages (31 per cent). Saturday 5th September was the most popular day in 2015 to get married, with 109 couples marrying on this day. Saturday 1st August 2015 followed a close second, with 101 weddings on this day.

With high demand for Friday and Saturday weddings coupled with significantly higher costs for weddings on these days, Sunday is becoming a more popular day to get married. For example, 154 marriages took place on a Sunday in 2015, which is almost 10 times the number recorded a decade previously (16 in 2005).

Figure 1.43: Percentage of marriages by place of ceremony (2005 and 2015)

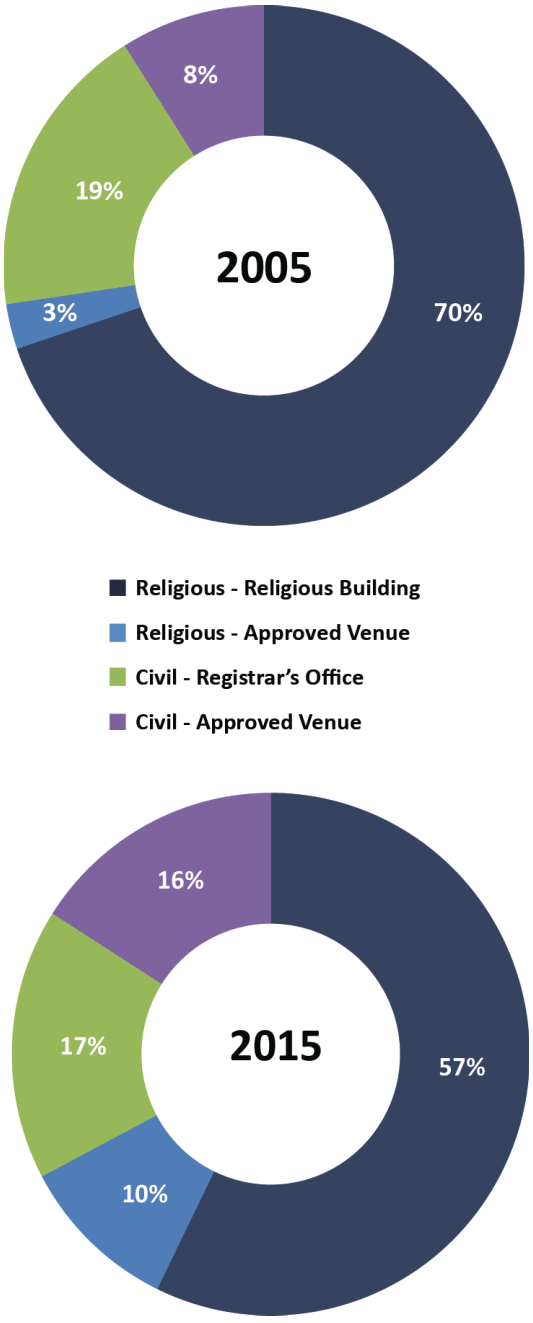

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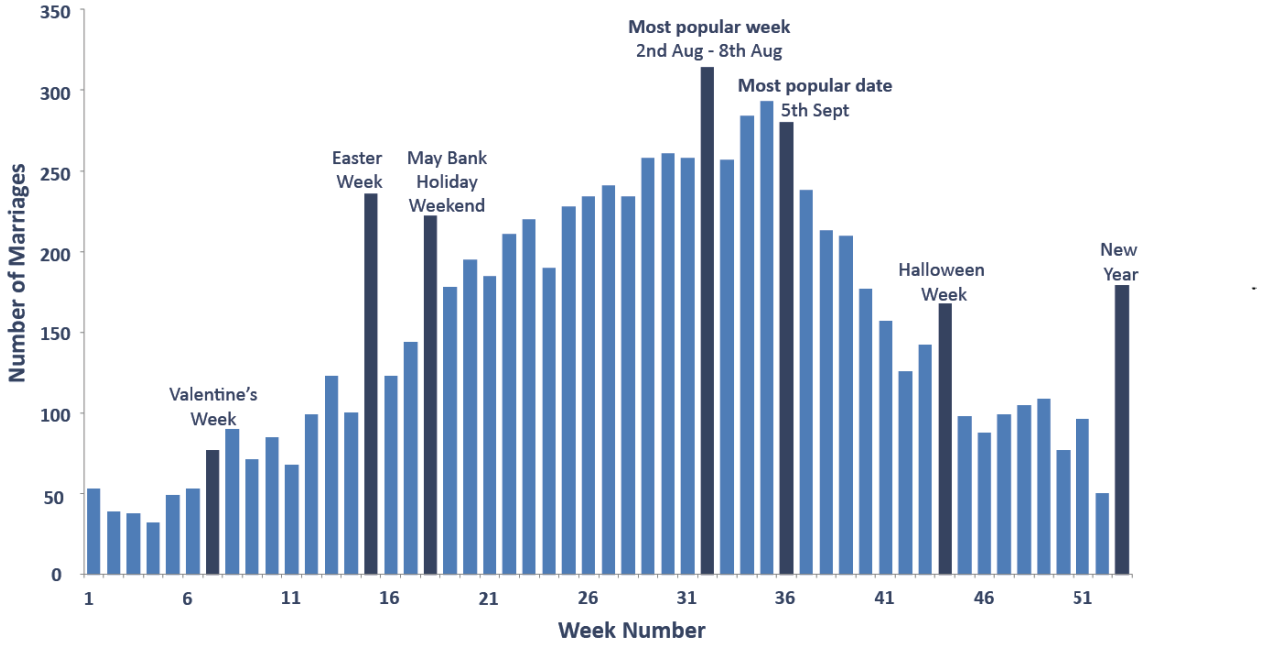
Figure 1.44: Number of marriages per week (2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 33Kb)

Marriages by Area

Belfast Local Government District hosted the most marriages in 2015 (1,410), followed by Newry, Mourne & Down (1,025) and Mid & East Antrim (794). Antrim & Newtownabbey had the fewest marriages (379) in 2015.

Belfast LGD hosted the most marriages – 1,410

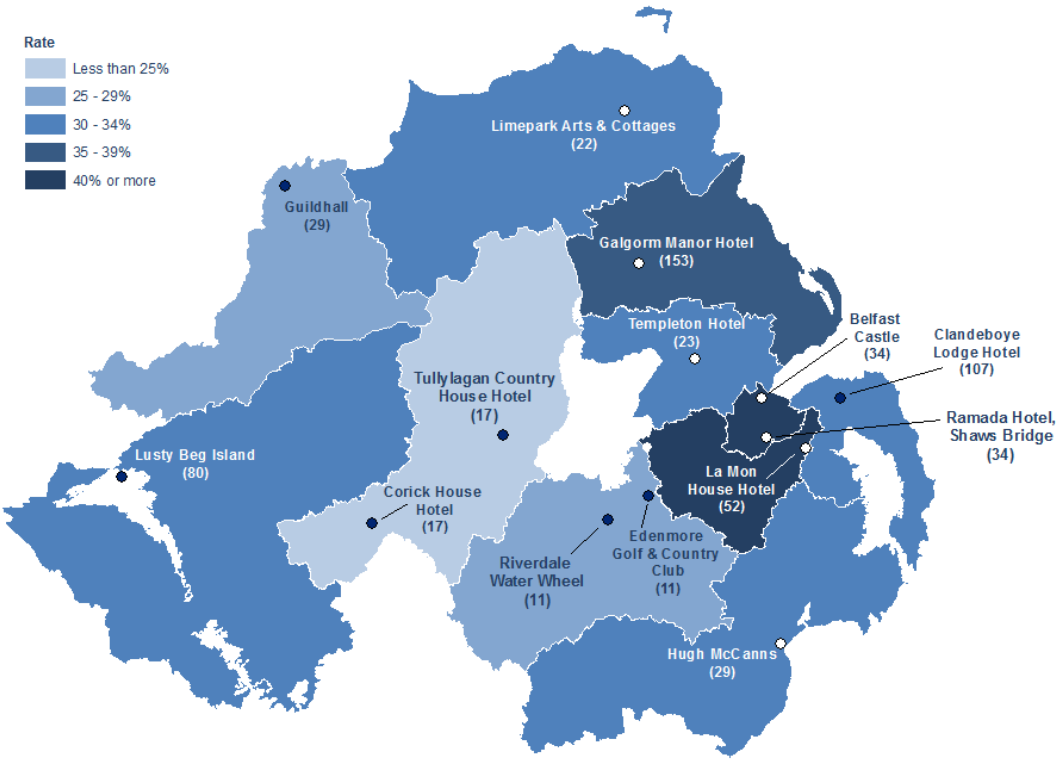
The characteristics of marriages varied across Local Government Districts. For example, the proportion of couples who were living together before getting married ranged from a low of 36 per cent in Ards & North Down to a high of 63 per cent in Mid Ulster. In addition, the proportion of marriages that took the form of a civil ceremony and were conducted by a District Registrar ranged from 18 per cent in Mid Ulster to 44 per cent in Belfast.

44 per cent of marriages in Belfast LGD took the form of a civil ceremony

The average age of males and females at the time of marriage varied across Local Government Districts. For example, couples in Mid Ulster tended to get married younger than their counterparts in Ards & North Down, who (on average) were approximately 3 years older when they 'tied the knot'.

Four in five religious ceremonies in Derry City & Strabane Local Government District were Roman Catholic compared with just over one in ten of religious ceremonies in Ards & North Down, reflecting the religious composition of the populations in these Local Government Districts.

Figure 1.45: Civil Ceremonies as a Proportion of all Marriages, by Local Government District (2015)



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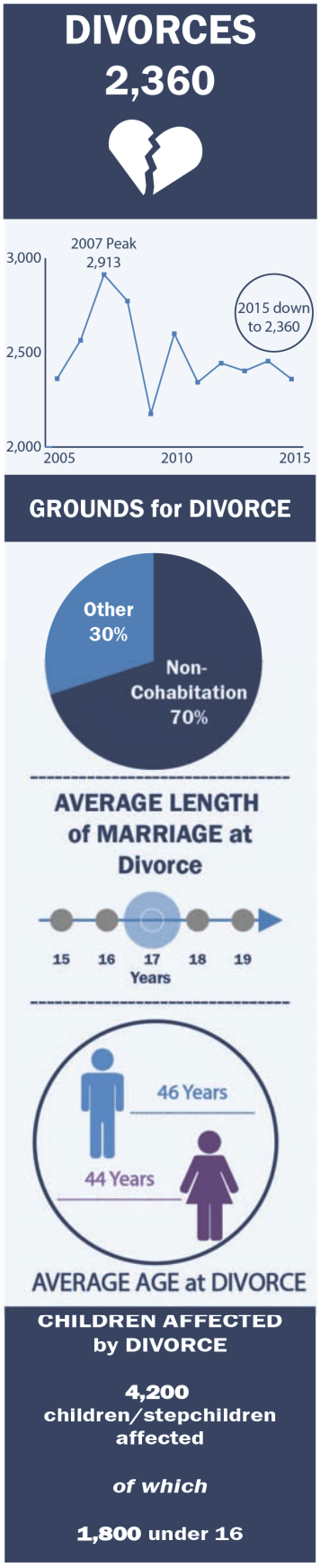


Divorces

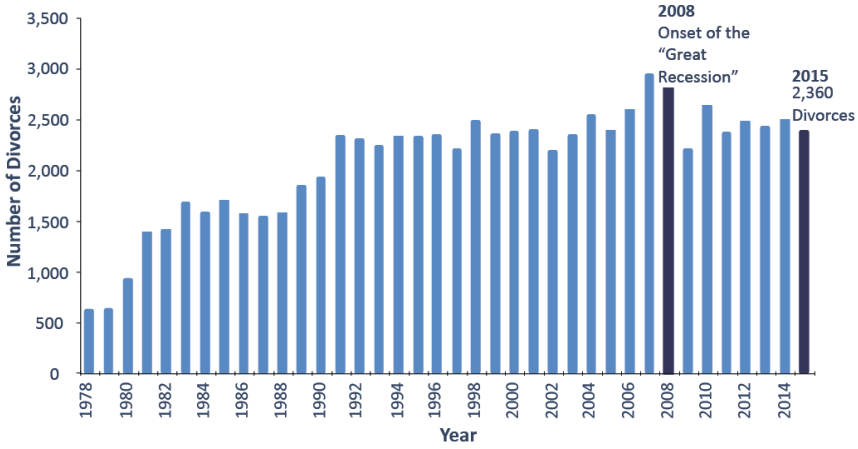
In 2015:

- 2,360 divorces were granted. This is fewer than in the previous year (2,455) and 19 per cent lower than the peak number of 2,913 in 2007.
- Non-cohabitation remains the most frequently recorded reason for divorce accounting for 70 per cent of all divorces.
- Those marriages which ended in divorce had lasted an average of 17 years. The average ages of the men and women concerned were 46.9 and 44.9 years respectively.
- Just over 4,200 children/stepchildren were affected by the divorces that were granted, of which almost 1,800 were under the age of 16.

The number of divorces granted was slightly lower than in the previous year (2,360 compared with 2,455), and 19 per cent lower than the peak number of 2,913 divorces in 2007.

During the late 1970's the number of divorces was around 600 per year and by the late 1980's this figure had tripled to around 1,800 per year. Since the 1990's there has been another increase in the number of divorces, peaking at the onset of the recession in 2007 and 2008 when 2,913 and 2,773 were recorded respectively. In more recent years this number has declined, fluctuating around 2,400 per year.

Figure 1.46: Number of divorces granted (1978 to 2015)

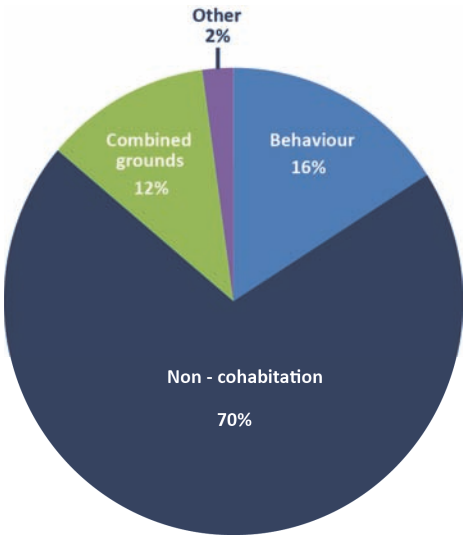


Download Chart (XLS Format – 31Kb)

The divorce figures reported here are based on Decree Absolutes. Decree Nisi information can be obtained from the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service. A Decree Nisi does not terminate the marriage; a couple remain married until the Decree Absolute has been granted. In some cases, following the receipt of a Decree Nisi, the parties may not apply for the Decree Absolute for a number of years. An example of this would be when one or more parties attempt to remarry and realise that the Decree Absolute is needed. For this reason among others, the period between the divorce being filed for or 'petitioned' and the year it becomes final can be lengthy.

Of the 2,360 divorces granted in 2015, approximately 83 per cent were granted within 3 years of the petition being lodged. Within 5 years, 94 per cent were granted. In 1 per cent of cases, the Decree Absolute was granted more than 10 years after the petition was lodged.

Figure 1.47: Reasons for Divorce (2015)



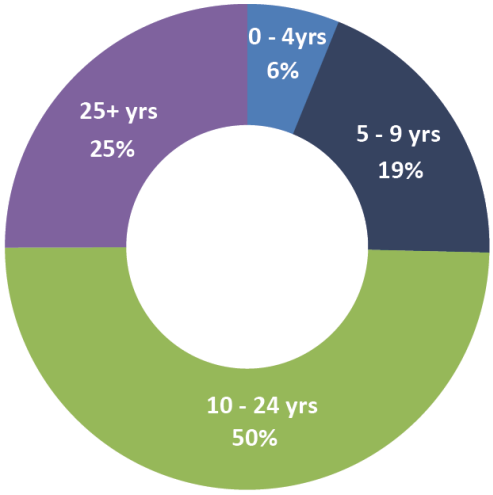
Download Chart (XLS Format – 28Kb)

Grounds for Divorce

Non-cohabitation remains the most frequently recorded reason for divorce with 1,657 cases last year, followed by behaviour (376) and combined grounds (276).

As in previous years, women were more likely than men to lodge an application for divorce. For example, 1,421 divorces were lodged by women and 901 were lodged by men, with a further 38 resulting from joint applications.

Figure 1.48: Duration of Marriage at Time of Divorce (2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 28Kb)

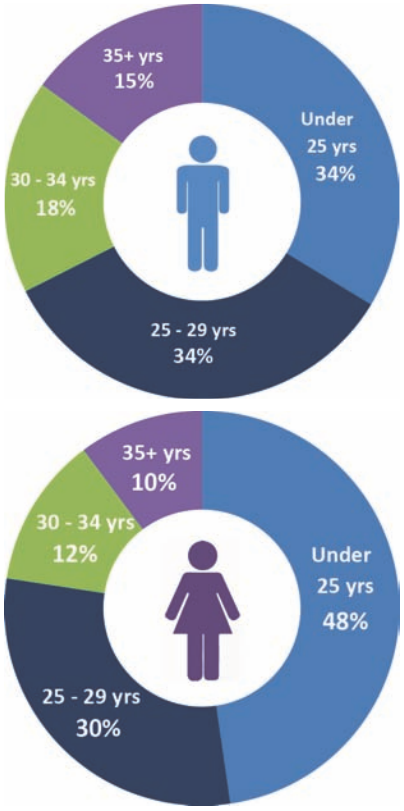
Duration of Marriage

The average duration of marriage ending in divorce was 17 years; that is, the number of years between the couple's marriage and their Decree Absolute being granted. If we compare that to the year in which the divorce was filed for, as opposed to finalised, the average duration of marriage before divorce proceedings commenced was 16 years.

Compared to 30 years ago, while more divorces are now being granted (2,360 in 2015 compared with 1,669 in 1985), the marriages now ending in divorce tend to be lasting longer (17 years in 2015 compared to 14 years in 1985).

Of the divorcing couples, 6 per cent were married less than 5 years and 19 per cent between 5 and 9 years. Those married 25 years or more accounted for one quarter of all divorces (25 per cent).

Figure 1.49: Age at Marriage of Divorcees (2015)



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Marital Status of Divorcees at the Time of their Marriage

While the majority of divorcees had been single at the time of marriage (88 per cent of males and 90 per cent of females), the proportion of people getting divorced who had been previously divorced continues to account for approximately 10 per cent of both male and female divorcees. Approximately 1 per cent of all divorcees in 2015 were widows or widowers when they re-married.

Age of Divorcees at the Time of Marriage

The average ages of the men and women who got divorced were 28.6 years and 26.6 years respectively at the time of their wedding. Some 34 per cent of the males concerned and 48 per cent of the females concerned were aged under 25 years at the time of getting married. In contrast, 15 per cent of male divorcees and 10 per cent of female divorcees were aged 35 or over when they got married, suggesting that those who marry later in life are less likely to get divorced.

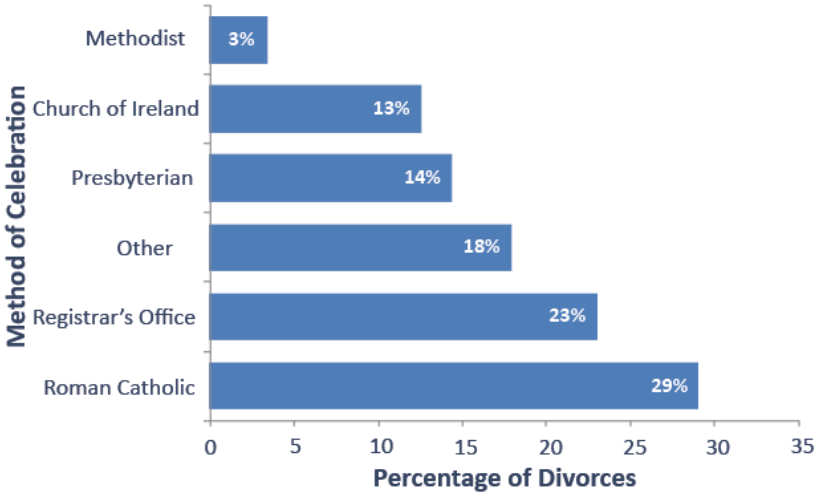
Age at Divorce

Almost two fifths of those who were granted a divorce in 2015 were in their forties (39 per cent). On average, men were typically 2 years older than women (46.9 years compared with 44.9 years).

Method of Celebration of Marriage for Divorces

Last year, 29 per cent of divorces were of marriages that had been celebrated in a Roman Catholic Church. A further 30 per cent were of marriages celebrated in a Presbyterian Church (including Free Presbyterian), Church of Ireland or Methodist Church. Those that had been celebrated in a District Registration Office represented 23 per cent.

Figure 1.50: Divorces by Method of Celebration of Marriage (2015)



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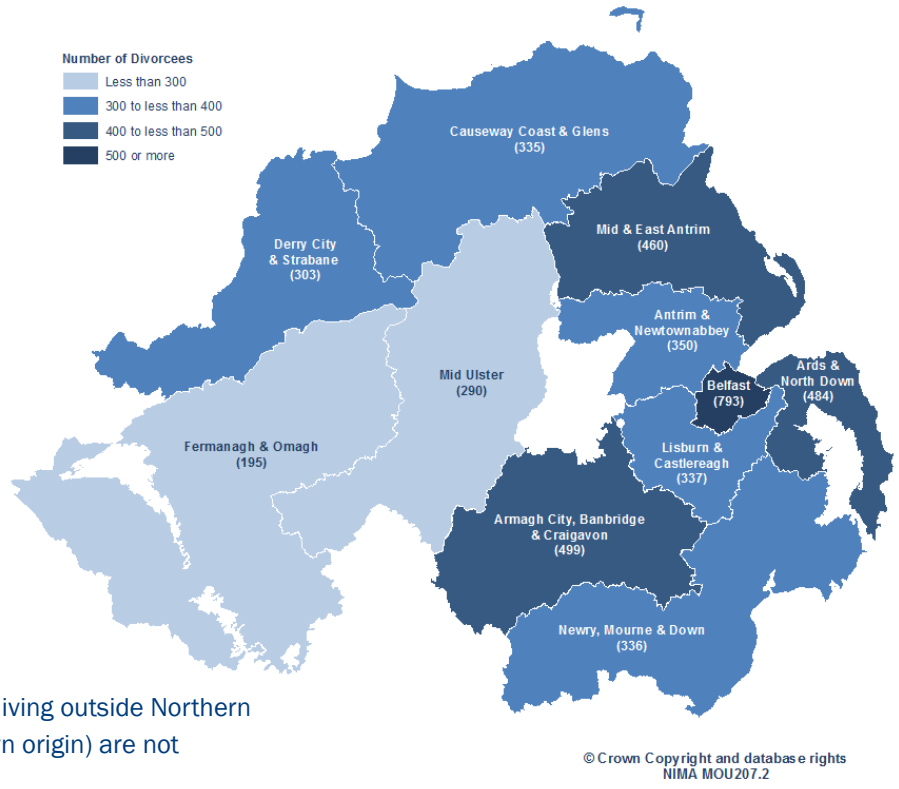
Some 17 per cent of divorces in Northern Ireland were associated with a marriage which took place outside Northern Ireland. Of these divorces, a significant proportion (25 per cent) involved at least one partner living outside Northern Ireland at the time of their divorce.

Divorcees by Area of Residence

Area of residence of divorcees varies throughout Northern Ireland. In 2015, Belfast had the highest percentage (18 per cent) of divorcees followed by Ards & North Down and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, both with 11 per cent each. Some 7.2 per cent of divorcees were residing outside Northern Ireland at the time of divorce, with more than twice as many being men than women.

Figure 1.51: Number of Divorcees by Local Government District (2015)



Note: 338 divorcees living outside Northern Ireland (or of unknown origin) are not included in the map.

Download Chart (XLS Format – 23Kb)

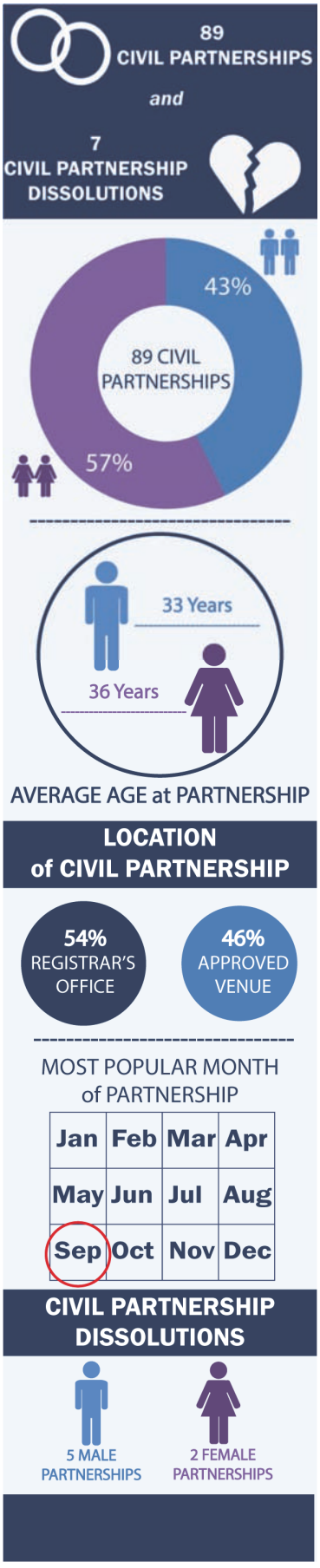
Children Affected by Divorce

Just over 4,200 children/stepchildren were affected by the divorces finalised in Northern Ireland during 2015, almost 1,800 of whom were under the age of 16. Approximately a further 400 children were aged 16 or 17, whilst the remainder were aged 18 or over when the decree absolute was granted.

Civil Partnerships & Civil Partnership Dissolutions

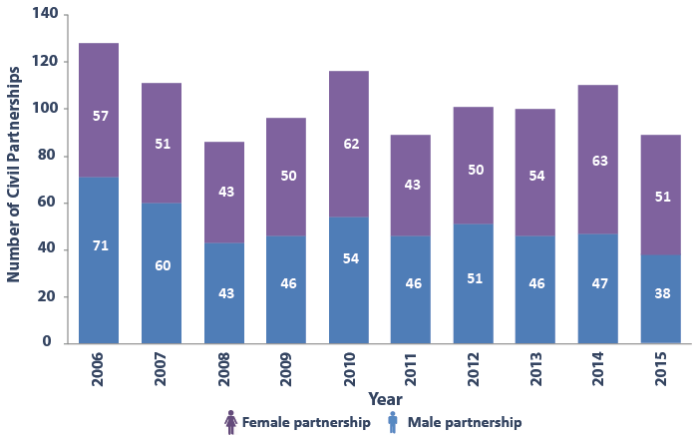
In 2015:

- There were 89 civil partnerships registered (38 male partnerships and 51 female partnerships), 21 less than in 2014.
- The average age of males entering a civil partnership was 33.8 years, while for females it was 36.8 years.
- 48 civil partnership ceremonies were held in a District Registration Office. The remaining 41 ceremonies were held in an approved venue.
- September was the most popular month for civil partnership ceremonies.
- 7 civil partnership dissolutions were registered; 5 of male couples and 2 of female couples.
- The average age of all partners dissolving a civil partnership was 37.2 years.



The Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into force in late 2005, enabling same-sex couples to obtain legal recognition of their relationship. Between December 2005 and the end of 2015, 1,026 civil partnerships have been registered in Northern Ireland.

Figure 1.52: Number of civil partnerships (2005 to 2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 33Kb)

Last year, 89 civil partnerships were registered in Northern Ireland. Of these, 38 partnerships were male partnerships and 51 were female partnerships. Since 2005, when Civil Partnerships began, the balance of male and female partnerships has been fairly equal, with 502 male and 524 female partnerships registered.

Marital Status and Age of Civil Partners

Almost 9 in 10 of those who formed civil partnerships in 2015 were single. The remaining people had been previously married or in a civil partnership.

The average age of males entering a civil partnership in 2015 was 33.8 years, while for females it was 36.8 years.

Place of Ceremony and Seasonality of Civil Partnerships

In 2015, 48 civil partnership ceremonies were held in a District Registration Office. The remaining 41 ceremonies were held in an approved venue.

September was the most popular month for civil partnerships, with 17 partnerships formed that month. A further 15 were formed in August and 13 in November. The second and third quarters of the year (April to September) are typically the most popular months to celebrate a civil partnership.

Civil Partnership Dissolutions

Whilst legislation has been in place in Northern Ireland since late 2005 to dissolve a civil partnership through the Civil Partnership Act, there were no dissolutions registered in Northern Ireland until 2010.

During 2015 there were 7 civil partnership dissolutions registered in Northern Ireland, 5 of male couples and 2 of female couples.

The average age of all partners dissolving a civil partnership was 37.2 years.

Adoptions, Re-Registrations & Gender Recognition

In 2015:

- 113 children were adopted, an increase of 9 from the 2014 figure of 104.
- 1,011 births were re-registered, 23 more than in 2014.

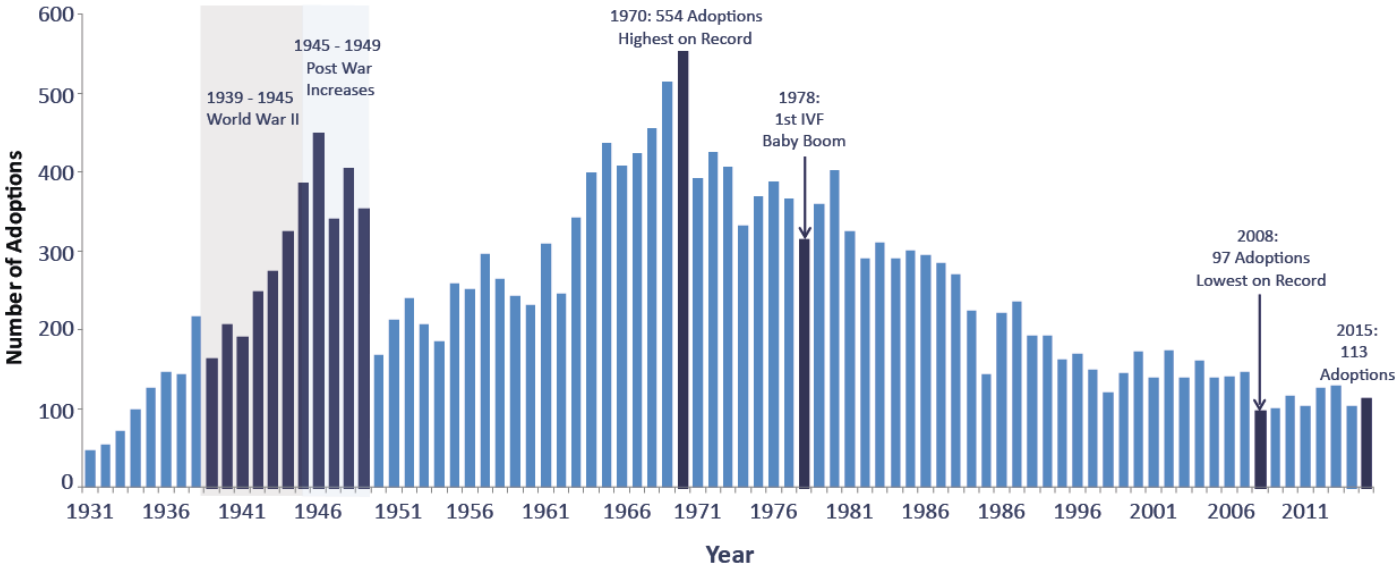
Adoptions

Registers of children adopted under the provisions of the Adoption (NI) Order 1987 and Adoption (Hague Convention) Act (NI) 1969 and of previous adoption Acts of 1929, 1950 and 1967 are kept in the General Register Office, to which adoption orders made to the courts are transmitted.

A certified copy of an entry in the Adopted Children Register is evidence of adoption, and is also evidence of the date of birth of the adopted child.

The number of children recorded in the Adopted Children Register during 2015 was 113, an increase of 9 from the 2014 figure of 104. The number of adoptions has generally been falling since 1970 when over 550 children were adopted. The 2008 figure of 97 adoptions was the lowest recorded figure since the early 1930's.

Figure 1.53: Number of Adoptions (1931 to 2015)



Download Chart (XLS Format – 39Kb)

Re-Registrations of Births

There were 1,011 births re-registered in 2015, 23 more than in 2014. The most common reasons for a re-registration are because (i) the parents have subsequently got married or (ii) to add the father's name to the birth entry.

Gender Recognition Registration

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 was passed on 1 July 2004 and established a Gender Recognition Panel that issues Gender Recognition Certificates to those who have satisfactorily proved that they have been living in their new gender identity.

The Gender Recognition Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 that came into operation from 1 April 2005 allows the Registrar General, on receipt of a Gender Recognition Certificate, to re-register a birth, showing the new gender, in the Gender Recognition Register. In 2015, there were 8 births re-registered in this way.

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Northern Ireland Statistics & Research agency

Appendices

Appendix 1: Population and vital events, 1926-2015

	Estimated population			Resident live births							Multiple births		
									Outside marriage				
Year	Persons	Males	Females	All resident births[1]	Rate[2]	Males	Females	Males per 1,000 females	Number	%[3]	Twins	Triplets etc	% of maternities
1926-30	**1,249,000**	604,000	645,000	**26,418**	***21.2***	13,587	12,831	*1,059*	1,249	*4.7*	308	4	*1.2*
1931-35	**1,270,000**	617,000	653,000	**25,098**	***19.8***	12,926	12,172	*1,062*	1,259	*5.0*	286	2	*1.2*
1936-40	**1,286,800**	626,100	660,700	**25,533**	***19.8***	13,110	12,423	*1,055*	1,178	*4.6*	300	4	*1.2*
1941-45	**1,304,400**	674,000	630,400	**29,592**	***22.7***	15,287	14,305	*1,069*	1,560	*5.3*	332	4	*1.2*
1946-50	**1,350,400**	695,800	654,600	**29,764**	***22.0***	15,336	14,428	*1,063*	1,124	*3.8*	367	5	*1.3*
1951-55	**1,382,500**	673,700	708,800	**28,798**	***20.8***	14,885	13,913	*1,070*	838	*2.9*	391	4	*1.4*
1956-60	**1,405,000**	684,700	720,300	**30,539**	***21.7***	15,755	14,784	*1,066*	758	*2.5*	414	3	*1.4*
1961-65	**1,447,200**	705,500	741,700	**33,226**	***23.0***	17,171	16,055	*1,069*	890	*2.7*	407	3	*1.3*
1966-70	**1,501,500**	732,500	769,000	**32,866**	***21.9***	16,958	15,908	*1,066*	1,180	*3.6*	355	3	*1.1*
1971-75	**1,532,000**	755,200	776,700	**28,850**	***18.8***	14,935	13,914	*1,073*	1,260	*4.4*	308	2	*1.1*
1976-80	**1,526,200**	754,300	771,900	**26,959**	***17.7***	13,807	13,152	*1,050*	1,531	*5.7*	271	4	*1.0*
1981-85	**1,552,100**	759,700	792,400	**27,194**	***17.5***	13,965	13,229	*1,056*	2,469	*9.1*	289	3	*1.1*
1986-90	**1,585,400**	773,800	811,600	**27,045**	***17.1***	13,914	13,130	*1,060*	4,266	*15.8*	286	4	*1.1*
1991-95	**1,631,800**	795,900	835,900	**24,779**	***15.2***	12,704	12,075	*1,052*	5,427	*21.9*	292	8	*1.2*
1996-2000	**1,674,500**	816,700	857,800	**23,321**	***13.9***	11,966	11,356	*1,054*	6,661	*28.6*	319	8	*1.4*
2001-2005	**1,704,700**	833,400	871,300	**21,928**	***12.9***	11,245	10,683	*1,053*	7,511	*34.3*	314	8	*1.5*
2006-2010	**1,772,800**	869,900	903,000	**24,716**	***13.9***	12,689	12,027	*1,055*	9,638	*39.0*	356	4	*1.5*
2011-2015	**1,829,720**	897,280	932,440	**24,686**	***13.5***	12,671	12,056	*1,051*	10,553	*42.8*	370	5	*1.5*
1971	**1,540,400**	754,600	785,800	**31,765**	***20.6***	16,504	15,261	*1,081*	1,207	*3.8*	342	4	*1.1*
1972	**1,539,000**	757,500	781,500	**29,994**	***19.5***	15,559	14,435	*1,078*	1,263	*4.2*	325	3	*1.1*
1973	**1,530,000**	755,700	774,200	**29,200**	***19.1***	15,152	14,048	*1,079*	1,195	*4.1*	290	1	*1.0*
1974	**1,526,900**	755,000	771,900	**27,160**	***17.8***	13,987	13,173	*1,062*	1,296	*4.8*	291	3	*1.1*
1975	**1,523,500**	753,300	770,200	**26,130**	***17.2***	13,475	12,655	*1,065*	1,338	*5.1*	294	-	-
1976	**1,523,500**	754,000	769,500	**26,361**	***17.3***	13,542	12,819	*1,056*	1,330	*5.0*	264	5	*1.0*
1977	**1,523,300**	753,900	769,400	**25,437**	***16.7***	13,154	12,283	*1,071*	1,383	*5.4*	266	3	*1.1*
1978	**1,523,200**	753,600	769,700	**26,239**	***17.2***	13,168	13,071	*1,007*	1,523	*5.8*	249	2	*1.0*
1979	**1,528,300**	755,200	773,100	**28,178**	***18.4***	14,485	13,693	*1,058*	1,668	*5.9*	276	5	*1.0*
1980	**1,532,800**	754,800	778,000	**28,582**	***18.6***	14,686	13,896	*1,057*	1,751	*6.1*	298	4	*1.1*
1981	**1,543,000**	756,600	786,300	**27,166**	***17.6***	13,847	13,319	*1,040*	1,894	*7.0*	304	4	*1.1*
1982	**1,544,500**	756,700	787,800	**26,872**	***17.4***	13,732	13,140	*1,045*	2,106	*7.8*	305	2	*1.2*
1983	**1,550,600**	759,000	791,500	**27,026**	***17.4***	13,972	13,054	*1,070*	2,370	*8.8*	263	4	*1.0*
1984	**1,557,300**	761,300	796,000	**27,477**	***17.6***	14,196	13,281	*1,069*	2,790	*10.2*	303	3	*1.1*
1985	**1,565,400**	764,900	800,400	**27,427**	***17.5***	14,076	13,351	*1,054*	3,185	*11.6*	269	3	*1.0*
1986	**1,573,500**	768,400	805,100	**27,975**	***17.8***	14,501	13,474	*1,076*	3,575	*12.8*	280	3	*1.0*
1987	**1,582,000**	772,900	809,100	**27,653**	***17.5***	14,196	13,457	*1,055*	3,967	*14.3*	320	7	*1.2*
1988	**1,585,400**	773,800	811,700	**27,514**	***17.4***	14,131	13,383	*1,056*	4,446	*16.2*	283	2	*1.0*
1989	**1,590,400**	775,900	814,500	**25,831**	***16.2***	13,307	12,524	*1,063*	4,394	*17.0*	281	2	*1.1*
1990	**1,595,600**	777,900	817,700	**26,251**	***16.5***	13,437	12,814	*1,049*	4,946	*18.8*	267	5	*1.0*
1991	**1,607,300**	783,200	824,100	**26,028**	***16.2***	13,427	12,601	*1,066*	5,288	*20.3*	311	7	*1.2*
1992	**1,623,300**	792,100	831,100	**25,354**	***15.6***	12,924	12,430	*1,040*	5,579	*22.0*	256	8	*1.1*
1993	**1,635,600**	798,200	837,300	**24,722**	***15.1***	12,515	12,207	*1,025*	5,445	*22.0*	283	9	*1.2*
1994	**1,643,700**	801,900	841,800	**24,098**	***14.7***	12,361	11,737	*1,053*	5,337	*22.1*	288	6	*1.2*
1995	**1,649,100**	804,000	845,100	**23,693**	***14.4***	12,293	11,400	*1,078*	5,487	*23.2*	324	9	*1.4*
1996	**1,661,800**	810,300	851,400	**24,382**	***14.7***	12,382	12,000	*1,032*	6,346	*26.0*	310	13	*1.3*
1997	**1,671,300**	815,500	855,700	**24,087**	***14.4***	12,325	11,762	*1,048*	6,427	*26.7*	330	7	*1.4*
1998	**1,677,800**	818,700	859,100	**23,668**	***14.1***	12,058	11,610	*1,039*	6,743	*28.5*	305	7	*1.3*
1999	**1,679,000**	818,500	860,500	**22,957**	***13.7***	11,943	11,014	*1,084*	6,957	*30.3*	334	6	*1.5*
2000	**1,682,900**	820,500	862,500	**21,512**	***12.8***	11,120	10,392	*1,070*	6,833	*31.8*	314	5	*1.5*
2001	**1,688,800**	824,300	864,600	**21,962**	***13.0***	11,288	10,674	*1,058*	7,144	*32.5*	330	10	*1.6*
2002	**1,697,500**	829,000	868,500	**21,385**	***12.6***	10,874	10,511	*1,035*	7,161	*33.5*	313	13	*1.5*
2003	**1,704,900**	833,100	871,800	**21,648**	***12.7***	11,244	10,404	*1,081*	7,439	*34.4*	304	5	*1.4*
2004	**1,714,000**	838,300	875,800	**22,318**	***13.0***	11,477	10,841	*1,059*	7,703	*34.5*	330	7	*1.5*
2005	**1,727,700**	845,300	882,400	**22,328**	***12.9***	11,341	10,987	*1,032*	8,108	*36.3*	294	6	*1.4*
2006	**1,743,100**	853,100	890,000	**23,272**	***13.4***	12,010	11,262	*1,066*	8,832	*38.0*	315	1	*1.4*
2007	**1,761,700**	862,300	899,400	**24,451**	***13.9***	12,516	11,935	*1,049*	9,261	*37.9*	357	5	*1.5*
2008	**1,779,200**	871,000	908,200	**25,631**	***14.4***	13,204	12,427	*1,063*	9,966	*38.9*	356	6	*1.4*
2009	**1,793,300**	878,500	914,800	**24,910**	***13.9***	12,799	12,111	*1,057*	9,902	*39.8*	372	5	*1.5*
2010	**1,804,800**	884,500	920,300	**25,315**	***14.0***	12,917	12,398	*1,042*	10,231	*40.4*	382	5	*1.6*
2011	**1,814,300**	889,300	925,000	**25,273**	***13.9***	12,825	12,448	*1,030*	10,591	*41.9*	410	4	*1.7*
2012	**1,823,600**	894,600	929,000	**25,269**	***13.9***	12,999	12,270	*1,059*	10,757	*42.6*	371	6	*1.5*
2013	**1,829,700**	897,100	932,600	**24,277**	***13.3***	12,388	11,889	*1,042*	10,308	*42.5*	378	5	*1.6*
2014	**1,840,500**	902,700	937,800	**24,394**	***13.3***	12,543	11,851	*1,058*	10,540	*42.2*	347	4	*1.5*
2015	**1,851,600**	909,100	942,500	**24,215**	***13.2***	12,602	11,823	*1,066*	10,570	*43.7*	343	7	*1.5*

Note: See Appendix 3 - for notes on change in definition of stillbirths that took place in 1992

[1] All births prior to 1981 [2] Rate per 1,000 population [3] Percentage of all live births

[4] Rate per 1,000 resident live and still births [5] Rate per 1,000 live births (resident and non-resident)

Appendix 1: Population and vital events, 1926-2015

Stillbirths		Infant deaths		Deaths						Marriages		Divorces	Civil Partnerships	
				Persons		Males		Females						
Number	Rate[4]	Number	Rate[5]	Number	Rate[2]	Number	Rate[2]	Number	Rate[2]	Number	Rate[2]	Number	Number	Year
..	..	2,083	78.8	**18,403**	***14.7***	8,888	*14.7*	9,515	*14.8*	7,328	*5.9*	..	..	1926-30
..	..	1,966	78.4	**18,026**	***14.2***	8,869	*14.4*	9,157	*14.0*	7,806	*6.1*	..	..	1931-35
..	..	1,970	77.2	**18,369**	***14.3***	9,097	*14.5*	9,271	*14.0*	9,073	*7.1*	..	..	1936-40
..	..	2,169	73.3	**17,478**	***13.4***	8,778	*13.0*	8,700	*13.8*	10,751	*8.2*	..	..	1941-45
..	..	1,423	47.8	**16,039**	***11.9***	8,134	*11.7*	7,905	*12.1*	9,396	*7.0*	..	..	1946-50
..	..	1,054	36.6	**15,557**	***11.3***	7,966	*11.8*	7,590	*10.7*	9,359	*6.8*	..	..	1951-55
..	..	863	28.3	**15,175**	***10.8***	7,872	*11.5*	7,303	*10.1*	9,500	*6.8*	..	..	1956-60
695	20.5	879	26.5	**15,628**	***10.8***	8,185	*11.6*	7,443	*10.0*	10,185	*7.0*	124	..	1961-65
530	15.9	791	24.1	**15,987**	***10.6***	8,399	*11.5*	7,588	*9.9*	11,357	*7.6*	225	..	1966-70
407	13.9	610	21.1	**16,948**	***11.1***	8,954	*11.9*	7,994	*10.3*	11,384	*7.4*	381	..	1971-75
269	9.9	427	15.9	**16,750**	***11.0***	8,770	*11.6*	7,980	*10.3*	10,010	*6.6*	648	..	1976-80
194	7.1	323	11.8	**15,972**	***10.3***	8,146	*10.7*	7,826	*9.9*	10,049	*6.5*	1,523	..	1981-85
136	5.0	231	8.5	**15,696**	***9.9***	7,879	*10.2*	7,818	*9.6*	10,031	*6.3*	1,664	..	1986-90
135	5.4	168	6.7	**15,228**	***9.3***	7,515	*9.4*	7,713	*9.2*	8,983	*5.5*	2,282	..	1991-95
126	5.4	134	5.7	**15,150**	***9.0***	7,315	*9.0*	7,835	*9.1*	7,881	*4.7*	2,325	..	1996-2000
109	4.9	122	5.5	**14,428**	***8.5***	6,953	*8.3*	7,474	*8.6*	7,821	*4.6*	2,345	..	2001-2005
106	4.3	129	5.1	**14,592**	***8.2***	7,095	*8.2*	7,496	*8.3*	8,309	*4.7*	2,605	105	2006-2010
93	3.7	111	4.5	**14,831**	***8.1***	7,178	*8.0*	7,652	*8.2*	8,375	*4.6*	2,401	98	2011-2015
462	14.3	722	22.7	**16,202**	***10.5***	8,593	*11.4*	7,609	*9.7*	12,152	*7.9*	339	..	1971
434	14.3	616	20.5	**17,032**	***11.1***	9,001	*11.9*	8,031	*10.3*	11,905	*7.7*	355	..	1972
389	13.1	610	20.9	**17,669**	***11.5***	9,288	*12.3*	8,381	*10.8*	11,212	*7.3*	393	..	1973
374	13.6	567	20.9	**17,327**	***11.3***	9,226	*12.2*	8,101	*10.5*	10,783	*7.1*	382	..	1974
375	14.1	534	20.4	**16,511**	***10.8***	8,664	*11.5*	7,847	*10.2*	10,867	*7.1*	437	..	1975
278	10.4	483	18.3	**17,030**	***11.2***	8,869	*11.8*	8,161	*10.6*	9,914	*6.5*	574	..	1976
310	12.0	438	17.2	**16,921**	***11.1***	8,871	*11.8*	8,050	*10.5*	9,696	*6.4*	569	..	1977
243	9.2	417	15.9	**16,153**	***10.6***	8,458	*11.2*	7,695	*10.0*	10,304	*6.8*	599	..	1978
246	8.7	417	14.8	**16,811**	***11.0***	8,822	*11.7*	7,989	*10.3*	10,214	*6.7*	601	..	1979
266	9.2	382	13.4	**16,835**	***11.0***	8,832	*11.7*	8,003	*10.3*	9,923	*6.5*	896	..	1980
240	8.8	360	13.2	**16,256**	***10.5***	8,423	*11.1*	7,833	*10.0*	9,636	*6.2*	1,355	..	1981
187	6.9	369	13.7	**15,918**	***10.3***	8,004	*10.6*	7,914	*10.0*	9,913	*6.4*	1,383	..	1982
204	7.5	329	12.1	**16,039**	***10.3***	8,209	*10.8*	7,830	*9.9*	9,990	*6.4*	1,657	..	1983
161	5.8	291	10.5	**15,692**	***10.1***	8,007	*10.5*	7,685	*9.7*	10,361	*6.7*	1,552	..	1984
178	6.4	265	9.6	**15,955**	***10.2***	8,088	*10.6*	7,867	*9.8*	10,343	*6.6*	1,669	..	1985
125	4.4	286	10.2	**16,065**	***10.2***	8,154	*10.6*	7,911	*9.8*	10,225	*6.5*	1,539	..	1986
170	6.1	242	8.7	**15,334**	***9.7***	7,721	*10.0*	7,613	*9.4*	10,363	*6.6*	1,514	..	1987
137	5.0	248	8.9	**15,813**	***10.0***	7,993	*10.3*	7,820	*9.6*	9,960	*6.3*	1,550	..	1988
133	5.1	180	6.9	**15,844**	***10.0***	7,878	*10.2*	7,966	*9.8*	10,019	*6.3*	1,818	..	1989
115	4.4	198	7.5	**15,426**	***9.7***	7,648	*9.8*	7,778	*9.5*	9,588	*6.0*	1,897	..	1990
123	4.7	194	7.4	**15,096**	***9.4***	7,533	*9.6*	7,563	*9.2*	9,221	*5.7*	2,310	..	1991
124	4.9	153	6.0	**14,988**	***9.2***	7,469	*9.4*	7,519	*9.0*	9,392	*5.8*	2,280	..	1992
128	5.2	176	7.1	**15,633**	***9.6***	7,731	*9.7*	7,902	*9.4*	9,045	*5.5*	2,213	..	1993
153	6.3	147	6.1	**15,114**	***9.2***	7,362	*9.2*	7,752	*9.2*	8,683	*5.3*	2,303	..	1994
145	6.1	169	7.1	**15,310**	***9.3***	7,482	*9.3*	7,828	*9.3*	8,576	*5.2*	2,302	..	1995
153	6.2	142	5.8	**15,218**	***9.2***	7,418	*9.2*	7,800	*9.2*	8,297	*5.0*	2,314	..	1996
131	5.4	137	5.6	**14,971**	***9.0***	7,244	*8.9*	7,727	*9.0*	8,071	*4.8*	2,176	..	1997
122	5.1	134	5.6	**14,993**	***8.9***	7,321	*8.9*	7,672	*8.9*	7,826	*4.7*	2,459	..	1998
132	5.7	148	6.4	**15,663**	***9.3***	7,464	*9.1*	8,199	*9.5*	7,628	*4.5*	2,326	..	1999
93	4.3	109	5.0	**14,903**	***8.9***	7,128	*8.7*	7,775	*9.0*	7,584	*4.5*	2,350	..	2000
112	5.1	134	6.0	**14,513**	***8.6***	7,007	*8.5*	7,506	*8.7*	7,281	*4.3*	2,365	..	2001
122	5.7	100	4.6	**14,586**	***8.6***	6,948	*8.4*	7,638	*8.8*	7,599	*4.5*	2,165	..	2002
108	5.0	115	5.2	**14,462**	***8.5***	6,920	*8.3*	7,542	*8.7*	7,757	*4.5*	2,319	..	2003
113	5.0	122	5.3	**14,354**	***8.4***	6,935	*8.3*	7,419	*8.5*	8,328	*4.9*	2,512	..	2004
89	4.0	140	6.1	**14,224**	***8.2***	6,957	*8.2*	7,267	*8.2*	8,140	*4.7*	2,362	12	2005
89	3.8	121	5.1	**14,532**	***8.3***	7,062	*8.3*	7,470	*8.4*	8,259	*4.7*	2,565	116	2006
102	4.2	123	4.9	**14,649**	***8.3***	7,208	*8.4*	7,441	*8.3*	8,687	*4.9*	2,913	111	2007
115	4.5	123	4.7	**14,907**	***8.4***	7,227	*8.3*	7,680	*8.5*	8,510	*4.8*	2,773	86	2008
119	4.8	130	5.1	**14,413**	***8.0***	6,914	*7.9*	7,499	*8.2*	7,931	*4.4*	2,176	96	2009
105	4.1	146	5.7	**14,457**	***8.0***	7,066	*8.0*	7,391	*8.0*	8,156	*4.5*	2,600	116	2010
91	3.6	110	4.6	**14,204**	***7.8***	6,918	*7.8*	7,286	*7.9*	8,366	*4.6*	2,343	89	2011
106	4.2	90	3.5	**14,756**	***8.1***	7,094	*7.9*	7,662	*8.2*	8,480	*4.7*	2,444	101	2012
110	4.5	112	4.6	**14,968**	***8.2***	7,261	*8.1*	7,707	*8.3*	8,126	*4.4*	2,403	100	2013
81	3.3	118	4.8	**14,678**	***8.0***	7,024	*7.8*	7,654	*8.2*	8,550	*4.6*	2,455	110	2014
76	3.1	124	4.8	**15,548**	***8.4***	7,595	*8.4*	7,953	*8.5*	8,355	*4.5*	2,360	89	2015

Note: See Appendix 3 - for notes on change in definition of stillbirths that took place in 1992

[1] All births prior to 1981 [2] Rate per 1,000 population [3] Percentage of all live births

[4] Rate per 1,000 resident live and still births [5] Rate per 1,000 live births (resident and non-resident)

Appendix 2a: Population and vital events by Administrative Area, 2015

AREA	Estimated population at 30 June 2015	Resident live births		Stillbirths		Infant deaths		Deaths		Marriages	
		Number	Rate[1]	Number	Rate[2]	Number	Rate[3]	Number	Rate[1]	Number	Rate[1]
NORTHERN IRELAND	**1,851,600**	**24,215**	***13.1***	**76**	***3.1***	**124**	***5.1***	**15,548**	***8.4***	**8,355**	***4.5***
Belfast HSC Trust	**353,800**	**4,648**	***13.1***	**17**	***3.6***	**30**	***6.5***	**3,414**	***9.7***	**1,428**	***4.0***
Belfast	285,000	3,870	*13.6*	13	*3.3*	26	*6.7*	2,829	*9.9*	1,252	*4.4*
Castlereagh	68,800	778	*11.3*	4	*5.1*	4	*5.1*	585	*8.5*	176	*2.6*
Northern HSC Trust	**471,200**	**5,763**	***12.2***	**12**	***2.1***	**24**	***4.2***	**4,005**	***8.5***	**2,134**	***4.5***
Antrim	54,400	704	*12.9*	0	*0.0*	3	*4.3*	424	*7.8*	218	*4.0*
Ballymena	65,600	792	*12.1*	2	*2.5*	6	*7.6*	613	*9.3*	459	*7.0*
Ballymoney	32,000	414	*12.9*	0	*0.0*	4	*9.7*	259	*8.1*	128	*4.0*
Carrickfergus	39,200	394	*10.1*	1	*2.5*	2	*5.1*	385	*9.8*	190	*4.9*
Coleraine	59,600	648	*10.9*	2	*3.1*	2	*3.1*	504	*8.5*	293	*4.9*
Cookstown	38,100	558	*14.6*	2	*3.6*	3	*5.4*	303	*8.0*	217	*5.7*
Larne	32,400	332	*10.3*	1	*3.0*	1	*3.0*	308	*9.5*	147	*4.5*
Magherafelt	46,600	663	*14.2*	1	*1.5*	0	*0.0*	285	*6.1*	201	*4.3*
Moyle	17,300	175	*10.1*	1	*5.7*	0	*0.0*	152	*8.8*	124	*7.2*
Newtownabbey	86,100	1,083	*12.6*	2	*1.8*	3	*2.8*	772	*9.0*	157	*1.8*

AREA	Estimated population at 30 June 2015	Resident live births		Stillbirths		Infant deaths		Deaths		Marriages	
		Number	Rate[1]	Number	Rate[2]	Number	Rate[3]	Number	Rate[1]	Number	Rate[1]
South Eastern HSC Trust	**354,700**	**4,321**	***12.2***	**13**	***3.0***	**24**	***5.6***	**3,108**	***8.8***	**1,621**	***4.6***
Ards	79,100	876	*11.1*	2	*2.3*	3	*3.4*	749	9.5	220	*2.8*
Down	70,500	916	*13.0*	4	*4.3*	8	*8.7*	578	*8.2*	440	*6.2*
Lisburn	125,000	1,649	*13.2*	6	*3.6*	7	*4.2*	991	*7.9*	464	*3.7*
North Down	80,000	880	*11.0*	1	*1.1*	6	*6.8*	790	*9.9*	497	*6.2*
Southern HSC Trust	**373,000**	**5,525**	***14.8***	**22**	***4.0***	**31**	***5.6***	**2,729**	***7.3***	**1,605**	***4.3***
Armagh	61,200	954	*15.6*	1	*1.0*	10	*10.5*	485	*7.9*	276	*4.5*
Banbridge	49,600	666	*13.4*	2	*3.0*	1	*1.5*	386	*7.8*	164	*3.3*
Craigavon	98,200	1,380	*14.1*	10	*7.2*	11	*8.0*	719	*7.3*	300	*3.1*
Dungannon	60,700	967	*15.9*	4	*4.1*	4	*4.1*	400	6.6	287	*4.7*
Newry & Mourne	103,400	1,558	*15.1*	5	*3.2*	5	*3.2*	739	*7.1*	578	*5.6*
Western HSC Trust	**299,000**	**3,958**	***13.2***	**12**	***3.0***	**15**	***3.8***	**2,292**	***7.7***	**1,567**	***5.2***
Fermanagh	63,100	780	*12.4*	4	*5.1*	4	*5.1*	562	*8.9*	463	*7.3*
Limavady	34,200	484	*14.1*	1	*2.1*	0	*0.0*	239	*7.0*	182	*5.3*
Derry	109,400	1,522	*13.9*	6	*3.9*	10	*6.6*	800	*7.3*	531	*4.9*
Omagh	52,200	632	*12.1*	1	*1.6*	1	*1.6*	379	*7.3*	227	*4.3*
Strabane	40,100	540	*13.5*	0	*0.0*	0	*0.0*	312	*7.8*	164	*4.1*

Note: See Appendix 3 - for notes on change in definition of stillbirths that took place in 1992

[1] Rate per 1,000 population

[2] Rate per 1,000 resident live and still births

[3] Rate per 1,000 live births (resident and non-resident)

Appendix 2b: Population and vital events by Administrative Area, 2015

AREA	Estimated population at 30 June 2015	Resident live births		Stillbirths		Infant deaths		Deaths		Marriages	
		Number	Rate[1]	Number	Rate[2]	Number	Rate[3]	Number	Rate[1]	Number	Rate[1]
NORTHERN IRELAND	**1,851,600**	**24,215**	***13.1***	**76**	***3.1***	**124**	***5.1***	**15,548**	***8.4***	**8,355**	***4.5***
Antrim & Newtonabbey	**140,500**	1,796	*12.8*	3	*1.7*	7	*3.9*	1,198	*8.5*	379	*2.7*
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	**207,800**	2,977	*14.3*	13	*4.3*	22	*7.4*	1,581	*7.6*	733	*3.5*
Belfast	**338,900**	4,584	*13.5*	17	*3.7*	31	*6.8*	3,267	*9.6*	1,410	*4.2*
Causeway Coast & Glens	**143,100**	1,722	*12.0*	4	*2.3*	6	*3.5*	1,154	*8.1*	728	*5.1*
Derry City & Strabane	**149,500**	2,061	*13.8*	6	*2.9*	10	*4.9*	1,112	*7.4*	694	*4.6*
Fermanagh & Omagh	**115,300**	1,413	*12.3*	5	*3.5*	5	*3.5*	941	*8.2*	692	*6.0*
Lisburn & Castlereagh	**140,200**	1,716	*12.2*	6	*3.5*	6	*3.5*	1,140	*8.1*	480	*3.4*
Mid & East Antrim	**137,100**	1,509	*11.0*	4	*2.6*	8	*5.3*	1,304	*9.5*	794	*5.8*
Mid Ulster	**144,000**	2,174	*15.1*	7	*3.2*	7	*3.2*	980	*6.8*	703	*4.9*
Newry, Mourne & Down	**176,400**	2,509	*14.2*	9	*3.6*	13	*5.2*	1,332	*7.6*	1,025	*5.8*
Ards & North Down	**158,800**	1,754	*11.0*	2	*1.1*	9	*5.1*	1,539	*9.7*	717	*4.5*

Note: See Appendix 3 - for notes on change in definition of stillbirths that took place in 1992

[1] Rate per 1,000 population

[2] Rate per 1,000 resident live and still births

[3] Rate per 1,000 live births (resident and non-resident)

Appendix 3: Notes and Definitions

Population Data

All population figures refer to estimates or projections as at the 30 June of the year in question. Ages relate to age at last birthday at the date shown.

Natural Change

Natural change is equal to total births minus total deaths.

Migration

Following international guidelines migration statistics relate only to long-term migrants (i.e. someone who changes their place of residence for a year or more (Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, United Nations, 1998)). Migration estimates are characterised by the previous and current place of residence, with internal migration relating to moves within Northern Ireland, and international migration relating to moves to or from countries outside the United Kingdom.

Marriages

Marriage rates relate to the number of marriages solemnised and not to the number of persons married. The number of marriages relates to those registered in Northern Ireland, thus it does not include Northern Ireland residents who get married outside Northern Ireland, but does include non Northern Ireland residents getting married in Northern Ireland.

Divorces

Divorce statistics have been compiled from returns of 'Decrees made Absolute' supplied by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service and include nullities of marriage.

Information on the number of 'Decree Nisis' is published by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service. A Decree Nisi does not terminate the marriage; a couple are still married until the Decree Absolute has been granted.

Date of Registration and Date of Occurrence

All the data presented on births, stillbirths, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths relate to the date of registration of the event and not to the date of occurrence. For events such as infant death or suicide, which are likely to be referred to the coroner, it can take some time for the event to be registered.

Place of Occurrence

Births, stillbirths and deaths have been allocated to the area of usual residence if it is in Northern Ireland, otherwise they have been allocated to the area of occurrence. Marriage and civil partnership figures relate to the area of occurrence.

Marital Status of Parents

The following terms are used throughout the report:

Married parents: refers to parents who are married to each other at time of registration of birth.

Unmarried parents: refers to parents who are unmarried or married but not to each other at time of registration of birth.

Births

The births presented in this report (since 1981) do not include births to non Northern Ireland resident mothers unless otherwise stated.

Stillbirths

The **Stillbirth (Definition) Act 1992** redefined a stillbirth, from 1 October 1992, as a child which had issued forth from its mother after the 24th week of pregnancy and which did not breathe or show any other sign of life. Prior to 1 October 1992 the statistics related to events occurring after the 28th week of pregnancy.

A stillbirth rate refers to the number of stillbirths per 1,000 live and still births.

The stillbirths presented in this report (since 1981) do not include stillbirths to non Northern Ireland resident mothers.

Perinatal Deaths

Perinatal deaths refer to stillbirths and deaths in the first week of life.

A **perinatal death rate** refers to the number of perinatal deaths per 1,000 live and still births (including non Northern Ireland residents).

Perinatal deaths presented in this report include stillbirths and infant deaths to non Northern Ireland residents.

Neonatal Deaths

Neonatal deaths refer to deaths in the first four weeks of life.

A **neonatal death rate** refers to the number of neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births (including non Northern Ireland residents).

Postneonatal Deaths

Postneonatal deaths refer to deaths after the first four weeks but before the end of the first year.

A **postneonatal death rate** refers to the number of postneonatal deaths per 1,000 live births (including non Northern Ireland residents).

Infant Deaths

Infant deaths refer to all deaths in the first year of life.

An **infant death rate** refers to the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births (including non Northern Ireland residents).

Deaths

The deaths represented in this report refer to all deaths which occurred in Northern Ireland. They include those which occurred in Northern Ireland to non Northern Ireland residents, but exclude those occurring to Northern Ireland residents outside Northern Ireland.

Suicide, Self-Inflicted Injury and Events of Undetermined Intent

In the UK, in considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'Undetermined injury'. The ICD10 codes used for 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' are X60-X84 and Y87.0, and the ICD10 codes used for 'Undetermined injury' are Y10-Y34 and Y87.2. (Also see note on registration and occurrence).

Prior to 2004 there were seven coroner's districts in Northern Ireland; following a review of the coroner's service the separate districts were amalgamated into one centralised coroner's service. This change may affect the timing of registration of deaths with statistics from 2004 onwards being more timely and consistent. For more information on the impact of time taken to investigate a death on official suicide death statistics see:

http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/publications/suicides/Impact_of_registration_delays_on_suicide_statistics_in_Northern_Ireland.pdf

Smoking Related Deaths

Information is not recorded on the death certificate on whether the deceased was a smoker. Estimates can however be made of the number of deaths attributable to smoking, by using information on the contribution of smoking to specific conditions such as lung cancer which are recorded at death.

Research has been undertaken by the Health Development Agency to derive attributable proportions of smoking related deaths based on published relative risk factors for mortality of current and ex-smokers from various diseases, counts of death by cause, and estimates of current and ex-smoking behaviour.

For further information on the causes of death and attributable proportions used to define smoking related deaths see:

http://www.nice.org.uk/niceMedia/documents/smoking_epidemic.pdf

Alcohol Related Deaths

The figures in this report are based on the UK-wide harmonised definition of alcohol related deaths. The definition of alcohol related deaths includes those causes of death regarded as most directly due to alcohol consumption. It does not include other diseases where alcohol has been shown to have some causal relationship, such as cancers of the mouth, oesophagus and liver. The definition includes all deaths from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis (excluding biliary cirrhosis), even when alcohol is not specifically mentioned on the death certificate.

Apart from deaths due to poisoning with alcohol (accidental, intentional or undetermined), this definition excludes any other external causes of death, such as road traffic deaths and other accidents.

Further details on the UK definition and a list of the ICD9 and ICD10 codes used to code alcohol related deaths can be found at:

http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/all-releases.html?definition=tcm%3A77-29395

Drug Related Deaths

A death is considered to be a drug related death if the underlying cause of death recorded on the death certificate is drug poisoning, drug abuse or drug dependence. These deaths can be identified solely through the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). The ICD9 and ICD10 codes used to define these deaths are listed in the table below

ICD10 Underlying Cause Code	ICD9 Underlying Cause Code	Description
F11–F16, F18–F19	292, 304, 305.2–305.9	Mental and behavioural disorders due to drug use (excluding alcohol and tobacco)
X40–X44	E850–E858	Accidental poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances
X60–X64	E950.0–E950.5	Intentional self-poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances
X85	E962.0	Assault by drugs, medicaments and biological substances
Y10–Y14	E980.0–E980.5	Poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances, undetermined intent

Asbestos Related Deaths

Asbestos exposure can result in a number of life threatening illnesses including asbestosis, a lung disease which restricts breathing, and also mesothelioma which is a cancer of the lung.

In this report, asbestos related deaths have been defined as those deaths where asbestosis and/or mesothelioma have been mentioned on the death certificate either as a primary or secondary cause.

Further details on the definition used for asbestos related deaths can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website at:

http://www.hseni.gov.uk/index/information_and_guidance/general_hseniinfo/statistics.htm

Healthcare Associated Infections

In this report deaths related to healthcare associated infection solely relate to Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and *Clostridium difficile*. It is not possible to identify directly from the ICD codes all deaths where MRSA or *Clostridium difficile* contributed to a death. Data within this report has been collated by looking for all mentions of either MRSA or *Clostridium difficile* on the death certificate.

Crude Birth and Death Rates

A **crude rate** refers to the number of occurrences of the event per 1,000 population.

Age Standardisation

A straight comparison of crude death rates between areas may present a misleading picture because of differences in the sex and age structure of the respective populations. The technique of standardisation is used to remedy this. In general, standardisation involves a comparison of the actual number of events occurring in an area with the aggregate number expected if the age/sex specific rates in the standard population were applied to the age/sex groups of the observed population. The results are expressed either as standardised rates or as standardised mortality ratios (SMRs) where the standard ratio (for Northern Ireland) equals 100.

In some areas the presentation of standardised rates for only one year's deaths may not provide a full picture of the underlying standardised death rates. It is therefore advisable to use the 3 years rates provided.

Significance of SMRs

The estimation of SMRs by LGD and Health and Social Care Trust invites the question of whether such SMRs are different from the Northern Ireland average (100). The statistical significance of the SMRs has been examined by estimating the probability that the difference between an observed SMR and 100 might have resulted from chance variation; where this probability is less than 0.05 (one in 20) the particular SMR has been classified as statistically significantly ($p<0.05$) different from 100.

Total Period Fertility Rate (TPFR)

The TPFR is the average number of children that would be born to a cohort of women who experienced, throughout their childbearing years, the fertility rates of the calendar year in question.

TPFR Replacement Level

In western countries a TPFR of about 2.1 is required to maintain long-term population levels, assuming no migration.

General Fertility Rate

The general fertility rate is the number of live births per 1,000 women aged 15-44.

The Gross Reproduction Rate

The gross reproduction rate is the average number of live daughters that would be born to a cohort of women who experienced, throughout their childbearing years, the fertility rates of the calendar year in question.

The Net Reproduction Rate

With reference to the gross reproduction rate, the net reproduction rate is the average number of these live daughters that, subject to the mortality rates of the calendar year in question, would survive to their mother's age at the time of birth.

Completed Family Size

Average completed family size is calculated by summing over time the succeeding age specific fertility rates of women born in a particular year. (Such an approximation assumes that the effects of mortality and migration are negligible). However this measure can only calculate a value for women who have reached the end of the main childbearing ages conventional 45 years of age, but there is some value in considering the historical data for cohorts that have reached this age and the partial series for those not yet 45.

Maternities

Maternities refer to the number of pregnancies ending in stillbirths or live births with multiple births counting only once. The number of maternities presented in this report (since 1981) does not include births or stillbirths to non Northern Ireland residents.

National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC)

This new social classification has replaced the previously published Registrar General's Social Class. It is principally based on the individual's occupation and employment status and has been introduced in order to reflect a modern view of social classification. It was introduced from 2001 onwards. Further information can be obtained from the Office for National Statistics at:

http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/archived-standard-classifications/soc-and-sec-archive/the-national-statistics-socio-economic-classification--origins--development-and-use.pdf

NS-SeC is determined according to a person's occupation; for children of parents who are married to each other, according to the occupation of the father as stated at birth registration; for children of parents who are not married to each other but who jointly registered the birth, according to the occupation of the father; and for sole registrations, according to the occupation of the mother. The occupations are grouped into the following classes:

NS-SeC I	Higher managerial & professional occupations
NS-SeC II	Lower managerial & professional occupations
NS-SeC III	Intermediate occupations
NS-SeC IV	Small employers & own account workers
NS-SeC V	Lower supervisory & technical occupations
NS-SeC VI	Semi-routine occupations
NS-SeC VII	Routine occupations
NS-SeC VIII	Never worked & long-term unemployed

Cause of Death Coding – ICD10

All deaths and stillbirths registered from the 1 January 2001 have been coded in accordance with the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death, (ICD) (Tenth Revision), which has been in operation by international agreement from 1 January 1999.

Classification of the underlying cause of death is done by reference to the death certificate and additional information from the certifying doctor.

In January 2011, the General Register Office (GRO) upgraded its software for coding the causes of death to take account of a number of updates that the World Health Organisation (WHO) had made to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision (ICD-10). The main changes are amendments to the modification tables and selection rules, which are used to ascertain a causal sequence and consistently assign underlying cause of death from the conditions recorded on the death certificate. Overall, the impact of these changes is small although some cause groups are affected more than others, notably 'F' codes and 'G' codes relating to Alzheimer's disease and Dementia.

Expectation of Life

Expectation of life statistics are produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Expectations of life can be calculated in two ways: period life expectancy or cohort life expectancy.

Period life expectancies are worked out using the age-specific mortality rates for a given period (either a single year, or a run of years), with no allowance for any later actual or projected changes in mortality.

Cohort life expectancies are worked out using age-specific mortality rates which allow for known or projected changes in mortality in later years.

All statistics for expectation of life are based on the period methodology and are produced for single year of age based on three year's deaths and population data with the exception of the cohort figures given in Table 1.2.

Northern Ireland Population Projections

Northern Ireland population projections based on the 2014 mid-year estimates were published on 29 October 2015.

Base population: The projection was based on the Northern Ireland mid-2014 population estimate.

Fertility: The numbers of births for the projections are obtained by applying the appropriate fertility rate to the average number of women at each age during each year of the projection period. For Northern Ireland, long-term average completed family size is assumed to be 2.00 children per woman.

Mortality: The mortality rates for the first year of the projection, (i.e. year ending mid-2015), are based on the best estimates that could be made in September 2015 of the numbers of deaths at each age. Future improvements in mortality rates are based on the trend in mortality rates in the years up to 2014. In the long term rates of improvement in mortality rates are projected to be 1.2 per cent per annum.

Migration: It has been assumed that over the period mid-2014 to mid-2020 net international migration will reduce linearly from 3,000 inflows to the long-term assumption of 1,000 inflows. Beyond this migration will be in balance with the same number of people coming here to live as leaving each year. These assumptions are based on recent trends in migration and do not attempt to predict the impact of government policies on, for example, migration and student fees.

The Northern Ireland population projections are produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) at the request of the Registrar General for Northern Ireland. Further information on population projections can be obtained from:

National Population Projections and Life Tables Branch
ONS Centre for Demography
Office for National Statistics
Room D3/05
1 Drummond Gate
LONDON
SW1V 2QQ

Tel: 020 7533 5222

Email: **natpopproj@ons.gov.uk**
lifetables@ons.gov.uk

Website: **http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/index.html**

Geography Used for Data

Since the 2007 Registrar General Annual Report vital statistics by geography are defined using the Pointer address database. In Annual Reports prior to 2007 the geography for vital statistics was defined using the postcode from the address in conjunction with the Central Postcode Directory (CPD).

Pointer is an address database that has been developed by the Land and Property Services, Royal Mail and Local Councils. Pointer gives each address a unique property reference number and geo-spatial co–ordinates.

From 2009, the address for each registration is linked using the grid-reference of the Pointer unique property reference number to higher geographies. Under the previous CPD method only the postcode of the address was used to define the higher geography. Thus the new method is a more accurate method for allocating births and deaths by geography.

Where it has not been possible to assign a unique property reference number to an address using the Pointer database, the previous CPD method has been used to assign the geography.

Change to Health Geographies

As a result of changes to the Health Service in Northern Ireland which were introduced from the 1 April 2009, the four Health and Social Service Boards have been replaced by five new Health and Social Care Trusts. The Northern, Southern and Western Trusts mirror the equivalent Boards in the old system while the former Eastern Board has been split into the Belfast Trust (Belfast and Castlereagh Local Government Districts) and the South Eastern Trust (Ards, Down, Lisburn and North Down Local Government Districts).

UK Data

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for producing a wide range of economic and social statistics. It also, for England and Wales, registers life events and holds the Census of Population. Contact details are as follows:

Customer Contact Centre
Room 1.015
Office for National Statistics
Cardiff Road,
NEWPORT
NP10 8XG

Tel: 0845 601 3034

Fax: 0163 365 2747

Email: **info@statistics.gov.uk**

Website: **http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/index.html**

The National Records of Scotland (NRS) is responsible for the registration of births, marriages, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland. They are also responsible for the Census of Population in Scotland which, with other sources of information, is used to produce population statistics. Contact details are as follows:

Customer Services
Dissemination and Census Analysis Branch
General Register Office for Scotland
Ladywell House
Ladywell Road
EDINBURGH
EH12 7TF

Tel: 0131 314 4243

Fax: 0131 314 4696

Email: **customer@gro-scotland.gov.uk**

Website: **www.gro-scotland.gov.uk**

Appendix 4: Further Information

Vital Statistics

A wide range of additional information at differing levels of geography and for years not included in this edition of the Registrar General's Annual Report is available on request from Customer Services.

Population Statistics

Estimates of the resident population are available by sex and single year of age for each of the Local Government Districts (including the former 26), Health and Social Care Trusts, former Health and Social Services Boards, former Education, Library Boards, NUTS III areas of Northern Ireland and Parliamentary Constituencies. This information can be obtained from:

Customer Services
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
BELFAST
BT1 1SA

Tel: 028 9034 8160

Fax: 028 9034 8161

Email: **census.nisra@finance-ni.gov.uk**

Website: **http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp17.htm**

Migration Statistics

Since 2006 NISRA has published additional information on long-term international migration. Anonymised information from a number of administrative/statistical sources including the Medical Card Register, the Work Permit Scheme and National Insurance Number registrations are cited to support the long-term international migration estimates and provide further information on country of origin and reasons for migrating.

These publications can be found on the NISRA website at the following link:

http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp18.htm

Historical Registrar General Annual Reports

Electronic copies of all Registrar General Annual Reports from 1887 to the present day are now available from the NISRA website. They can be accessed at the following link:

http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp57.htm

Census Office for Northern Ireland

2011 Census

The 2011 Census was held on Sunday 27 March 2011. Census Office has completed the publication of the pre-planned outputs including:

- Census 2011 Population and Household Estimates
- Census 2011 Key and Quick Statistics
- Census 2011 Detailed Characteristics
- Census 2011 Local Characteristics
- Census 2011 Alternative Populations

The information from the 2011 Census is available through the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) website: **www.nisra.gov.uk/ninis**

NINIS provides facilities to access the data and to view the data on charts and maps.

More information on the Census, and the statistics available from it, can be obtained from:

Census Customer Services
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
BELFAST
BT1 1SA

Tel: 028 9034 8160

Fax: 028 9034 8161

Email: **census.nisra@finance-ni.gov.uk**

Website: **http://www.nisra.gov.uk/census.html**

2021 Census

Preparations are underway for the next Census which is planned for 2021. The 2021 Census will be predominantly online, while offering alternative modes of completion where necessary. It will also aim to make best use of technology and administrative data in its design, building on the online approach used successfully in the 2011 Census.

Further information on the planning of the 2021 Census can be obtained from: **http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/census/2021/planning/the-future-provision-of-census-of-population-information-for-northern-ireland.pdf**

Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS)

Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) is a service delivered by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) providing free online access to statistical and locational information relating to areas across Northern Ireland. Information is available across a range of themes including Population, Census 2011, Health & Social Care, Education & Skills and Crime & Justice. The NINIS website (**www.nisra.gov.uk/ninis**) contains datasets for statistical and administrative (e.g. Local Government District and Health and Social Care Trusts) geographies; area profiles providing statistical snapshots of your area; and mapping facilities that enable statistics to be interpreted readily in a spatial context as well as other data visualisation tools.

Further information can be obtained from:

Neighbourhood Statistics
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
BELFAST BT1 1SA

Tel: 028 9034 8111

Email: **ninis.nisra@finance-ni.gov.uk**

Website: **http://www.nisra.gov.uk/ninis**

Twitter: **@NISRANINIS**

Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS)

The Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS) is a large-scale data linkage study which has been created by linking administrative and statistical data. The Study is designed for statistical and research uses only and is managed under various legislative acts including The Census Act. Information is linked over time on people from Census, vital events and health registration datasets. Data sources include 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census data, birth, death and marriage registrations and demographic data derived from health registrations. The result is a 30 year plus longitudinal data set which is regularly being updated. In addition to this rich resource there is also the potential to link further Heath and Social Care data in distinct linkage projects (DLPs). The NILS dataset, which is anonymised, is managed in a secure environment by the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA).

Northern Ireland Mortality Study (NIMS)

The Northern Ireland Mortality Study (NIMS) is a large-scale data linkage study, developed in 2006, that links mortality data from the General Register Office (GRO) to 2001 and 2011 Census returns. The NIMS has been developed as a companion dataset to the full NILS, in which 100 per cent of the populations as enumerated in the 2001 and 2011 Censuses are included. As with the NILS dataset, these anonymised data are managed in a secure environment by NISRA. Like the NILS dataset, the NIMS is designed and maintained for statistical and research uses only and is managed under various legislative acts including The Census Act.

Further information on the NILS and the NIMS can be obtained from:

NILS Research Support Unit
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
BELFAST
BT1 1SA

Email: **nils-rsu@qub.ac.uk**

Website: **http://www.nils-rsu.census.ac.uk**

Twitter: **@NILSRSU**

Administrative Data Research Centre – Northern Ireland

Administrative Data Research Centre Northern Ireland

The Administrative Data Research Centre for Northern Ireland (ADRC-NI) is part of the UK-wide Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN). The purpose of the ADRN is to facilitate economic and social research using administrative data (data which are collected by Government and other organisations for administrative purposes). Anonymised administrative can be accessed held in a secure environment managed by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Researchers are welcome to contact the team to discuss project ideas.

NISRA Research Support Unit

Email: **rsu.nisra@finance-ni.gov.uk**

Website: **www.adrn.ac.uk**

Divorces and Civil Partnership Dissolutions – Decree Nisi Information

The information on divorces and civil partnership dissolutions in this report refers to Decree Absolutes. Information on Decree Nisi's can be obtained from:

Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service
Laganside House
23-27 Oxford Street
Belfast BT1 3LA

Tel: 028 9032 8594

Fax: 028 9072 8942

Website: **http://www.courtsni.gov.uk**

Appendix 5: Report on the work of the General Register Office for Northern Ireland (2015)

Introduction

The General Register Office for Northern Ireland (GRO) is the part of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) that administers civil registration. The Registrar General for Northern Ireland has overall responsibility for the work conducted by the GRO. The registration functions of GRO stem mainly from the statutory responsibilities placed on the Registrar General and include:

- administration of the registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships through District Registration Offices;
- registration of adoptions;
- formalities relating to marriage and conduct of civil marriages;
- formalities relating to civil partnership registration;
- maintenance of records of births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships and adoptions and production of certified copies to applicants on request; and
- the provision of online access to historic records of births, deaths and marriages.

The Registrar General has additional statutory duties relating to the production and publication of vital statistics. Demography and Methodology Branch within NISRA manage these duties in partnership with GRO.

Aims

The work of GRO is wide ranging including policy development, oversight and regulation of registration work undertaken by the District Registration Offices, advice on marriage procedures, casework relating to change of name, procedures relating to legal adoptions, production of certified copies of vital events and maintenance and storage of archive records. This is reflected in the fundamental aims of GRO, which are:

- to register all births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships and adoptions;
- to ensure that all information collected is relevant, accurate, complete and updated in such a way as to maintain public confidence in the records;
- to support the production of accurate vital statistics to assist policy development and research;
- to preserve birth, death, marriage, civil partnership and adoption records permanently and to store them securely;
- to produce certified copies of records efficiently and promptly on demand and manage the Family History website.

The aims of GRO staff are to carry out these statutory obligations, to give accurate and unbiased advice to the public, to act with integrity at all times and to respect the confidentiality of all information contained in registration records or given by the public in confidence.

Main Activities / Performance Against Key Targets during 2015

Over 50,000 vital events (births, re-registered births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships) were registered in District Registration Offices and a corresponding number of certificates were issued. In addition, during 2015, GRO staff:

- produced over 60,000 certificates and of those, over 7,000 priority certificates;
- welcomed 1,200 visitors to the Public Search Room facility in Oxford House;
- verified 90 births, deaths and marriages for government departments:
- provided all death notifications to the Business Services Organisation, Electoral Office for Northern Ireland and Department for Work and Pensions;
- dealt with 4,200 registration related cases; and
- facilitated 1.5 million searches were carried out on the Family History website
- attended the Who Do You Think You Are? live exhibition in Birmingham in April 2016 and met over 1,000 visitors.

Each year the Registrar General sets a number of key targets for GRONI. During 2015 these included:

- To process 98 per cent of postal, online and telephone certificate applications within 5 working days.

  Achieved: over 98 per cent were processed within target.

- To process 98 per cent of personal certificate applications within 3 working days.

  Achieved: over 98 per cent were processed within target.

- To process 97 per cent of birth, death, marriage, civil partnership and adoption registration casework within 15 working days.

  Achieved: over 97 per cent were processed within 15 days.

(i) Annual review of civil registration fees

Each year GRO review the statutory fees charged for registration services against costs. The review indicated that an increase in fees in relation to birth, death, marriage and civil partnership certificates was not necessary.

(ii) GRO Northern Ireland Registration Office System (NIROS) Project

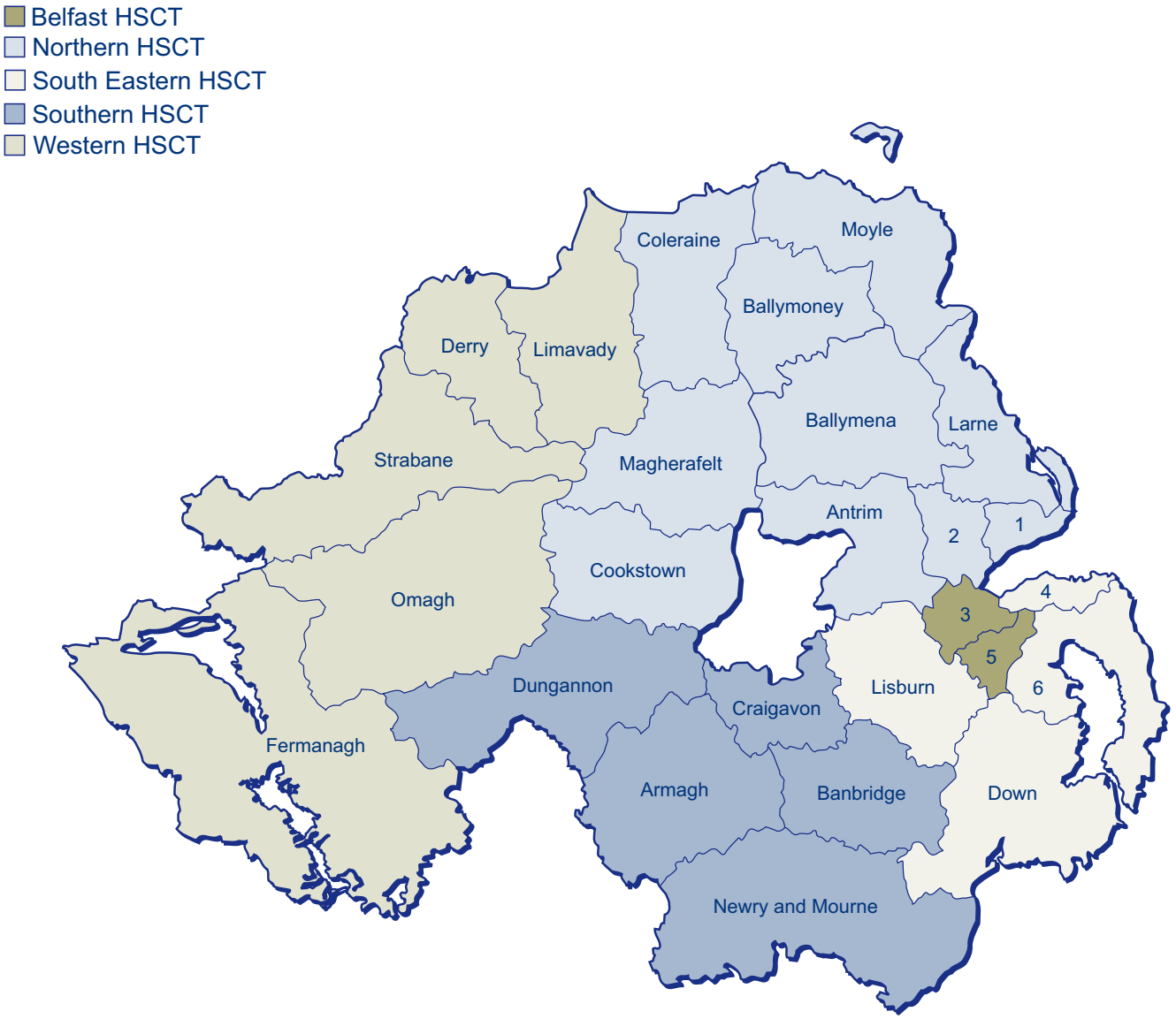
GRO has commenced planning for the next stage in the modernisation programme, which is the replacement of the current electronic registration system. A Supplier for the NIROS project was selected in 2014, with the delivery of the replacement system due in early 2016.

The project team has engaged with the system designers throughout the year to ensure that the new system will embrace the most up-to-date technology and deliver a registration system both fit for purpose now and in the future.

All project milestones have been met and the delivery of the new system is expected by the end of February 2016.

Appendix 6

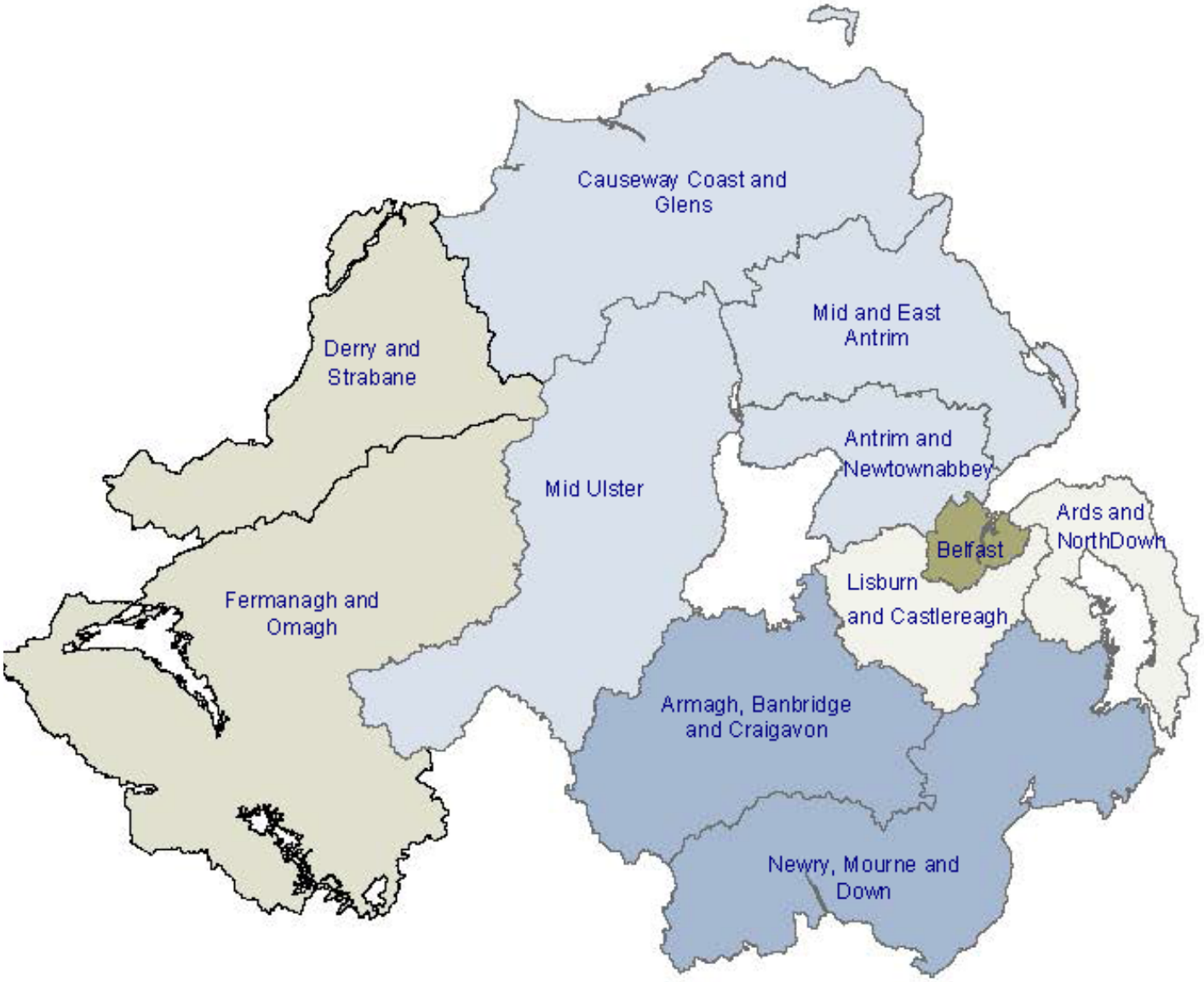
Northern Ireland's Health & Social Care Trusts and Local Government Districts



1. Carrickfergus
2. Newtownabbey
3. Belfast
4. North Down
5. Castlereagh
6. Ards

Appendix 7

Northern Ireland's 11 Local Government Districts



Correction Notice - Tuesday 06/09/2016
An error has been identified in the previously published count of Maternities for 2015.
The figures has been revised on Page 18 to 342.

NISRA apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

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McAuley House, 2-14 Castle Street, Belfast BT1 1SA
http://www.nisra.gov.uk

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