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Vital
Stats

A R R I V E D ...

Baby Names

Northern Ireland
2015

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Key Findings For New Arrivals in 2015

Boys

James was the most popular first name given to baby boys in 2015.

Jack followed a close second, followed by Noah.

James has not held the top spot since the reporting of baby first names began in 1997. Whereas Jack has held the top spot 13 times during this period.

Jackson climbed the greatest number of places to join the top 100 names for boys (up from rank 145 in 2014 to rank 75 in 2015).

Four of the 10 most popular boys' names in 2015 were also among the top 10 a decade ago, namely James, Jack, Daniel and Matthew.



Some less common names given to baby boys in 2015 were Cruz, Jon, Olaf, Theon and Tyrion.

Girls

Emily was the most popular first name given to baby girls in 2015.

Ella came in second in 2015, closely followed by Grace.

Since reporting of first names began in 1997, Emily has held the top position on 3 occasions, Sophie on 3 occasions, whilst Chloe and Katie have held the top spot on 6 occasions each.

Rosa climbed the greatest number of places to join the top 100 names for girls (up from rank 147 in 2014 to rank 53 in 2015).

Sophie and Anna were the only 2 girls' names from the top 10 in 2015 to feature in the top 10 list a decade previously.

Some less common names given to girls in 2015 were Arya, Elsa, Rita and Suri.



1. Introduction

This bulletin presents the most popular names given to babies whose birth was registered in Northern Ireland during 2015 and is based on 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 mother's age and country of birth, and makes regional comparisons across Northern Ireland. It also compares the ranks of these names with the ranks in previous years, showing the names that have grown in popularity.

It should be noted that the year of registration is not necessarily the year the birth occurred as for example, a birth that occurs towards the end of December 2015 may not be registered until early January 2016. It should also be noted that different spellings of a name have been treated as separate names, for example Conor and Connor. However, 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.

In 2015 there were 1,629 different boys' names and 2,207 different girls' names registered. This is in contrast to the 1,227 boys' names and 1,795 girls' names registered in 2005. These figures demonstrate that parents have become more diverse in the first names they give to their babies, with a wider variety of girls' names than boys' names being used. 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.

2. Top 10 baby names registered in Northern Ireland in 2015

James was the most popular first name given to baby boys in Northern Ireland in 2015. There were 300 baby boys named James in 2015, a name which has not held the top spot since the reporting of first names began in 1997. Jack dropped from the top spot to become the second most popular boy's name in 2015, while Noah climbed from sixth in 2014 to third in 2015. Jake and Matthew were new entries into the boy's top 10 in 2015, replacing Ethan and Jacob.

Emily was the most popular girl's name, with 233 baby girls registered in 2015. Ella climbed from fifth in 2014 to second place in 2015, whereas Grace fell 1 place to become the third most popular girl's name. Aoife and Ava increased in popularity to enter the girl's top 10, replacing Eva and Sophia. Table 1 shows the top 10 names and changes in rank since 2014 for baby boys and girls in Northern Ireland.

Table 1: Top 10 baby names registered in 2015 in Northern Ireland

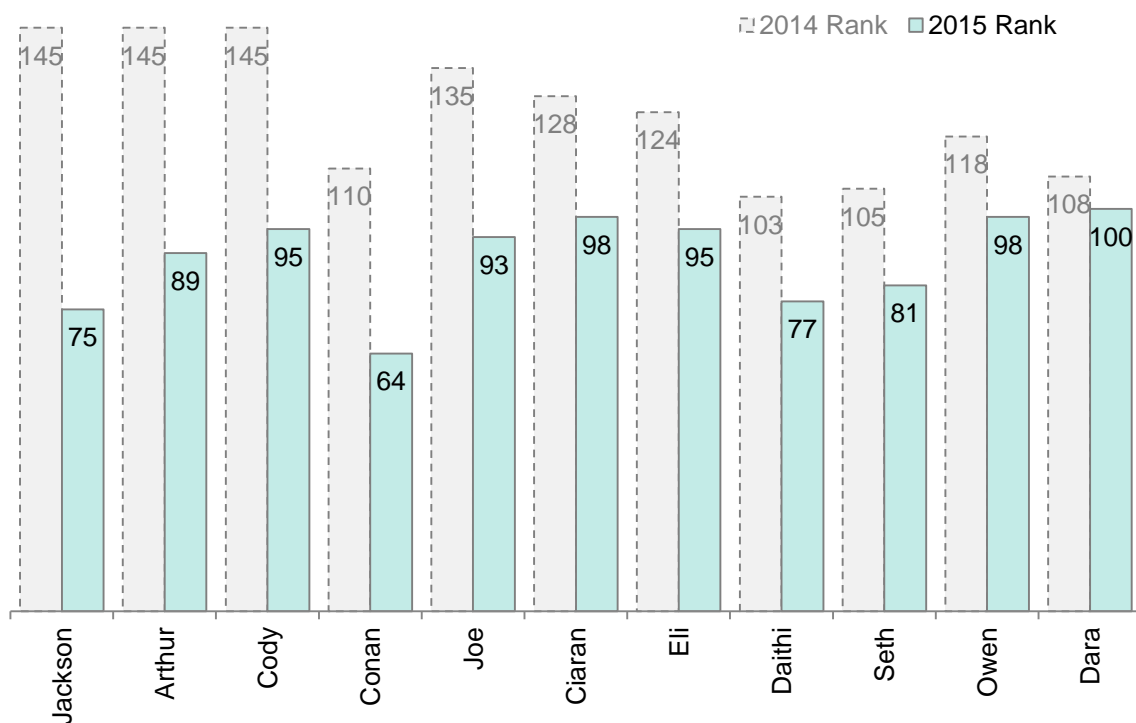
Rank	Name	Number	Rank in 2014	Name	Number	Rank in 2014
1	James	300	2	Emily	233	1
2	Jack	261	1	Ella	197	5
3	Noah	225	6	Grace	192	2
4	Charlie	213	4	Sophie	179	3
5	Daniel	188	3	Olivia	153	6
6	Oliver	186	7	Anna	152	7
7	Matthew	168	11	Amelia	149	4
8	Harry	166	5	Aoife	147	12
9	Thomas	157	10	Lucy	146	8
10	Jake	141	13	Ava	141	16

3. Top 100 baby names registered in Northern Ireland in 2015

Boys: New entries to the Top 100 Names

Within the 100 most popular boys' names in 2015 there were 11 new entries, with Jackson the biggest climber moving up 70 places to rank 75. Figure 1 shows the change in rank of all the new entries to the boy's top 100 names in 2015. The new entries replaced Sam, Ruairi, Daire, Kian, Kyle, Corey, Elijah, Rhys, Christopher, Eoghan, Jay, Connor and Robert which fell out of the top 100 boys' names between 2014 and 2015.

Figure 1: New entries to the boy's Top 100 names in 2015 by change in rank



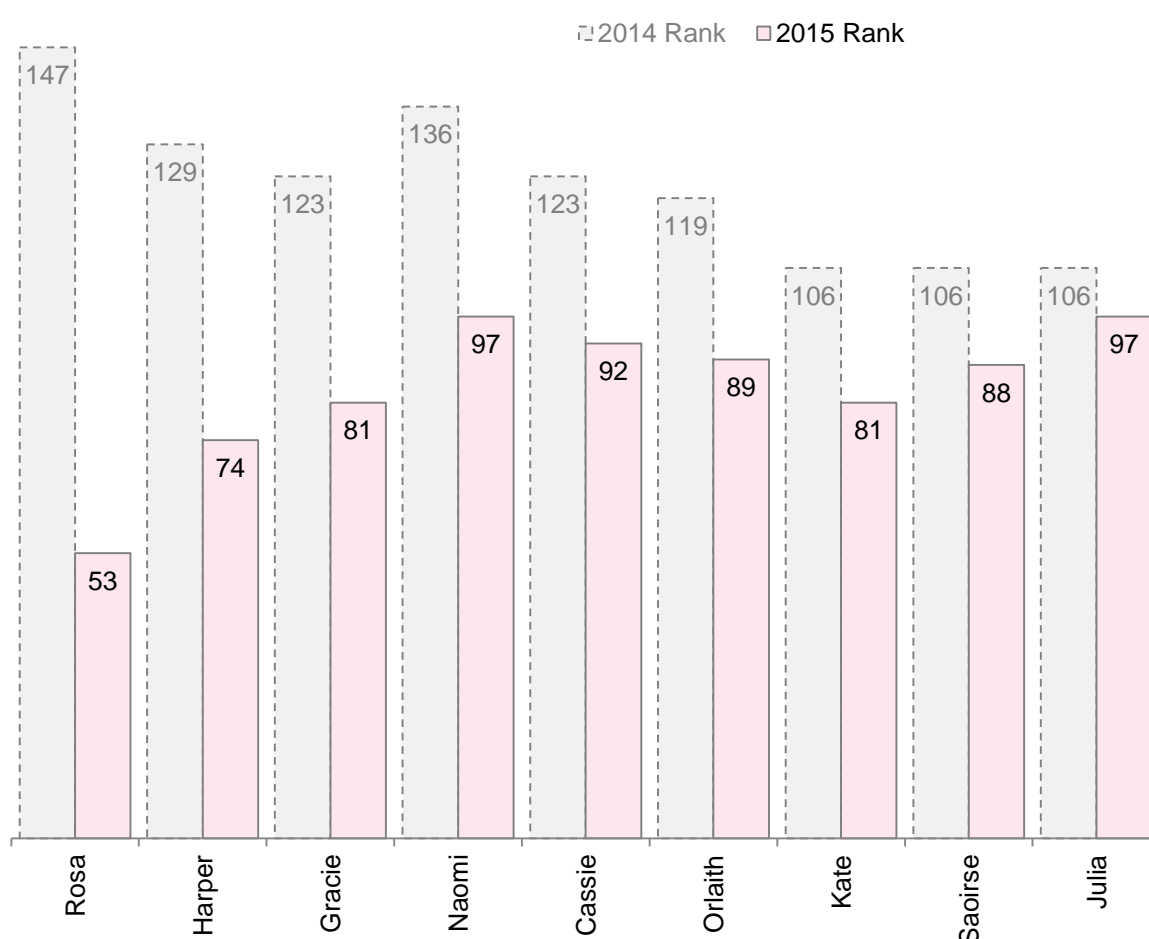
Boys: Names in the Top 100 in both 2014 and 2015

Among the boys' names that appeared in the top 100 in both 2014 and 2015, Odhran increased most in popularity rising 26 places to rank 49. Cillian jumped up 23 places from rank 48 to rank 25 in 2015. The greatest drop within the boy's top 100 was Rory, down 32 places to rank 80. Niall dropped 30 places to rank 95.

Girls: New entries to the Top 100 Names

The top 100 names for girls saw 9 new entries in 2015, with Rosa increasing in rank the most, up 94 places to rank 53. Figure 2 below shows the change in rank of all the new entries to the girl's top 100 names in 2015. These replaced Aine, Lucia, Nicole, Lara, Madison, Darcey, Darcie, Lydia, Lacey, Bethany, Eliza, Jasmine, Tilly and Laura, all of which fell out of the top 100 girls' names between 2014 and 2015.

Figure 2: New entries to the girl's Top 100 names in 2015 by change in rank



Girls: Names in the Top 100 in both 2014 and 2015

Within the girl's top 100, the highest climber between 2014 and 2015 was Heidi, which rose 42 places to rank 57. Paige was the second highest climber, up 41 places to position 53, followed by Aria which climbed 36 places, also to rank 53. The greatest falls in rank for girls within the top 100 were Faith (down 39 places to rank 81), Kayla (down 36 places to rank 99) and Brooke (down 31 places to rank 79).

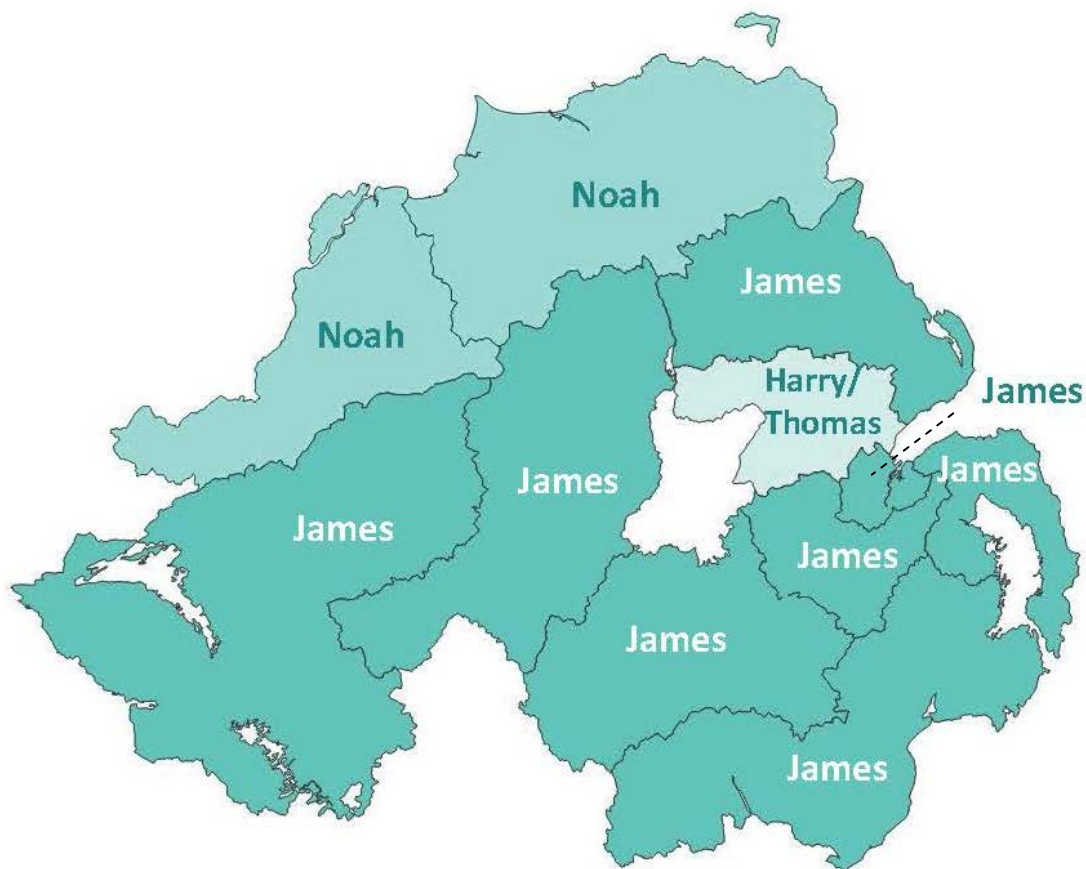
Tables for the top 100 baby names for boys' and girls' whose births were registered in 2015 can be downloaded [here](#).

4. Regional variations

Boys

The new 11 Local Government Districts (LGDs) replaced the previous 26 LGDs on 1st April 2015. On the basis of the new 11 LGDs, James was the most popular name given to baby boys in 8 districts in 2015 while Noah, Harry or Thomas were the most popular boys' names in the remaining 3 districts.

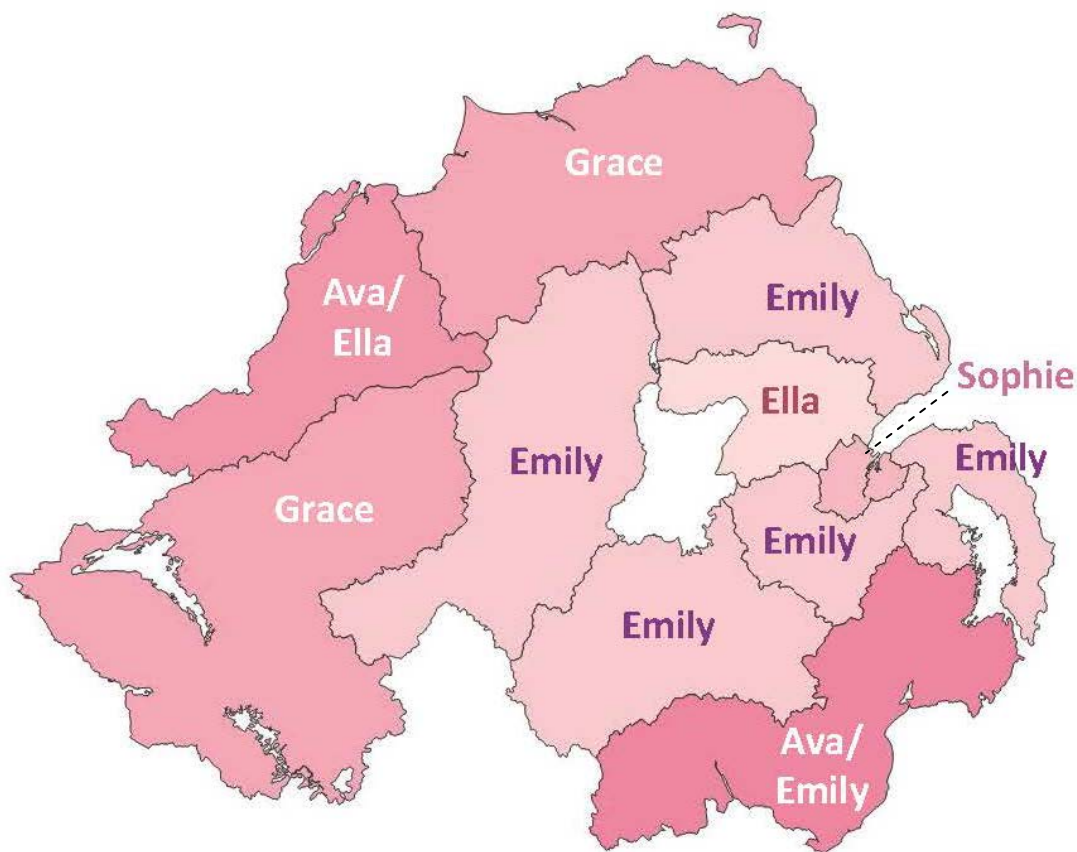
Figure 3: Map of the most popular Boy's Names in 2015 for the new 11 Local Government Districts



Girls

In terms of baby girls, Emily was the most popular choice in 5 of the new 11 LGDs and shared top spot with Ava in Newry, Mourne & Down. Ella, Sophie and Grace were the top choices in the remaining 5 districts.

Figure 4: Map of the most popular Girl's Names in 2015 for the new 11 Local Government Districts



Tables containing the most popular baby boys' and baby girls' names in 2015, broken down by Local Government District and Health and Social Care Trusts, can be downloaded [here](#).

5. Variation in baby names by mother's country of birth

There is some variation in the popularity of baby names in Northern Ireland depending on mother's country of birth (see Table 2 below).

James and Emily were the most popular baby names chosen by mothers who were born in Northern Ireland. For mothers born in the rest of the UK, Jack and James were jointly the most popular boys' names registered in 2015, whereas Grace was the most popular girl's name. For mothers born in the Republic of Ireland, James and Aoife were the most popular choice.

Daniel and Julia were the most popular names given to children of mothers born in one of the A8¹ countries followed by Jakub and Oliver for boys and Mia for girls. For mothers born in the rest of the world, Daniel and Maria were the top names followed by David and James for boys and Amelia and Sofia for girls.

Table 2: Top baby names registered in 2015 by mother's country of birth

Mother's Country of Birth	Boys		Girls	
	Name	Number	Name	Number
Northern Ireland	James	261	Emily	203
	Jack	234	Ella	175
	Noah	201	Grace	174
Rest of the UK	Jack/James	13	Grace	14
	Jake	11	Emily	13
	Noah	10	Amelia/Olivia	10
Republic of Ireland	James	13	Aoife	11
	Conor/Darragh/Finn	9	Emily	9
	Jack/Ryan	8	Ava	7
A8	Daniel	20	Julia	18
	Jakub/Oliver	14	Mia	17
	Dominik	13	Olivia	15
Rest of the world	Daniel	11	Maria	9
	David/James	10	Amelia/Sofia	7
	Joshua/Lucas	8	Anna/Emily/Maya/Sophia	6

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

6. Variation in baby names by mother's age

The popularity of the names given to baby boys and girls registered in Northern Ireland during 2015 also varied depending on the age of the mother. Table 3 below shows the most popular names given to boys and girls by the age of the mother.

Boys

For mothers under twenty years of age Noah was the most popular choice whereas for mothers in their twenties, Charlie was the most popular choice. James was the favourite name for mothers aged 30 and over.

Girls

For baby girls, Mia was the most popular choice for mothers under twenty years of age, while Ella was most popular for mothers in their twenties. Emily was the favourite name for mothers in their thirties, whereas for mothers aged 40 and over Anna was the most popular choice.

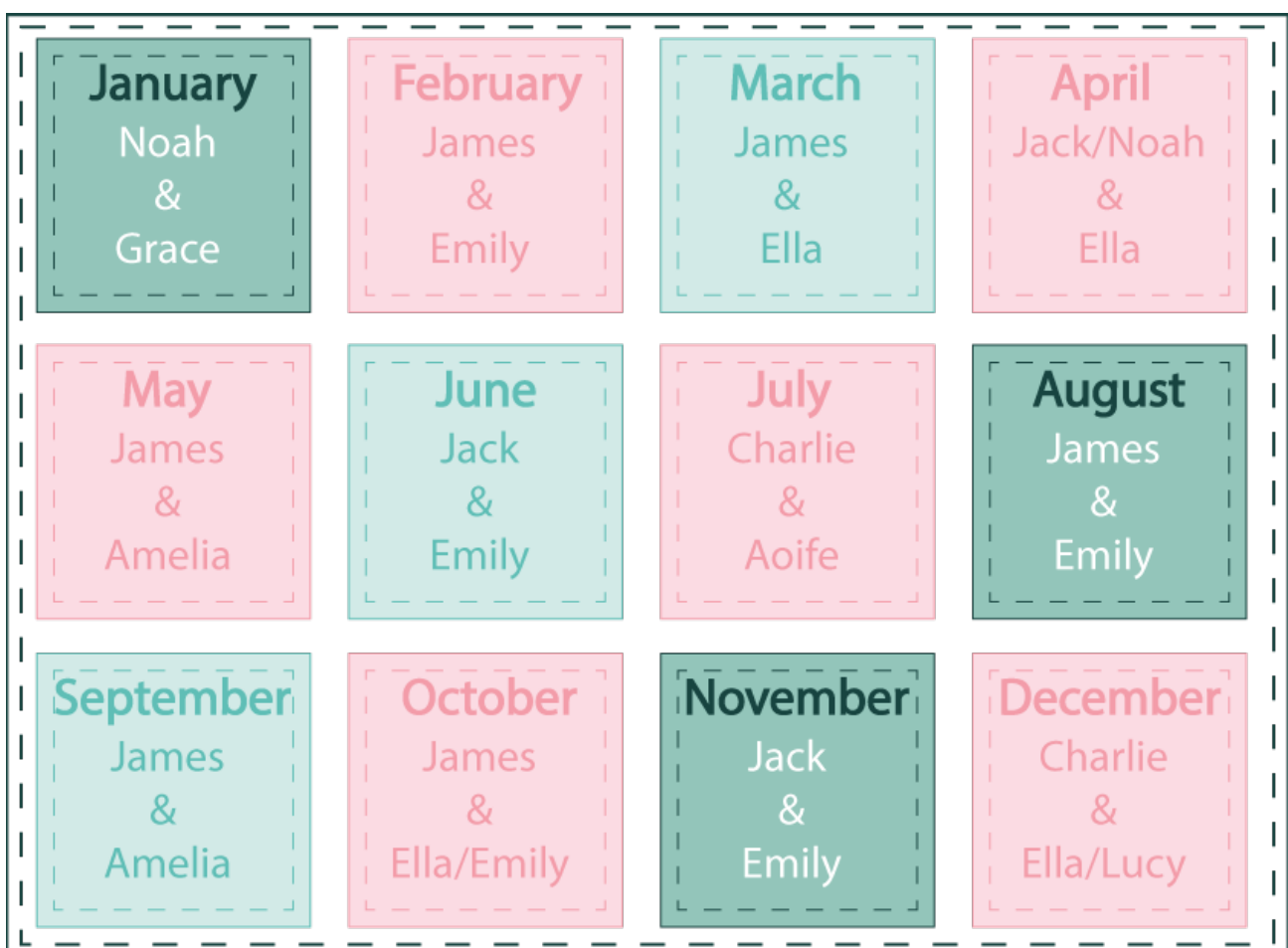
Table 3: Top baby names registered in 2015 by mother's age

Age of mother	Boys		Girls	
	Name	Number	Name	Number
Under 20	Noah	11	Mia	10
	Charlie	9	Amelia/Ella	9
	Jack	8	Emily	7
20-29	Charlie	106	Ella	96
	Jack	104	Emily	93
	Noah	98	Sophie	77
30-39	James	187	Emily	126
	Jack	140	Grace	120
	Daniel	119	Anna	101
40 and over	James	18	Anna	10
	Matthew	17	Aoife/Grace	9
	Daniel	10	Emily/Eva/Lucy	7

7. Variation in baby names by month of registration

There is very little variation by month of registration for births in Northern Ireland. However, in January and December of 2015 Holly (or Hollie) was a more popular choice for girls when compared with other months of the year. Similarly, the name Summer was a more popular name during June and July when compared with other months of the year. The name Autumn also increased in popularity for baby girls registered during October and November but was relatively uncommon in the other months of 2015.

Figure 5: Top baby names by month of registration in Northern Ireland 2015



8. Additional first names

The majority of babies (87%) registered in Northern Ireland in 2015 had one or more additional first names.

James, John, Patrick, William and Thomas were the 5 most popular choices for boys' additional first names. James was given as an additional forename to 990 boys and John to a further 559 babies.

For baby girls, the names Rose, Elizabeth, Grace, Mary and Marie were the 5 most popular choices as additional first names. Rose was given to 871 girls while Elizabeth was given as an additional first name to 412 girls.

Figure 6: Top 10 Additional first names registered in 2015 in Northern Ireland



9. Changes over the past decade (comparison between 2015 and 2005)

Boys: Top 10

Four of the top 10 most popular boys' names in 2015 were also in the top 10 in 2005: namely James, Jack, Daniel and Matthew. James and Jack, which were the two most popular names in 2015, were ranked fourth and first respectively in 2005. Jack held the top spot in 2005 and dropped to rank 2 in 2015. The greatest changes over the decade within the top 10 include the increases in popularity of Oliver (up 58 places to rank 6 in 2015) and Noah (up 52 places to rank 3 in 2015).

Boys: Top 100

Within the top 100 boys' names, Ollie (up 490 places to rank 25), Blake (up 294 places to rank 86) and Eli (up 285 places to rank 95) were the highest climbers between 2005 and 2015. In contrast, Brandon (down 253 places to rank 342), Darren (down 189 places to rank 288) and Lee (down 183 places to rank 259) fell the furthest out of the top 100 between 2005 and 2015.

Girls: Top 10

Sophie and Anna were the 2 names that appeared in the top 10 most popular girls' names in both 2005 and 2015. The 2 most popular girls' names in 2015, namely Emily and Ella, were ranked 20 and 26 respectively in 2005. Katie held the top spot in 2005 but dropped to rank 19 in 2015. The greatest changes in the top 10 girls' names over the decade include the increase in popularity of Amelia (up 82 places to rank 7 in 2015) and Ava (up 56 places to rank 10 in 2015).

Girls: Top 100

Within the top 100 girls' names over the decade Bella increased in popularity (up 670 places to rank 41), as did Maisie (up 668 places to rank 43) and Fiadh (both up 659 places to rank 52). Gemma (down 704 places to rank 803), Kirsten (down 340 places to rank 426) and Natasha (down 278 places to rank 358) fell the most in terms of popularity over the past decade.

10. Changes in popularity over the past 15 years

Figure 7: Top baby names in Northern Ireland since 2001

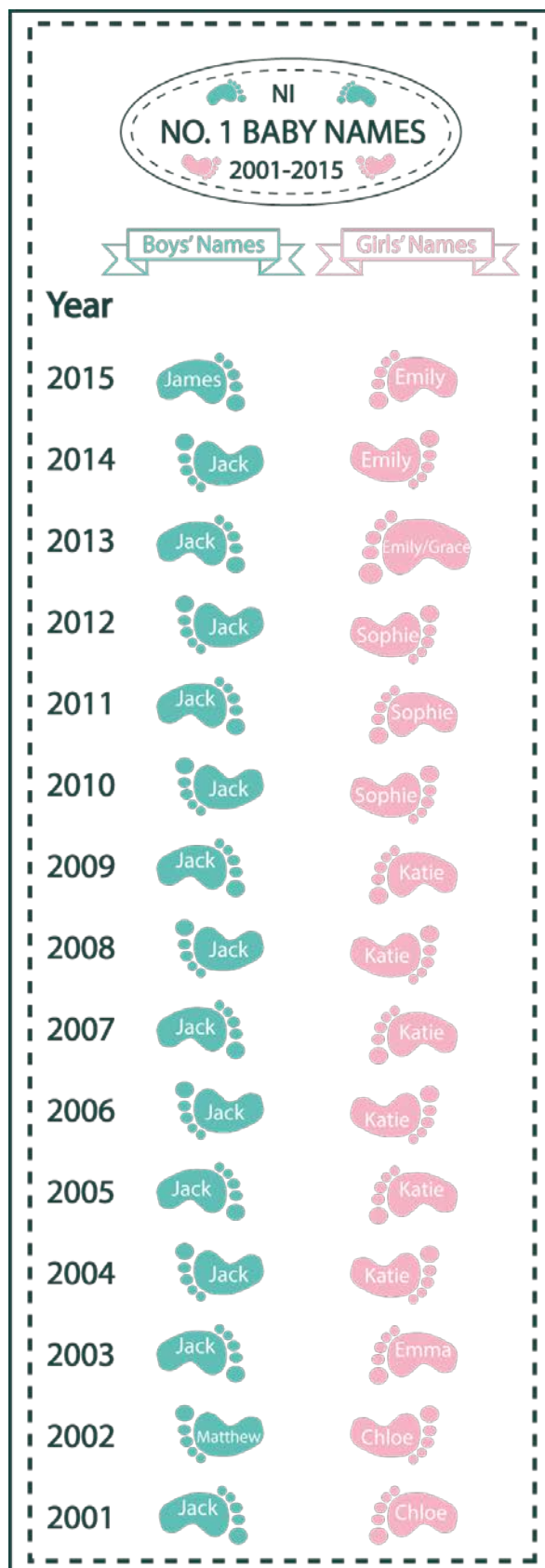


Figure 7 gives details of the most popular baby names each year for the last 15 years. Interestingly, the boys' names have retained their popularity much more than girls' names.

Jack was the most popular name for baby boys for 13 out of the last 15 years with Matthew being the most popular in 2002 and James in 2015.

For baby girls, the most popular name has varied more often over the past 15 years, with Katie ranked first for 6 consecutive years between 2004 and 2009. Sophie held the top spot for 3 consecutive years, while Emily has held it on 3 occasions (jointly in 2013, along with Grace). During the period in question, Chloe held the top spot for 2 consecutive years and both Emma and Grace (jointly with Emily in 2013) each held first place on one occasion.

11. Changes in popularity compared with 30 years ago

Table 4 below highlights the baby boy and girl names which made the Top 10 thirty years ago, in 1985, and shows their corresponding rank in 2015.

James is the only name which appears in both the 1985 and the 2015 top 10 names for baby boys. Michael, ranked number 16 in 2015, was also among the top 20 boys' names in 1985. While none of the top 10 girls' names from 1985 appeared in the 2015 top 10, Emma (ranked second in 1985) did make it into the top 20 in 2015 (at rank 20).

Table 4: Top 10 baby names registered in 1985 in Northern Ireland

Rank in 1985	Name	Rank in 2015	Name	Rank in 2015
1	David	64	Laura	129
2	Christopher	102	Emma	20
3	Stephen	129	Claire	312
4	Mark	102	Sarah	31
5	John	44	Catherine	113
6	Paul	138	Michelle	803
7	Michael	16	Nicola	426
8	James	1	Lisa	803
9	Andrew	83	Jennifer	269
10	Jonathan	139	Danielle	545

12. New and less common names in 2015

There were 980 new names registered in 2015 that had not been registered between 1997 and 2014. Of these, 381 were boy's names, including Aaren, Christiano and Dani. The remaining 527 were girl's names including Alexah, Fathima and Lolly.

Some less common names in 2015 were as follows:

Boys: Cruz, Jon, Olaf, Theon and Tyrion.

Girls: Arya, Elsa, Rita and Suri.

Olaf and Elsa could be an indication of the 'Frozen Effect' following popularity of Disney's 2013 movie.

13. Further Information:

The latest baby name statistics in Great Britain and Ireland are available at the following links:

[Northern Ireland](#)

[England and Wales](#)

[Scotland](#)

[Republic of Ireland](#)

An interactive map which enables trends in baby names to be analysed at Local Government District level for [boys](#) and for [girls](#).

An [interactive tool](#) which will return the rank that any particular name has held over the period 1997 to 2015 is also available.

14. Background Notes

1. The baby name statistics have been derived from annual births registration data and include all live births, both resident and non-resident, registered in Northern Ireland in 2015. The results are based on analysis of all births registered within the 2015 calendar year. This is not necessarily the year these births will have occurred (e.g. a birth that occurs near the end of December 2015 may not be registered until early January 2016 and as such, will not be included in these figures).
2. Different spellings of a name have been treated as separate names, e.g. Conor and Connor. Names containing accents have been analysed as if they did not have those accents, e.g. Séan was counted together with Sean.
3. A8 countries include the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.
4. Further information on the production of Baby Names statistics in Northern Ireland is provided in the [Baby Names Information Paper](#) on the NISRA website.
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- are well explained and readily accessible;
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9. The [Vital Statistics Quality Assurance Policy](#) and [Revisions and Errors Policy](#) are both available from the NISRA website.

10. All media inquiries should be directed to the DFP Communications Office:

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11. Any queries relating to its statistical or data content and requests for further information should be addressed to NISRA Customer Services at:

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