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Statistics and Research Agency

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um Staitisticí agus Taighde



Baby Names in Northern Ireland 2018



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Introduction

This booklet presents the most popular names given to babies whose birth was registered in Northern Ireland during 2018 and includes all live births to both resident and non-resident mothers. It examines the top 100 first names for boys and girls and discusses additional first names, variations in first name by the age and country of birth of the mother, and makes regional comparisons across Northern Ireland. It also discusses the change in popularity of names over time.

It should be noted that the year of registration is not necessarily the year in which the birth occurred as, for example, a birth that occurred towards the end of December 2018 may not have been registered until early January 2019. Similarly, some names included in this booklet for 2018 will have been given to babies born towards the end of 2017. It should also be noted that different spellings of a name have been treated as separate names, for example Amelia and Amelija. In contrast, names containing accents have been treated as if they did not have those accents, for example Séan is counted together with Sean.

Key users of baby name statistics include parents, soon-to-be parents and those who are interested in the popularity of their own name. Additional users include researchers who examine how names are changing over time and journalists who produce articles on the popularity of names.

The popularity of baby names can be influenced by a variety of factors including current celebrities, memorable places, religion, cultural and/or ethnic origins and names of relatives and friends.

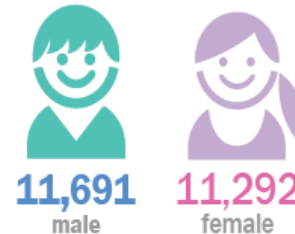
A total of 22,983 births were registered in Northern Ireland during 2018.

There were slightly more births of males (11,691) than females (11,292) registered, accounting for 50.9 per cent and 49.1 per cent of all registrations respectively.

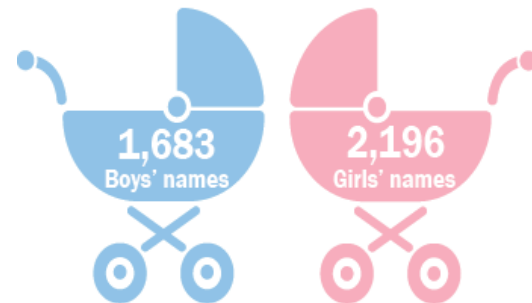
As with previous years, a greater variety of girls' names (2,196) than boys' names (1,683) were registered in 2018. The range of names being used by parents has grown considerably over the past 40 years, with 1,198 girls' names and 647 boys' names being registered in 1978.

There were 351 new boys' names and 554 new girls' names registered in 2018 that had not been registered since the reporting of baby names began in 1997. Some 61 per cent of the new names were for girls and 39 per cent were for boys.

~ 22,983 births registered in 2018 ~



~Range of names~



905 new names registered in 2018

Top 10 names

~Top 10 names~

1 James (217)

1 Noah (217)

3 Jack (201)

4 Charlie (191)

5 Daniel (154)

5 Jacob (154)

7 Oliver (151)

8 Harry (150)

9 Thomas (142)

10 Leo (137)

1 Grace (221)

2 Emily (203)

3 Olivia (178)

4 Sophie (155)

5 Ella (151)

6 Amelia (140)

7 Isla (135)

8 Anna (128)

9 Lily (125)

10 Lucy (124)

~Top names~

James/Noah (217)

Grace (221)

~New to Top 10~



Leo
Lily
Lucy

14% of babies given
a top 10 name

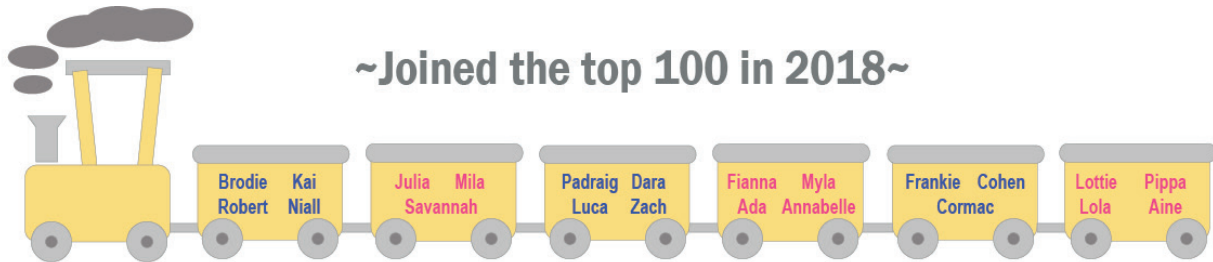
Top 10 boys' names:

- James and Noah were the equally most popular first names given to boys during 2018, with a total of 217 boys each being given these names. This is the first year that Noah has held the top spot since reporting baby names began in 1997.
- Noah climbed from fifth place in 2016 to third place in 2017 and has been in the top 10 since 2012. It was virtually unused in the late 1990s.
- This is James' fourth consecutive time at number one. James has been ranked in the top five each year since reporting of baby names began in 1997.
- Logan fell from the top 10 most popular boys' names after reaching the top ten for the first time in 2017.
- Leo entered the top 10 in 2018 for the first time, after coming close to the top 10 in 2016 and 2017, ranking 12 and 11 respectively.

Top 10 girls' names:

- Grace was the most popular name for girls, with 221 girls given this name in 2018.
- This is the thirteenth consecutive year Grace has been in the top three. It was previously number one in 2013.
- Emily fell to the second most popular name for girls following five consecutive years as number one.
- Olivia remained the third most popular girls' name in 2018, holding this spot in the top 10 for the last three consecutive years.
- Lily and Lucy replaced Charlotte and Sophia respectively for top 10 rankings. This is the third time that Lily has made the top 10 girls' names. Lucy left the top 10 in 2016 and 2017, having been in the top 10 continuously since 2006.
- Names are diversifying. In 2018, only 14 per cent of babies were given one of the top 10 names, compared to 22 per cent in 1998.

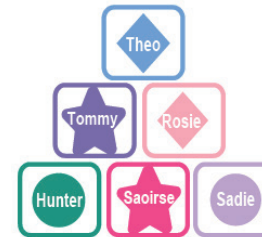
~Joined the top 100 in 2018~



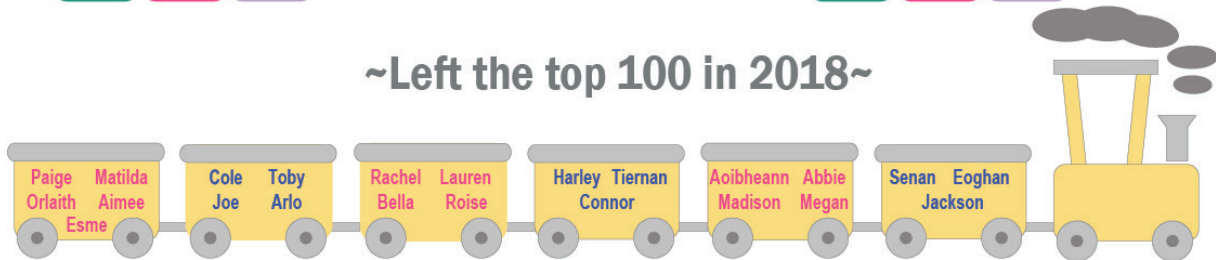
~Top climbers since 2008~



~Top climbers in 2018~



~Left the top 100 in 2018~



Top 100 boys' names:

- Of the 11 new entries to the top 100 boys' names in 2018, Brodie, Cohen, Frankie and Luca made the top 100 for the first time since the recording of baby names began in 1997.
- These replaced names such as Arlo, Cole, Harley, Senan and Toby, who had only joined the top 100 for the first time in 2017.
- Within the boys' top 100, the highest climbers in popularity between 2017 and 2018 were Tommy, Theo and Hunter.
- Ben (once a top 10 name) was one of the names to fall the greatest number of places between 2017 and 2018, along with Jamie, John and Sam.
- Since 2008, Brodie, Arthur and Tommy have all climbed over 300 places to reach the top 100 in 2018.

Top 100 girls' names:

- Of the 11 new entries to the top 100 girls' names in 2018, Ada, Fianna, Mila, Myla, Pippa and Savannah made the top 100 for the first time since the recording of baby names began in 1997.
- Esme, Matilda and Roise left the top 100 having only joined for the first time in 2017. Abbie, Aimee and Megan also left the top 100, and did so for the first time in 2018.
- Within the girls' top 100, the highest climbers in popularity between 2017 and 2018 were Rosie, Sadie and Saoirse.
- Sarah (once a top 10 name) was one of the names to fall the greatest number of places between 2017 and 2018, along with Mya, Rose and Penny.
- Since 2008, Ivy, Elsie and Mila have all climbed over 700 places to reach the top 100 in 2018.

Change over time

~Most popular names over the past 5 decades~



2018

Leo	Emily	Lily
Olivia	Thomas	Charlie
Harry	Amelia	Grace
Daniel	Jacob	Sophie
Noah	Oliver	Isla
Ella	Anna	Lucy

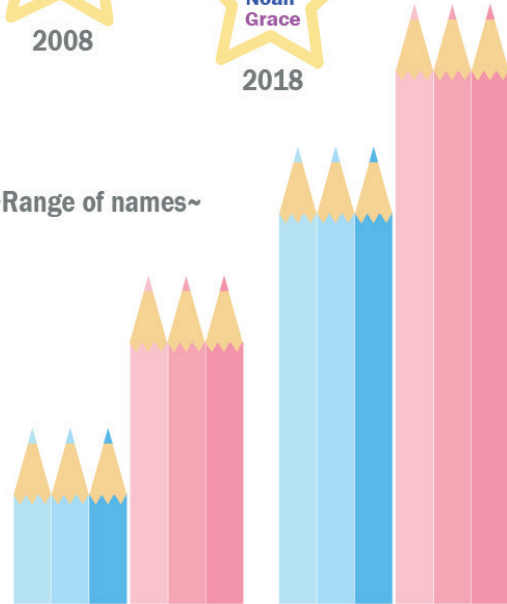
Mark		James	Jack	Amy
Joanne				Hannah
Andrew				Shannon
Stephen	John	Emma	Ryan	Rachel
Michelle	Karen	Sarah	Chloe	Jordan
Claire	Julie	Michael	Conor	Adam
William	Nicola	David	Lauren	Megan
Catherine	Paul	Christopher	Rebecca	
Lisa			Matthew	

1978

1998

~Top 10 boys' & girls' names in 1978, 1998 & 2018~

~Range of names~



647

1,198

1,683

2,196

2018

Top 10 boys' names: 1978 versus 2018

- James is the only name from the 1978 top 10 boys' names to have made the top 10 in 2018.
- David, Paul, John, Stephen and Mark were the five most popular boys' names registered in 1978.
- The names David, Paul and John were each given on more than 500 birth registrations in 1978. The two most popular names in 2018 were given fewer than 220 times each.
- There were 647 boys' name variations used in 1978 compared with 1,683 in 2018.

Top 10 boys' names: 1998 versus 2018

- Of the top 10 boys' names in 1998, only James and Jack appear in the top 10 in 2018. James was ranked third in 1998.
- Matthew, Ryan, James, Jack and Conor were the five most popular boys' names in 1998.

Top 10 girls' names: 1978 versus 2018

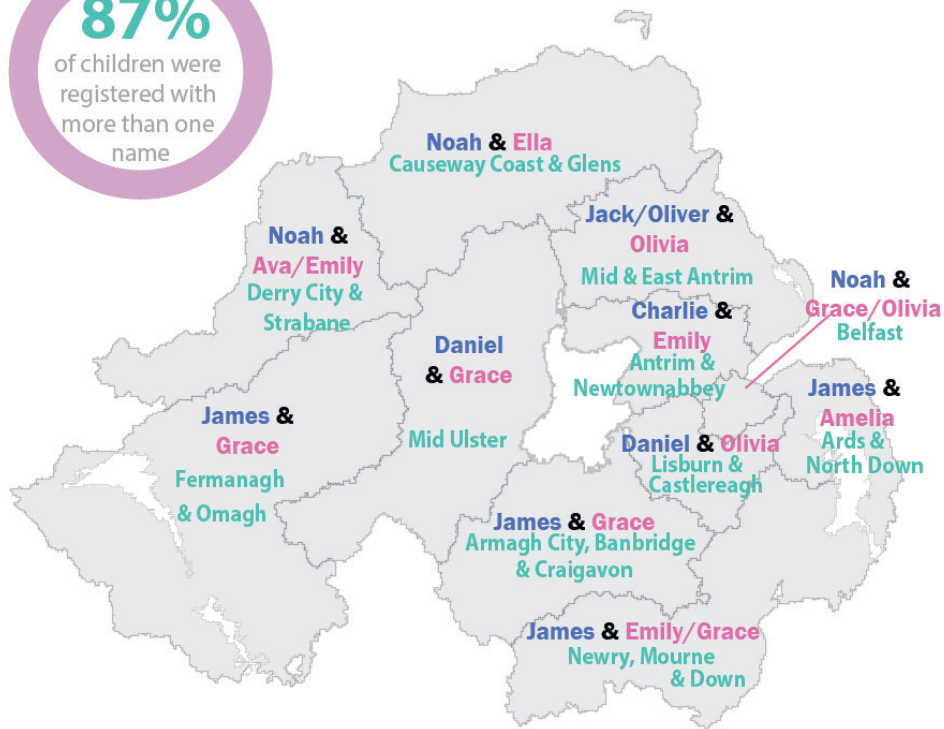
- None of the top 10 girls' names of 1978 made the top 10 in 2018. Indeed, Maria, Emma and Sarah were the only names from the 1978 top 100 that were also in the top 100 of 2018.
- Joanne, Lisa, Claire, Emma and Julie were the favourite girls' names chosen by parents in 1978.
- Even in 1978, parents were more diverse in the range of names given to girls (1,198) as opposed to boys (647).

Top 10 girls' names: 1998 versus 2018

- None of the most popular girls' names in 1998 appeared in the top 10 in 2018.
- Chloe, Emma, Rebecca, Amy and Lauren were the five most popular girls' names in 1998.

Additional Names and Regional Variations of First Names

~Top 5 additional names~



~Top first names by Local Government District~

Additional boys' names:

- Eighty nine per cent of boys whose births were registered in 2018 were given at least one additional name.
- James, John, Patrick, Thomas and William were the most popular choices for additional names.
- Almost 1,100* boys were given James as an additional first name.

Regional variations boys' names:

- Although Noah was joint most popular boys' name in Northern Ireland in 2018, at district level it was the most popular in three of the 11 Local Government Districts (LGDs).
- James, who was also joint most popular boys' name was the most popular in four of the 11 LGDs.
- Daniel was the favourite name in two LGDs, whilst Jack, Charlie and Oliver were the remaining most popular names at LGD level.

* All additional names have been included in this figure, not just the first additional name.

Additional girls' names:

- Eighty five per cent of girls registered in 2018 were given one or more additional names.
- Rose, Grace, Elizabeth, Mary and Marie were the five most popular additional names for girls.
- More than 800* girls were given Rose as an additional name.

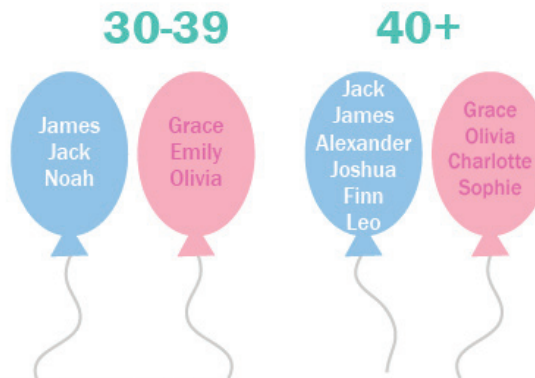
Regional variations girls' names:

- Although Grace was the most popular girls' name in Northern Ireland in 2018, at district level it was the most popular in three of the 11 LGDs.
- In an additional two LGDs Grace was joint favourite with either Olivia or Emily. Ella, Ava and Amelia were the most popular names in the remaining LGDs.

~Top names by mothers' country of birth~



~Top names by mothers' age~



¹The A8 countries are Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia

Mothers' country of birth - boys' names:

- Noah was the most popular boys' name choice for mothers born in Northern Ireland.
- Harry was the favourite for mothers born throughout the rest of the United Kingdom and James the most popular for mothers born in the Republic of Ireland.
- For mothers born in the A8 countries¹, Oliver was the most popular choice of boys' name. David was the most popular among mothers born elsewhere in the world.

Variation by mothers' age - boys' names:

- For teenage mothers the most popular choice of boys' name was Mason. Charlie and Noah were the most popular name given by mothers in their twenties.
- James was the most popular choice with mothers in their thirties and those aged 40 and over.

Mothers' country of birth - girls' names:

- Grace was favourite girls' names given by mothers born in Northern Ireland.
- Olivia was the most popular girls name given by mothers born in the rest of the United Kingdom and Aoife and Faidh were joint most popular for mothers born in the Republic of Ireland.
- Mia was the most popular choice of first name for mothers born in the A8 countries¹. For mothers born elsewhere in the world, Maria was the favourite name.

Variation by mothers' age - girls' names:

- The most popular girls' name choice for teenage mothers was Amelia.
- Grace was the favourite name for mothers in both their twenties and their thirties.
- For mothers aged 40 and over, Grace was the most popular girls' name choice.

Examples of inspired and less common names

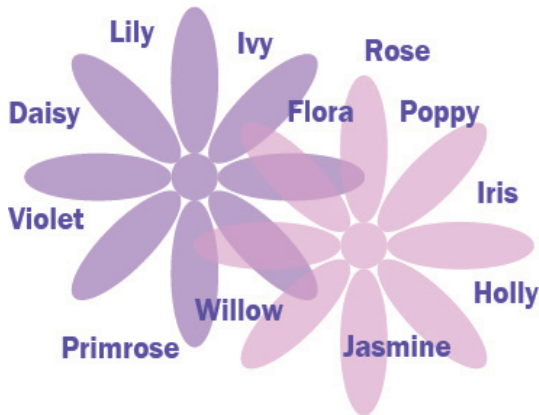
~Children given the name of a parent~



1,626

266

~Botanical names~



~Longest name~

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~Place names~



~Nature Names~



Month of birth:

- There was a spike in the number of girls named April who were born in April.
- The popularity of the name Autumn increased for girls born in September and October.
- There was a spike in the number of boys born in December and January who were given the name Noel.
- There was a spike in the number of girls named Holly or Hollie born in December and January.
- For girls born in July there was a spike in the number of girls named Julia, and in December, there was a peak in the number of girls named Joy.
- There were no babies named Summer in the winter months (December - February) with numbers peaking for this name in the summer months (June - August).

Place names:

- Adelaide, Brooklyn, Chelsea, Diego, India and Paris were some of the place names given to children whose births were registered in 2018.

Botanical names:

- There were several baby girls given the names of flowers. Of these, the most popular were Lily, Holly, Poppy, Ivy, Daisy, Rose, Jasmine and Violet.

Less common names:

- Oluwatimilehin was one of the less common names in 2018 and also the longest first name given (not including those containing a hyphen).
- Some of the less common names given to baby boys in 2018 included: Axl, Blaze, Hendrix, Phoenix and Wolf.
- Some of the less common names given to baby girls in 2018 included: Disney, Hermione, Moana, Storm and Zandaya.

Parents' names:

- Of those registrations containing details of the father, 1,626 boys were given their fathers' first name as a first or additional name. 266 girls were given their mothers' name.

All of the data in this booklet are available on the NISRA website at www.nisra.gov.uk

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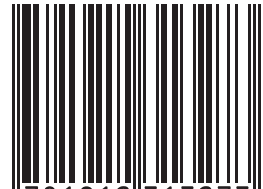
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